



## **Briefing paper** **Workshop 2: Community Resilience to Extreme Events**

Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling, FK9 4LA  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019

### **Purpose of this briefing paper**

This briefing paper is produced to summarise the key elements which arose in Workshop 1 and to introduce Workshop 2. We hope that this will inform participation in Workshop 2 and provide context for further discussion and action. This information will also be of use to those who are not able to attend but may wish to follow the progress of the project.

Previously circulated information, including the Introduction to the project and the Briefing Paper for Workshop 1, is available on request. To read more about Workshop 1, including the slides and notes from the day, please visit our [project webpages](#).

### **Introduction to Workshop 2**

This workshop is designed to build upon the conversations begun in Workshop 1 and to explore experiences of community resilience and insight gained from case studies. Through this collective process we hope to enrich our understanding of the issues, concerns, limits and potential of community resilience to extreme events.

This workshop is part of a research project called 'Building a Movement: Community Development and Community Resilience in Response to Extreme Events' that forms part of the work of the University of Stirling's Extreme Events in Science and Society research programme, and is funded by the National Centre for Resilience. Whilst 'community resilience' is a topic that has been at the forefront of recent Scottish Government strategy and policy, there remains a gap in identifying what community resilience is currently enacted (particularly in Scotland), and how such experiences can be used to encourage further development of community resilience. This research project aims to address this gap. We believe creating a network of people interested in community resilience will be the first step in building and feeding into a movement(s) around creating a fairer, healthier and more ecologically sustainable Scotland.

This free, one-day workshop will focus on current best practice in community resilience and practical steps for building a network and community of our own around community resilience to extreme events. Following on the discussions from workshop 1, we will hear from community groups about their experiences of building community resilience and will hear from those working in government and the statutory sector about how we link grassroots approaches to current and emerging policies and programmes. Confirmed speakers include Kerry Jardine and Ralph Thrope from the Resilience Division, Scottish Government, Hugh Deeming from the [Emergency Planning College](#), and community case studies including [Sustaining Dunbar](#), [The Garioch Partnership](#), [the Isle of Bute Resilience Team](#), [Braemar Care](#) and [Eden Project Communities](#) (see end of document for biographies of each of our case studies).



## **Aims of the day:**

- Showcasing examples of on-the-ground work
- Improving understanding between communities, community organisations, policy-makers, practitioners, policy-makers and researchers
- Increasing the likelihood of future connections between these groups

Refreshments and tea/coffee will be provided during the day.

Please join in the conversation and keep it going using hashtags linked to our workshops and projects: #CR2EE, #StirExtreme

## **Timetable:**

09:30: Arrival (with tea/coffee)

10:00: Welcome and intro activities

10:30 - 11:00: Community resilience policy landscape - Resilience Division, Scottish Government

11:00 - 12:00: Improving the links between communities and policy

12:00: Lunch & Networking Opportunity - served in the Uist room

12:45: Keynote - How research can help link community groups and policy

13:45: Case Study Discussion Groups: showcasing current practice (plus coffee!)

15:30: What we've learnt and next steps

16:00: Close

Travel bursaries are available for those working/volunteering for charities, community groups, on low incomes, unemployed or students. Please contact Fiona Millar ([fiona.millar1@stir.ac.uk](mailto:fiona.millar1@stir.ac.uk)) in advance of the workshop if you would like more information and to request one.

This workshop is the second in the series, following our [first workshop in February 2019 which started the process of building a network](#). A public event will also take place in July 2019 at the University and similarly a further invite will be shared nearer the time.

## **Research Team**

- Dr Sandra Engstrom, Lecturer in Social Work, University of Stirling  
<https://www.stir.ac.uk/people/257512>
- Dr Fiona Millar, Research Development Officer, University of Stirling
- Dr Tony Robertson, Lecturer in Social Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Stirling  
<https://www.stir.ac.uk/people/257342>
- Dr Paul J Docherty, Research Assistant, University of Stirling

### Notes from Workshop 1

In our first workshop we engaged in group discussion around the following prompts in relation to community resilience to extreme events:

- Q1 What are the knowledge / evidence gaps?
- Q2 Building a Movement vs Building a Network
- Q3 Who is missing?
- Q4 Are there exemplars of good practice/greater insight from communities?

In response to each of these questions there were a number of areas highlighted by the discussion groups. These are summarised below.

#### **Q1 What are the knowledge / evidence gaps?**

Responses to this question fell generally into two categories: information and the processes around dissemination and application of that information. Issues highlighted included:

1. **Lack of Public awareness** of what information is available, how to access this information, and what the relevance of this information is at a community level.  
(NB Community Risk Register identifies top 10 risks for Scotland but not well promoted.)  
There is a need for greater realisation by the public about addressing community resilience locally. Whilst structures may be in place these may also form barriers as many communities don't want to be linked to statutory organisations and are resistant to the 'command and control' approach to delivery which is commonly applied.
2. **Expectations** of what others can provide - 'Someone else's job' / lack of ownership
3. Lack of evidence about **gender based violence** – knowledge gap between theory and action
4. Limited knowledge about what happens **to children/young people/those with disabilities/marginalised groups in disasters**. There is some evidence but it is not well understood by policy makers.
5. What do we gain? **Lack of access** to information and help
6. **Gap** between theory and practice
7. Evidence lacking for **turning knowledge into action/change**
8. **Shared identity**. The core of community resilience lies in shared identity, but we don't understand what we share. It's not a yes/no if something works, there is fluctuation and a range of impact, especially after events. Longitudinal evidence and research is needed and a recognition that there is a temporal ebb and flow of community resilience
9. We don't understand **what turns a locality into a community** – this comes and goes, fluctuates after an emergency and state intervention can divide a community. We need a long term understanding of what happens after the cameras go home There is a process of negotiation and empowerment but it's hard to evidence 'what made it work' and there is a lack of value in these processes too.
10. Transferability of **best/good practice** – We noted that what works well in one place doesn't necessarily work elsewhere. We often evaluate things/schemes rather than **underpinning processes** such as galvanisation. Nuancing and capturing what makes things work is important. The parts of the puzzle that drive change are often not valued – need to understand them more



11. **What is the reality now?** Extreme events are constantly happening. There is lots of knowledge that comes together in events like this but there are so many people doing similar work and not linking up effectively.
12. **Lack of clarity** on how we build a movement.
13. Importance of noting the **positive benefits** of increasing community resilience.

## Q2 Building a Movement vs Building a Network

This discussion considered what connections are required in order to share information and to build the evidence that is needed for informed decision making. This also looked at the need for transition from an information network to a movement for community resilience.

1. **Importance of a shared vision** and ownership to make any intervention/project more sustainable
2. **What connections are needed** to build and share?
3. Good example is Women for Independence and how that developed. Women for independence movement started out of the Scottish Independence movement - it is still going as a collective because of a **shared sense of ownership**
4. All local authorities have structures in place to support community resilience. However, these structures seem to have little **community voice** within them and people are not hearing about them.
5. **Need balance between official system/structures and people's voice.** Sometimes people don't want to connect if they don't feel empowered.
6. **Communities are not just geographical**, how to connect between communities of interest and promote appropriately
7. Connections/connectivity – **meta knowledge and meta belief** - how do you change what people know about what other people think – shift in psychology – what influences behaviour isn't so much what people think but what they think others think
8. Connectivity in communities is **hidden and gendered**. Women are supportive but often the support networks are informal, hidden and fragmented
9. **Websites and social media** can be useful
10. **Denial**. Attitude that 'it's not going to happen to me' is a barrier to taking action.

## Q3 Who is missing?

- Funders
- Community council reps
- Emergency planning college
- People from communities who have experienced extreme events
- Community volunteers
- Scottish Flood Forum
- Private sector
- People who manage critical infrastructure

## Q4 Are there exemplars of good practice/greater insight from communities?

- Scottish Flood Forum



- Social Care in Aberdeenshire (Braemar shared care)
- Refugee integration programme in Glasgow  
<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/gramnet/unesco/>
- It was also discussed that we can often learn more from bad practice where things have gone wrong or not worked as expected

## **Case Studies**

Below you will find a few examples of some of the cases that will be presented at this second workshop to showcase how community resilience is being built in Scotland.

### **Eden Project Communities**

At Eden Project Communities, our aim is to improve the happiness and wellbeing of people across the UK by helping to build more resilient and better connected communities.

We support and encourage people all over the UK to take positive actions that strengthen local connections and build stronger communities.

Through the Big Lunch initiative and our national network, we bring people together to build their confidence and grow and share their talents. We support individuals and communities as they create positive change to tackle local issues that matter to them most.

We started off with a very simple idea: one day a year when, for a few glorious hours, cars stop, shyness stops, gloom lifts and communities come together in streets, parks, gardens, beaches, community centres and village halls to meet, greet, share, swap, sing, play and laugh for no reason other than that we all need to.

And so The Big Lunch was born. Since it began in 2009, The Big Lunch — the UK's annual get together for neighbours — brings together an average of 6 million people across the UK each year.

Our research over the past 10 years shows that the Big Lunch connects people and encourages friendlier, safer neighbourhoods where people start to share more — from conversations and ideas, to skills and resources.

For many, holding a Big Lunch ignites a passion for doing more good things in their community, and through our UK wide network, we support over 1,500 people to deliver community-led projects that make a positive difference where they live.

### **Braemar Care**

Braemar Care grew out of a Community Action Plan meeting in 2015 due to the inability to recruit and retain Care staff locally.

This was exacerbated by:

- geography
- the relatively low but fluctuating need for personal care
- Poor public transport links



- The requirement by the local authority to work in a larger area

We also identified a need for general household support, transport, befriending etc. The GP practice population currently stands at c600: 65-74yrs 16%; 75yrs+ 12%.

Our vision is to facilitate safe, effective and sustainable care and support services which would be Community 'owned', driven and accountable. To identify and support local carers based on local knowledge and tap into the strength and commitment of the community and to use the already present flexible employment patterns.

We held a series of consultation events with the local community such as Stakeholder workshops involving Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership & Council, Independent sector providers (VSA, Cornerstone, MyCare), the Scottish Government and the Care Inspectorate. There were visits, exchanges and learning from community-driven projects in other parts of Scotland (Bolleskine, Highland Home Care, Perthshire Health & Wellbeing Coop, Grampian Opportunities etc), an exploration of various organisational and delivery models, accessing independent legal/HR advice and there were grants from Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership, Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Government and additional fundraising.

### **The Garioch Partnership**

The Garioch (pronounced Geer-ree) Partnership is a community-led independent community development organisation that uses its members' networks to build stronger, more successful, more sustainable communities in the Garioch Area of Aberdeenshire.

We support people and communities with projects of all sizes, both existing and new, enabling and encouraging, and harnessing the skills and enthusiasm of local people. We can provide information and advice on project planning, funding, community consultation and engagement, governance and dealing with "red-tape".

After the 2016 flooding from Storm Frank that really badly affected Inverurie and Port Elphinstone, and other Garioch communities, we supported people to come together to form a community based resilience group and continue to support the development of community resilience.

### **Sustaining Dunbar**

Dunbar is a small and rapidly growing town on the coast, thirty miles east of Edinburgh.

**Sustaining Dunbar** is the community development trust for Dunbar and District. Our aim is to stimulate and support action to create a carbon neutral community in which everyone can thrive in a regenerating local environment. Our vision is for Dunbar and District to be a great place to live at every stage of our lives, with a vibrant local economy offering good jobs and a range of goods and services, and where we can all enjoy the beauty and abundance of the natural world.

Our approach is to collaborate with groups in Dunbar, and with communities nearby and further afield, to learn from each other, work together and find ways forward that make a real difference. We seek to bring people together through practical projects and a regular programme of events where they can share their hopes and concerns, explore ideas and be inspired by positive stories of community-led action from across the world.



We launched in 2008 and have run a wide range of projects around energy, food, travel and waste and we have incubated various community enterprises including a bakery, a carshare club and a waste reuse hub. We developed a '[Local Resilience Action Plan](#)' which was first published in 2011. Our main projects at present are the running of a community web platform, the development of a community garden and orchard as a therapeutic, growing and learning space and the creation of a Coworking hub to provide local workspace and support the development of new enterprises.

More information on our website: [www.sustainingdunbar.org](http://www.sustainingdunbar.org)

## **Isle of Bute Resilience Team**

This team was established to respond to local emergencies and can be contacted via Police Scotland or Facebook. Our group was formed in March 2018 following the bad weather we had, we will also be assisting Rothesay Community Council Emergency Plan.

The town already relies on a host of volunteers and emergency services but the idea of having a trained group, drawn from the wider community who could be called upon in times of need. We have recruited 24 members of the public and they have been trained in various areas and now have a good understanding of what is needed at incidents and what would be expected of them. We have also undertaken training in basic skills such as map reading and first aid and radio communications.

The challenge with a group like this is that in a serious situation we could be asked to do just about anything, from helping to open a rest centre and make cups of tea right through to helping search for a missing person. That means our training has to reflect this and be broad ranging. We meet one or two days a month with a set training plan outdoor and indoor all year round, which helps to keep the group working as a team. The team has invested in equipment to allow us to operate professionally and this includes hi-vis jackets/vests, radios, first aid kits and much more. Our team will always be identifiable at all times.

We hope nothing serious will ever happen within our community but being realistic and looking back over the years, we know that one day it will. It is essential that communities are able to help look after themselves and even be able to manage a crisis while help is on the way and that what our team is all about.

We can be contacted on 07922883732 or [bteresilience@gmail.com](mailto:bteresilience@gmail.com). We are also on Twitter: @resiliencebute

## **Next Steps**

The next steps are to conduct empirical research through interviews that will evaluate the discussions we have had throughout the two workshops. Using qualitative interviews we will ask questions around:

- How do we pool knowledge, experience and evidence from diverse communities?
- How do we prevent the voices from the lived-experience from being ignored or overshadowed?
- What are the key issues from the project that need to be taken further in practice, policy making and research?
- Which formats can they be taken forward in? Who can take them forward?



- What might be some appropriate structures / models for supporting emergence of community resilience?

The aim of this empirical research is to establish an agenda for collaboration and opportunity for further knowledge exchange through developed multi-disciplinary collaborations across research, policy, practice and communities.

We would also like to invite you to consider taking part in our photo voice project. Photo voice is a way for individuals to capture the lived experience of their community and to encourage the use of photography for social change. It is a way for individuals to represent themselves and tell their own story through their photos. We will have more detailed information about this process after the workshops are complete.

Finally, we invite you to join us in a final public event at the MacRobert Arts Centre in Stirling showcasing the work of the group, including some of the photos and walking diaries to be held at the end of July (date to be confirmed). This will also be a chance to reconnect with workshop participants and promote continued networking and relationship building.

## **Links**

**Scottish Government's Resilient Communities Strategic Framework and Delivery Plan 2017 – 2021**

<https://www.100resilientcities.org/>

**Extreme Events in Science and Society** – Research Group, University of Stirling

<https://extremeevents.stir.ac.uk/>

**National Centre for Resilience (NCR)**

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/ncr/>

Full details on this research project (Building a Movement: Community Development and Community Resilience in Response to Extreme Events) and events are available at the [project website](#). This project is funded by the [National Centre for Resilience](#) to [Sandra Engstrom](#), [Fiona Millar](#) and [Tony Robertson](#).