

UK Resilience Lessons Digest

Learning in Community

Issue 7 | June 2026

UK Resilience Academy

Welcome

This session is being recorded



Lianna Roast

Head of Thought Leadership

UK Resilience Academy

Introduction



Free download

Coming up…

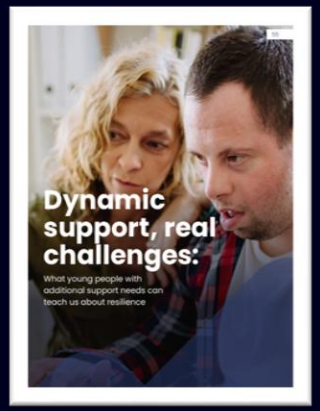
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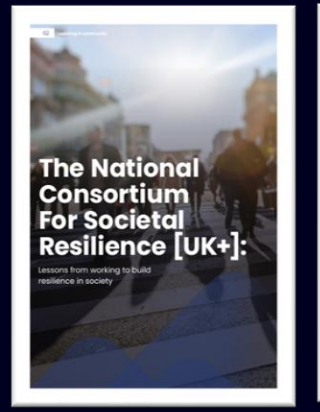


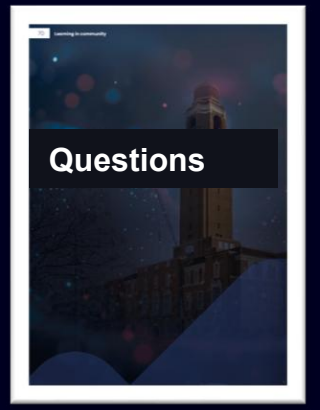












Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Keynote



Zainab Agha

Director, Resilience and Emergencies

Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

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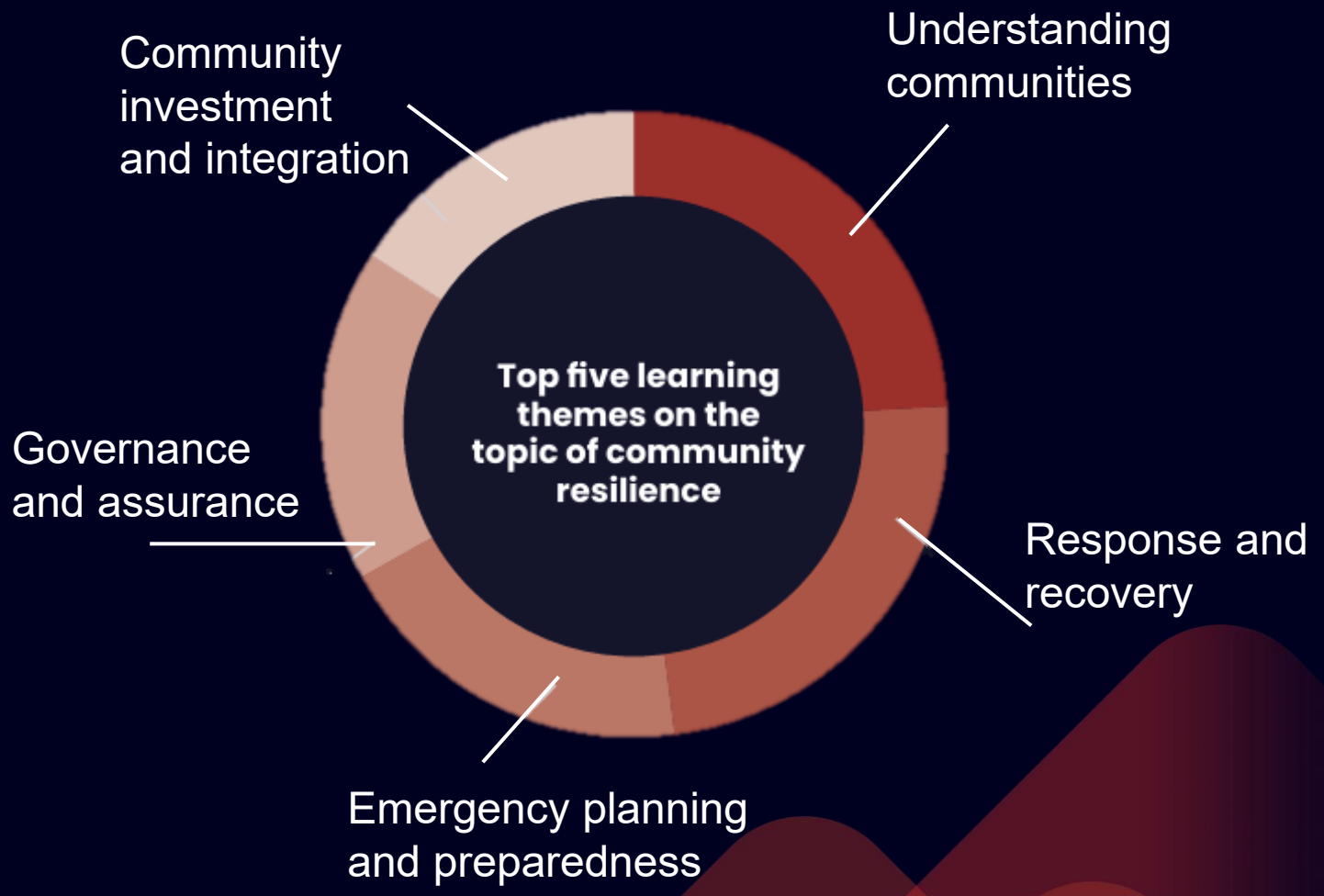
Learning Analysis

Operated by

serco

Learning analysis

- **19 reports** relating to the topic of community resilience
- Published over a **12-year period** (2013 and 2025)
- Total of **186 lessons and recommendations**



Theme 1:
Understanding communities

Underdeveloped community knowledge and relationships could undermine local confidence, unintentionally exacerbate risk, and weaken effectiveness of activities across the resilience cycle.

'Identifying…local people's interests was important for encouraging residents' shared actions …'



Theme 2:
Response and recovery challenges

Salient learning points could be grouped under three key subheadings:

- **Partnerships -** active partners v passive aid recipients
- **Coordination** - clear, consistent, contextualised communication (unclear and/or **inconsistent guidance and information** to those affected by emergencies…tended to **weaken trust and diminish community involvement** over time)
- **Protraction -** complex recovery journeys



Theme 3:
Emergency planning and preparedness

1. Evolving emergencies : responses exceeding reasonable worse case scenarios motivated post-event engagement between emergency planning teams and local community members (e.g., via community research or consultation, delivery of emergency preparedness education, co-production)

2. Engagement: Engagement between planners and residents *broadly* strengthened relationships and facilitated mutual knowledge sharing.

3. Education: delivery did not ensure embedding

4. Externally initiated "top-down' engagement was most successful when anchored into existing community interests and/or groups. consistent local representation benefitted from higher levels of confidence amongst local communities. Projects based on externally dictated aims often resulted in poor buy-in and diminishing engagement over time.

5. Empowerment: *Relationships* enabled the co-production of bespoke local emergency plans or helped to empower local volunteers (e.g. to set up their own community emergency hubs).

Theme 4:
Governance and assurance

Transparency

when levels of risk and uncertainty were clearly acknowledged in **policy and well translated through communications** with local community members, **trust, cooperation and collaboration** were improved.

Governance

Organisations with wider, long-term community resilience strategies, clear frameworks, engagement plans, and allocated engagement leads were better placed to establish and sustain relationships across the risk cycle. A lack of **supportive governance** could… reduce effectiveness and fairness of community resilience efforts, [and] deepen inequality

Structures

Responder organisations with complex, fragmented, or **unclear governance** arrangements and **vague accountability** tended to **undermine system confidence** in a response. **Respect for VCS structures** helped to enhance responders' understanding of how local groups operated in practice, signalling a commitment to equitable partnership working in planning and response.

Accountability

Reports advocated for independent assurance and oversight processes that provide the necessary accountability, transparency, and challenge - flagging discrepancies between official guidelines and actual operations

Theme 5:
Community investment and integration









Financial disbursements 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. **Pre-agreed disbursement mechanisms** that could be activated quickly in the event of an emergency allow local groups to reach residents that statutory services often could not.

Activities that **supported and strengthened social cohesion** (whether through direct project work or indirect engagement with existing programmes or networks) were considered **important strategic investments** (financially and relationally) in community preparedness.

Inadequate financial support and partial provision could exacerbate recovery costs in subsequent crises. The €1 billion damage from the French 2023 riots represents five times the cost of 2005. Sustained, integrated investment in prevention would have been more cost effective.

Sustained, integrated capability (rather than short-term surge and escalation) is vital to protect communities during complex or prolonged situations.

Emergency planning in partnership

Strengthening flood resilience in Loftus

Rachael Campbell

Principal Emergency Planning Officer

Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit



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The Background



- **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.

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.

Lessons Identified (continued)

CLEVELAND LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM

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

Riots to resilience:

Five ways to turn lessons into action

Jon Vangorph

Head of Partnership Insight

VCS Emergencies Partnership



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Introduction



1. Between 30 July and 5 August 2024, the UK experienced a wave of riots, protests, and civil unrest following the mass stabbing in Southport
2. False online claims and **mis/dis-information quickly spread and fuelled violence**
3. The EP commissioned, and in February 2025 it published, Riots to Resilience to understand the **impact on communities**, identify lessons and to offer **practical recommendations**
4. The report captured the experiences of 80 local, national, and statutory organisations affected by the racist and Islamophobic riots and which outlined **five key recommendations** that support community resilience building

'Five ways to turn lessons into action'

1

Know your communities

Strengthening connections across organisations of different size, scale and sector.

2

Know your leaders

Effective collaboration to lead the response and recovery.

3

Know your places

Identify the places and spaces that are open to everyone during an emergency of this type.

4

Know your sources of information

Minimising dis and misinformation through trusted communication channels.

5

Know your history

Harnessing local memory and mobilising unofficial leaders to inspire young people and help with healing.

Since publication and looking forwards

1. More than two years on, there is a growing consensus that **the potential for further unrest remains high**.
2. The **riots (and the report) underscored the importance of safeguarding people and community spaces** and in March 2025 our event on Martyn's Law drew record attendance evidencing high interest from partners in the topic
3. 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.
4. In July 2025, **our Network Call focused on civil unrest** and its impact on migrants and refugees and again drew strong engagement
5. We've experienced increased partner insight and concern on riots and associated community resilience across our events and partner interactions since August 2024 (more notably in August 2025, September 2025, October 2025 and March 2026)

Dynamic support, real challenges:

How is resilience understood and experienced by young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN)

Dr Sandy Whitelaw

Research Lead, National Centre for Resilience

Senior Lecturer, University of Glasgow,
School of Social and Environmental Sustainability



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The Usual Place

The Usual Place social enterprise community café = *employability*



- **Question 1**: *How is 'resilience' conceptualised by young people with ASN in the setting*?
- **Question 2**: *What features of TUP as an organisation are significant in promoting resilience*?

Findings I – Conceptualising resilience



- **…basic articulation of resilience as *flexibility***

  "bendy tree in a big storm….when the storm comes….you're being battered about but afterwards you're still standing"

- **…a form of *maturation* 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"

- **…an *inevitable challenge***

  "*part of life*" and "*big bad world*"

- **an *internalised concept* ["*inner strength*"] *and* as the consequence of *nurture* [setting]**

  "*not something you are born with…something you grow into*"; "*like parenting it depends on the nurture…the adults round about you*"

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Findings II - Facilitators of resilience in TUP



- TUP as a ***safe setting***
- role of ***personal support***
- where ***bonding*** *occurs*
- **what it is *not:*** *"molly-coddling"; "smothering"; "wrap in cotton wool"*
- ***reacting*** **to challenges**: *"it's…about challenges…how you deal with them"*
- **linked to *'front-facing'* café:** *"working naturally within the café…out in the public"*
- **centrality of *doing*:** *"a big thing…all the practical jobs"*
- **extending beyond *limits:*** *"getting them out of their comfort zone"*
- influence of *Michael Ungar*

	‘Protective’ features		‘Challenging’ features
Level of assistance	Active interventionalist support (when needed)		Fostering independence and taking responsibility (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

The National Consortium for Societal Resilience

Lessons from working to build resilience in society

Professor Duncan Shaw

Professor of Critical Systems: Disaster Risk, Resilience and Society

University of Manchester



Digest article collectively 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.*

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Initial Lessons from NSCR [UK+]

NATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR SOCIETAL RESILIENCE [UK+]

- In 2021 NCSR [UK+]* 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.
- 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



Spontaneous volunteers



Essential sectors that support vulnerable persons



Help from civil society

www.ambs.ac.uk/ncsrmap

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*NCSR+ includes all 51 local resilience partnerships across the UK (i.e. all LRFs, EPGs, RRPs). 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+.

MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester
Alliance Manchester Business School

NATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR SOCIETAL RESILIENCE

SOCIETAL RESILIENCE

WHY

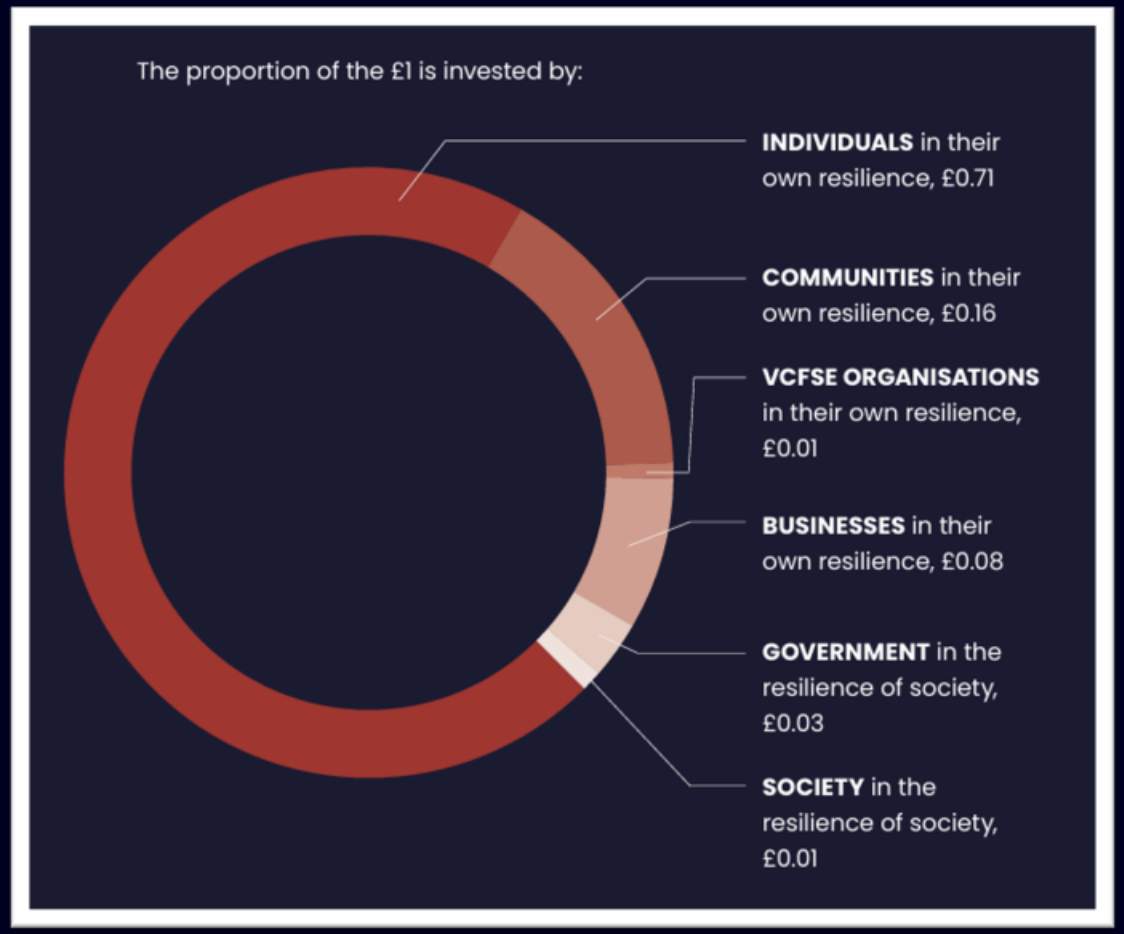
It's the right thing to do
- **Politically**
- **Socially**
- **Ethically**
- **Financially**
- **Operationally**

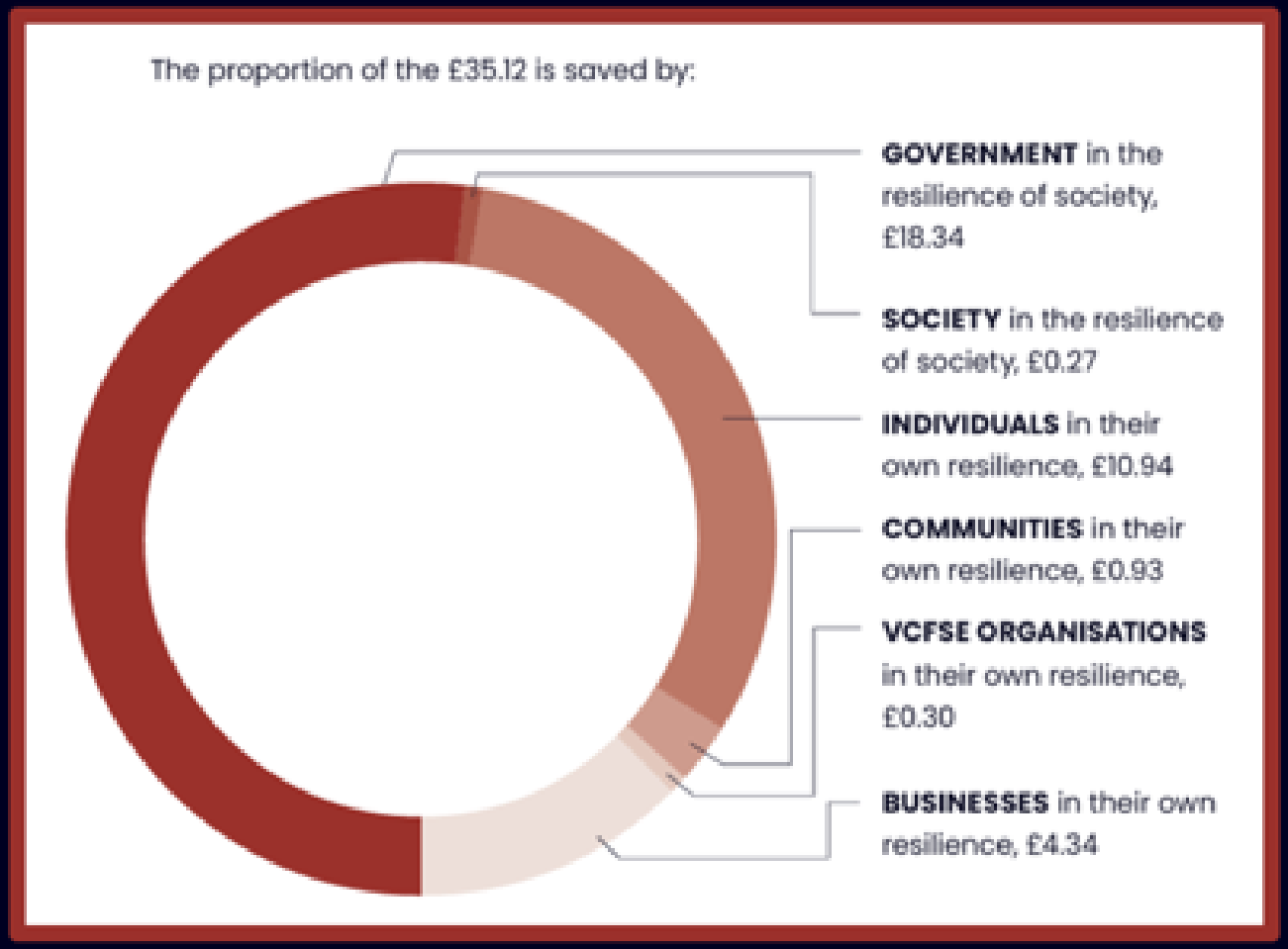
… because the public value of societal resilience is so high

Research over 18 months, 90 participants
When disruptions happen 5 years apart…
Investing £1 in societal resilience to disruption saves £35.12

Investing £5,000 to a community group, £176,000 of public value

Latest Learning from NSCR [UK+]





www.ambs.ac.uk/publicvalue

The Resilience Pyramid created by civil society organisations



LRF does not :

- task frontline charities
- match affected people with frontline charities

LRF shares situation updates

Summary

Learning so far…

ISO 22354:2026

Security and resilience: Societal resilience - Guidelines to develop local resilience capability

is out now



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Q & A Panel

Recording available NOW!

UKRA Senior Visiting Fellows
Masterclass



Community Resilience: The Evolving Relationship Between Communities of Geography, and Online Communities of Interest (and Influence)

Dr Rowena Hill, MBE

Professor of Resilience, Emergencies and Disaster

Science Nottingham Trent University

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Insight papers from the UKRA....



Available to download NOW!

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Coming soon…

Online
April 2027



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UK Lessons Management Forum

Championing continual improvement in the resilience and emergencies sector



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