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Spontaneous volunteers: Involving citizens in the response and recovery to flood emergencies

Final report FD2666

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Spontaneous volunteers: Involving citizens in the response and recovery to flood emergencies

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Executive Summary

For the purposes of this report, spontaneous volunteers are individuals who are unaffiliated with existing official response organisations yet, without extensive preplanning, are motivated to provide unpaid support to the response and/or recovery to an emergency. Spontaneous volunteers potentially represent an important valuable resource available to emergency managers, particularly at times of financial constraint. The report focuses on the case of spontaneous volunteers in flood situations. Spontaneous volunteers include volunteers who directly support the emergency responders (so-called convergent volunteers) as well as those whose work is not overseen by official responders (so-called freelancers).

This report presents findings which show that national non-statutory guidance is required to inform the official involvement of spontaneous volunteers during a flood. Although responsibility for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers during emergencies is the responsibility of Local Authorities[1,2] many emergency managers seemed unaware of this. It details the aspects that emergency managers need to consider when developing a local plan for how to manage spontaneous volunteers. The project was commissioned by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

[1] Emergency Response and Recovery (Non-statutory guidance accompanying the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (October 2013).

[2] Revision to Emergency Preparedness Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme. Chapter 14: The Role of the Voluntary Sector. October 2011 (V3).

This one-year study commenced in October 2013 and the data collection period, by chance, included the winter floods of 2013/14. The research involved data collection at 3 case study locations and included 62 interviews with stakeholders such as: national and local government representatives, Category 1 responders, academics, organised volunteers and spontaneous volunteers. An Advisory Board, consisting of experts from national and local government and the voluntary sector, was also established. The design, collection and analysis of this data has followed good-practice academic research methodology, outlined in Section 3.

The report examines the motivations and aims of spontaneous volunteers suggesting that many did so because of a desire to help and the recognition that, by doing so, they could reduce others' suffering. Spontaneous volunteers also often wanted to build a sense of community spirit by helping people to recover from the effects of flooding and often meeting needs which were unmet by official emergency services.

The report looks at the ways in which spontaneous volunteers had previously been involved in flood response and recovery. Some voluntary organisations were willing to take on the task of coordinating spontaneous volunteers for emergency managers, whilst it was pointed out that not all offers of assistance from volunteers could be accepted. Offers of assistance from spontaneous volunteers with specialist skills were sometimes declined because of the inability to verify qualifications. Due to the issues associated with establishing whether an individual is a suitably qualified or experienced person (SQEP), many of the tasks spontaneous volunteers were assigned to were low-level, low-responsibility. One of the major concerns identified was the risk of 'freelancing' if spontaneous volunteers could not be drawn into the official response.

A range of management issues were identified such as the resources required to both monitor and coordinate spontaneous volunteers. Social media played a significant role in coordinating the volunteers however it could also be a source of misinformation. Four working arrangements between spontaneous volunteers and emergency managers were identified. These included volunteers working side-by-side with emergency managers, volunteering being integrated into the emergency management structure, volunteers providing additional resources to emergency managers and volunteers working independently from emergency managers. The potential for tension between different organised and spontaneous volunteer groups was also highlighted.

The report examines the ways in which spontaneous volunteering could be made more effective as well as the ways in which potential volunteers should be prepared for future floods. Here issues associated with training are explored for both volunteers and incident responders.

Finally, issues around the need for a national policy are explored. There was an appetite for further guidance concerning spontaneous volunteering however; a national policy was not desired by the emergency response community. This guidance should answer the 5 key questions raised by emergency managers so they minimise some of the existing uncertainty they have of involving spontaneous volunteers in an emergency response. These questions were:

- Who has responsibility for spontaneous volunteers?
- What are the insurance issues raised by the involvement of spontaneous volunteers?
- What health and safety measures need to be considered before tasking spontaneous volunteers?
- Who is liable if something goes wrong?

The project's findings focus on the role of fourteen strategies to further consider the involvement of spontaneous volunteers (SVs) in emergencies (detailed in Section 7). These findings are presented below along with a potential order of precedence.

Strategies to be implemented in the short term:

- Establish a working group to develop non-statutory guidance on the involvement of SVs in a flood event.
- Partners in a Local Resilience Forum should task an organisation with responsibility for managing and coordinating SVs on its behalf during a flood event.
- Clarify the key issues where emergency managers have uncertainty.

Strategies to be implemented in the medium term:

- The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the principles for recruiting SVs.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the type of relationship that official emergency responders should have with SVs and how this will affect how they work together.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should define what is an acceptable level of risk to expose SVs to, how to measure that risk and what steps can be taken to reduce that risk.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the principles for monitoring the tasks done by SVs.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish a framework under which they will manage and task SVs.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish a communications plan relating to SVs.

- The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish what on-going training is required for SVs to maximise their effective involvement in flood events and what training about involving SVs should be given to EMs and OVs.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should put plans in place for involving SVs in the longer term recovery.
- The organisation that coordinates SVs should build resilience for future flood events by converting SVs into organised volunteering roles.

Strategies to be implemented in the long term:

- Develop national non-statutory guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood event.
- Emergency Managers and Voluntary Organisations should build their awareness of what motivates volunteers generally and spontaneous volunteers in particular.

These findings were synthesised and presented in a more manageable document for emergency planners, available at:

> **Duncan Shaw, Graham Heike, Chris M Smith, Margaret Harris, Judy Scully (2015) Spontaneous volunteers: Strategies for involving citizens in the response and recovery to emergencies. 30th June 2015.**

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this report

BFPG	Bodenham Flood Protection Group
BRC	British Red Cross
CCS	Civil Contingencies Secretariat
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EM	Emergency Manager
FGS	Flood Guidance Statement
FSA	Flood storage area
LRF	Local Resilience Forum
MET	The Meteorological Office
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OV	Organised volunteer
PAT	Portable Appliance Test
PGL	Parents Get Lost - rest centre in Lincolnshire
PRSA	Princess Royal Sports Arena - rest centre in Lincolnshire
PWOG	Prince William of Gloucester Barracks - rest centre in Lincolnshire
SCG	Strategic Coordinating Group
SQEP	Suitably Qualified and Experienced Person
SV	Spontaneous Volunteer
TAFS	Tonbridge Area Flood Support

TCG	Tactical Coordination Group

A glossary of key terms is available in Appendix E.

Section 1. Introduction

The reason this project was commissioned

When a flood happens the effectiveness of the emergency response depends, in part, on the weight and timeliness of that response. An overwhelming response can save lives and protect property. However, the limited availability of official emergency responders and equipment means that an overwhelming response may be difficult to provide as official responders may be unable to help everyone who needs it. In these situations could voluntary resources supplement the official response?

Some volunteers are associated with organised voluntary sector bodies (e.g. Red Cross, Royal National Lifeboat Institute) and so have undertaken suitable training for tasks that they perform. As such these volunteers can be confirmed as suitably qualified and experienced (SQEP) when responding to flood events. However, other volunteers may converge on the day and are likely to be unknown to official emergency responders beforehand. This makes it difficult for official emergency responders to involve them appropriately.

Establishing SQEP volunteers in advance of an incident is also problematic. Some voluntary organisations have emergency response at the heart of their constitution and have potentially strong links with their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) such as the Red Cross. In this sense they are natural partners for LRFs and establishing SQEP is more straightforward. However, most voluntary organisations have no such links. Such organisations may be social, faith or health groups whose purpose is unrelated to emergency response. They may or may not get involved in the response to a flood event but this cannot be determined beforehand. In the case of spontaneous volunteers who are acting as individuals and are not part of any pre-existing voluntary organisation or group, it is almost impossible to establish SQEP prior to an event as, by their very nature, they have yet to emerge.

These issues came into sharp focus during Exercise Watermark (2011) which was the UK's largest ever flood defence exercise. In collaboration with participants from the East Coast Flood Group (ECFG) we surveyed ten Local Resilience Fora (LRFs) to identify what concerning gaps were apparent from their participation in the exercise. Issues around working with spontaneous volunteers was voted by the LRFs as the joint highest priority topic (out of twelve topics), signalling its significance. That work led to the formation of this research project.

Defining spontaneous volunteering

There are four phases of the emergency: preparation, response, recovery and mitigation. The involvement of volunteers from organised voluntary groups, such as the British Red Cross, is established in the preparation phase and such organisations can continue to be available through the remaining three phases. Spontaneous volunteers are established in the response or recovery phase and their involvement may stop after the recovery phase – therefore, spontaneous volunteers offer a temporary, reactive presence. If spontaneous volunteers continue beyond the recovery then they are likely to have established a coordinated and organised structure of leadership enabling them to continue into the other phases i.e. they have become an organised voluntary group. The Bodenham Flood Protection Group, one of the selected case studies in this project, is an example of where an initial spontaneous flood response became formalised into an organised voluntary group.

An initial working definition of spontaneous volunteers is proposed in the literature review. However, as our understanding of the issues associated with spontaneous volunteers grew throughout this project we began to challenge our initial assumptions. Our revised definition of the term states that:

> "Spontaneous volunteers are individuals who are unaffiliated with existing official response organisations yet, without extensive preplanning, are motivated to provide unpaid support to the response and/or recovery to an emergency"

While the involvement of certain voluntary organisations in the official response may be more straightforward, involving spontaneous volunteers is more problematic and controversial. Recognising these concerns Defra, as the lead government department on flooding, sought views from the response community on how spontaneous volunteers could be incorporated into the official response.

It is important to note that there is overlap in the definition of spontaneous volunteers and convergent volunteers. Convergent volunteers are spontaneous in that they are initially unaffiliated with the official response but they offer support to official response organisations i.e. converge with officials at the scene. In contrast spontaneous volunteers may not converge with officials at the scene, instead they may individually or collectively organised themselves to conduct activities anywhere. Thus, spontaneous volunteers can either support the official emergency response (convergent) or potentially work out of sight of official response organisations (freelancers).

Despite 'convergent volunteer' being the term used early on in the project in alignment with the UK's civil protection vocabulary on the topic (e.g. as we initially

used to define the project aims and in the data collection activities) we now replace this with ‘spontaneous volunteer’ (or SV) throughout this report. There are six reasons that were discovered during the project which culminated in our final decision to advocate a change in terminology. First, the results of the data analysis indicated that most interviewees did not distinguish conceptually between convergent and spontaneous volunteers – meaning that their answers to questions were not limited to only convergent volunteers but also covered those volunteers who conducted tasks away from the official response (i.e. spontaneous volunteers). This is discussed more in Section 4. Second, based on the data this report addresses the greater challenge for emergency response organisations which is represented by a broad range of emergent spontaneous volunteers than only those who cooperate under their command. Third, the discussions held with stakeholders signal that ‘spontaneous volunteer’ is a more intuitive and useful term for the UK civil protection community and therefore it seems appropriate to mirror that language. Fourth, we aim for this report to be useful to national and international communities and ‘spontaneous volunteer’ is a better known term which will allow the report to be more easily found through internet search engines. Fifth, spontaneous volunteer is a term that aligns better with the existing literature on the topic. Finally, spontaneous volunteer aligns this report with the international community, for example, the International Standard ISO22319 which is under development based on this report.

How the winter floods of 2014 gave new meaning to the research

The winter of 2013/14 saw the UK affected by a succession of severe winter storms culminating in serious coastal and river flooding (MET Office, 2014). During this period the Environment Agency (EA) issued 155 severe flood warnings and over 7,000 homes were flooded (Defra, 2014). The impact on individuals, businesses and infrastructure was therefore substantial. One of the most enduring images associated with these winter floods was the efforts of local communities and volunteers to address the need in flood affected areas, including protecting properties and helping those who had been flooded to return to their homes. Although commissioned before the flood events of winter 2013/14, the research process coincided with those emergencies. Our data was vastly enriched by responses based on recent real experiences rather than hypothetical situations.

Research priorities this project considered

To provide Defra with support on thinking about spontaneous volunteers this project had the following research priorities: To explore

a. The challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers in the official response to a flood event.
b. The interplay between spontaneous volunteers, official emergency responders and organised voluntary groups.
c. Whether a national policy or guidance document on spontaneous volunteering would be useful.

Why these research priorities are important

Current financial pressures mean official emergency responders continue to look for value-for-money ways of increasing capacity. Questions have been raised as to whether volunteering could provide this however, without insight into the dimensions of spontaneous volunteering during floods; official emergency responders have no consistent basis for involving volunteers. This may lead to:

a. Inconsistent approaches to involving voluntary organisations and volunteers in the official response.
b. Difficulties in coordination across regional boundaries.
c. Different types of official emergency responders (e.g. Environment Agency, Police) developing different internal policies within a region.
d. Variations in the way risks associated with spontaneous volunteers are assessed.
e. A waste of potentially available resources for responding to flood situations and a variety of possible legal challenges.

The winter floods of 2013/14 demonstrated to official emergency responders, organised voluntary groups and members of the public, the important role volunteers can play in the response and recovery to flooding. The findings presented in this final project report therefore draws upon the immediate experiences of officials who were responsible for coordinating spontaneous volunteers in floods as well as the views of the individuals who put themselves forward as volunteers. Tonbridge and Boston, two of the case study locations for this project, had experienced flooding over the winter and provide an example of spontaneous volunteer involvement. The Bodenham case study provides an example of a pro-active community response to a previous flood event.

This report presents evidence to suggest that, whilst a national level policy governing the involvement of spontaneous volunteers is less desired, there is a clear demand from emergency managers and voluntary organisations at the local level for guidance and best practice examples. The report explores the points that should be considered when involving spontaneous volunteers including the challenges of managing, monitoring and supervising spontaneous volunteers in a flood response and recovery; improving the effectiveness of spontaneous volunteers, and improving the relationships between official emergency responders and volunteers.

How this project report addresses the research priorities

This one year project commissioned by Defra sought to collect a range of different data to determine whether a policy regarding the involvement of spontaneous volunteers was necessary and if so what dimensions this policy should consider. To address these issues a project Advisory Board was established in the early stages of the research. The Advisory Board consisted of experts from national and local government and the third sector and served as a sounding board for emergent findings as well as a source of guidance for important decisions. The following paragraphs outline the structure of this project report to address these issues:

Section 2 states the research priorities and questions.

Section 3 outlines the methodology that guided the data collection and analysis. This section of the report outlines how the interviews were designed and presents the analytic technique used to analyse data.

Section 4 presents a review of the existing academic literature concerning spontaneous volunteering. This review maps out how spontaneous volunteering is different from other forms of volunteering that might be found during an emergency such as a flood and scopes out the operational challenges associated with their involvement. The literature review identifies the key theoretical concepts that were used to inform the empirical stage of the research. A policy review can be found in Appendix D.

Section 5 of the report examines three selected case studies: Bodenham, Tonbridge and Boston. This section begins by discussing the selection of each case study including the similarities and differences across each case. What follows is a detailed outline of each case study, including a contextual overview, timeline of events and discussion of the nature of the involvement of spontaneous volunteers during a flood event.

Section 6 discusses the findings from the interviews. In total we conducted 62 interviews with official emergency responders, organised volunteers and spontaneous volunteers. 12 of these interviews were classified as Stage 1 interviews and these were instrumental in helping to scope the breadth of issues the project would need to consider. The remaining 50 interviews were conducted at Stage 2 and were designed to identify the issues around spontaneous volunteering that need to be addressed. Of these Stage 2 interviews, 21 were conducted with emergency managers and officials, 16 were conducted with members of voluntary organisations, and 13 were conducted with spontaneous volunteers. The structure of this section is designed to identify the key learning points from the Stage 2 interviews across a

variety of important themes, showing how these were each understood by emergency managers, members of voluntary organisations and spontaneous volunteers.

Section 7 brings together the key findings from across the project. In particular this section looks at how our initial expectations gleaned from the literature and policy reviews and Stage 1 interviews began to change as we collected data from Stage 2. We therefore present each theme, discuss what we expected to find on the basis of the literature and policy reviews and Stage 1 interviews and then consider the learning from the Stage 2 interview data and case studies. Finally, drawn from the analysis of the interview data and case studies we provide a series of evidence based strategies for progressing the issue of spontaneous volunteering.

Section 8 provides a discussion of the ways in which LRFs could enhance their working practices with spontaneous volunteers. It explores issues such as how emergency planners could consider involving spontaneous volunteers in flood response, the implications of including spontaneous volunteers in emergency plans and the need for a strategy to guide this process. It also examines how LRFs might consider the use of volunteer coordinators to manage spontaneous volunteers and the importance of developing an integrated, multi-agency response to ensure that Category 1 responders understand the LRF's policy for dealing with spontaneous volunteers. The final part of Section 8 considers what voluntary organisations might be available to assist emergency planners and LRFs with developing plans for involving spontaneous volunteers.

Section 2. Our research priorities

As explained in Section 1 above, the research had three research priorities (a, b, c). Each of these priorities is addressed by a number of research questions (i-ix) which targeted the data collection and analysis. The analysis identified 50 themes which align to one of the nine research questions. Using the themes to answer the nine questions, the project has identified 14 strategies.

The three research priorities and nine research questions are below:

a. The challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers in the operational response to a flood event. Here the research questions are:
    i) What are the motivations and aims driving individuals to spontaneously volunteer during a flood event?
    ii) How have spontaneous volunteers been involved in flood response and recovery?
    iii) What are the issues in managing spontaneous volunteers?
    iv) How do organisations monitor and supervise spontaneous volunteers?
b. The interplay between spontaneous volunteers, official emergency responders and organised voluntary groups. Here the research questions are:
    v) How do spontaneous volunteers work alongside different elements of the official response and recovery?
    vi) How could spontaneous volunteering be made more effective?
    vii) How should potential volunteers be prepared for future flood events?
c. Whether a national policy or guidance document on spontaneous volunteering would be useful. Here the research questions are:
    viii) Is a national policy on spontaneous volunteering desired by the emergency response community?
    ix) On what questions could emergency responders benefit from having additional information regarding spontaneous volunteers?

Section 3. Methodology

Key points:

- This section outlines the research methodology that was designed to collect data and analyse it to discover relevant findings.
- The findings are informed by 62 telephone and face-to-face interviews conducted with emergency managers, representatives of voluntary organisations and spontaneous volunteers.
- Three site visits to case study locations focused on spontaneous volunteering in flood response, recovery and mitigation: Bodenham, Tonbridge, Boston.
- Three interview schedules were developed: the first scoped the operational challenges; the remaining two schedules were designed for spontaneous volunteers and officials/organised volunteers who were involved in flood response and recovery.
- Data analysis involved analysing open-ended questions using thematic analysis.
- To ensure respondent confidentiality the results are presented by grouping i.e. spontaneous volunteers, emergency managers, and organised volunteers.

Work undertaken

This section discusses how data was collected and analysed to achieve the research priorities for the project. In all, work on the data collection falls under the four main activities in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Activities conducted in this project

Activity	Task	Start date	End date
Search published works for insights	Literature review and policy review	31st October 2013	31st October 2014
Stage 1 interviews	12 interviews with strategic managers	8th January 2014	15th April 2014
Stage 2 interviews	50 interviews with emergency managers, organised volunteers and spontaneous volunteers	5th May 2014	5th September 2014
Case studies	Visit to Tonbridge Visit to Bodenham Visit to Boston	2nd June 2014 27th June 2014 30th June 2014	

The search of published works helped to build a conceptual model of spontaneous volunteering (presented in Figures 4.2 and 4.3) on which the interview questions were designed. Stage 1 interviews defined the scope of issues by discussing spontaneous volunteering with strategic managers in emergency management, government and voluntary organisations. Based on these first two activities, Stage 2 interviews were designed to understand spontaneous volunteering from the perspectives of spontaneous volunteers, officials and organised volunteers. The three case studies provide a rich account of three specific types of flood event during which spontaneous volunteers played a prominent role.

This section on the research methodology is split into three main sections:

a) **Designing the interviews**: This section shows how results were informed by data collection techniques, including:
   - Designing the interview questions.
   - Methods of collecting data.
   - Finding interviewees.
   - Ethical issues with collecting data.
b) **Collecting the data**: This section reports on the breadth, depth and success of the data collection, including:
   - Literature review and policy review.
   - Stage 1 interviews.
   - Stage 2 interviews.
   - Case studies.
c) **Analysing the data**: This section describes the data analysis, including:
   - Analysing the open-ended questions.
   - Sensible slicing of the results.

Designing the interviews

Designing the interview questions

The Stage 1 interview questions were designed using insights from: the literature review; the policy review; discussions with project partners. For Stage 1, we designed a semi-structured interview to enable a consistent set of questions to be asked whilst giving interviewees the option to provide additional insights. The aim of the Stage 1 interview questions was to identify topics about which we needed to ask at Stage 2. The Stage 1 interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

Stage 2 interview questions were designed using insights from: the literature review; the policy review; discussions with the Advisory Board and partners; transferable knowledge from other projects; and Stage 1 findings. For Stage 2, we designed a structured interview (a tight series of questions) in order to ensure that we had consistency across the interviews in the topics covered. The same questions were asked to all Stage 2 interviewees, including those in the three case studies. The aim of the Stage 2 interview questions was to uncover a broad range of views on important issues regarding spontaneous volunteering. One set of interview questions was designed to be asked to officials/organised volunteers (see Appendix B) while a second set was designed for spontaneous volunteers (see Appendix C).

The interview questions were designed to be administered by an interviewer either face-to-face or by telephone – rather than by self-completion. This approach allowed interviewers to probe for more details as appropriate and explain questions which were not fully understood by interviewees (O'Leary & Miller, 2007).

Methods of collecting data

Interview data was collected via telephone interviews as well as face-to-face interviews at the three case study visits.

Telephone Interviews: Telephone interviews were conducted with respondents during Stages 1 and 2. While this makes communication more difficult due to the lack of visual or non-verbal cues (Aquilino, 1994; Groves, 1990), there are advantages of telephone interviews, for example:

- Respondents may be more relaxed and candid, and data collected using this method has been described as rich and of a high quality (Chapple, 1999; Kavanaugh & Ayres, 1998; Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004; Sweet, 2002).
- Are more cost effective (Chapple, 1999), increase anonymity (Sweet, 2002) and privacy (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004), and allow notes to be taken without disturbing the respondent (Smith, 2005).
- Are less intrusive and safer than going to an interviewee's house or place of

work.
- Are fewer interviewer effects when compared to face-to-face interviews (Marcus & Crane, 1986).

Interview questions were designed so that the interview lasted no more than 30 minutes, to minimise disruption to interviewees.

Case study interviews: Conducting case studies allowed us to build a comprehensive picture of what spontaneous volunteering meant during and after three real-life floods. They provided concentration on three locations which involved searching for documents about the flood as well as conducting a series of interviews with spontaneous volunteers (and official emergency responders and organised volunteers) thereby building a richer appreciation of the issues.

Potential case studies were identified through: the literature review; the policy review; Stage 1 interviews. Information on all potential case studies was presented to the Advisory Board. This led to the selection of three case studies, each having experienced a different type of flooding (see Section 5):

- Bodenham Flood Protection Group: Flash flooding, 2007.
- Tonbridge, Kent: River flooding, 2014.
- Boston, Lincolnshire: Coastal flooding, tidal surge, 2014.

Interviews using the Stage 2 interview questions were conducted face-to-face at the location or via telephone were necessary. Information on the case studies can be found in Section 5.

Finding interviewees

A snowball method of recruiting participants was used (Vogt, 1999; Heckathorn, 2007). This involved:

- For Stage 1 interviews, establishing contact with key individuals from across a range of organisations involved in volunteer management. Asking them to identify other officials, voluntary organisations and spontaneous volunteers who we should talk to.
- Asking Stage 2 interviewees to recommend other contacts who might have an interesting perspective and could be interviewed.
- Visiting each of the three case study locations and conducting interviews and collecting contact details of potential interviewees.

The strengths of the snowball method include:

- It is useful where the population is relatively tight-knit as it relies on established networks (Sudman & Kalton 1986).
- It is useful for newcomers to penetrate these networks (Watters & Biernacki 1989; Spreen, 1992; Brown et al. 1999).

- It accesses participants who may not otherwise be accessible.
- It gains access to people who will participate because a friend is asking them to.
- It avoids cold calling.
- It avoids the need for a comprehensive list of the population members which would be required if seeking a statistically representative sample.

The weaknesses in the snowball method include:

- The interviewed population are not necessarily statistically representative of the wider population, and so drawing wider conclusions is problematic (Kalton 1983). We addressed this by having a diversity of interviewees from across the UK with a range of flooding experience.
- It cannot typically reach individuals who are not connected to any network. In this project these people are less important as spontaneous volunteers will, by definition, have been part of some social network of spontaneous volunteering.
- It oversamples those who have more inter-relationships with networks i.e. central community figures (Griffiths et al. 1993). We addressed this by involving a wide spread of UK organisations which helped us to access interviewees who are not connected to other interviewees.
- It is time and labour intensive (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997).

Ethical issues with collecting data

Ethical issues were prioritised in this research. For example:

- We did not door-step anyone or cold call interviewees.
- The research was designed to avoid panicking respondents about the issue.
- A protocol was designed for respondent recruitment.
- We did not put people under pressure to participate and they were free to stop the interview at any time.
- We did not request too long a time-period for the interview – 30 minutes.
- All interviews were audio recorded (with the permission of the participants). These audio recordings will be held confidentially in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act.
- Any personal details of the interviewees will be held confidentially.

On recording interviews, all interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the interviewee. Also, handwritten notes were taken during each interview. Following each interview, the audio recording was replayed and additional notes and transcriptions taken. Forty of the richest interviews were transcribed verbatim to support the analysis.

Collecting the data

Below we discuss the practical issues of collecting data from our four sources.

Literature review and policy review

A review of the academic, practitioner and policy-based literature concerning spontaneous volunteering was conducted. These findings were used to build a conceptual model of volunteering that identified the key themes to consider when thinking about spontaneous volunteering.

From the academic and practitioner-based literatures we identified a range of theoretical and empirical studies on spontaneous and convergent volunteers. Also, we found other forms of emergent behaviour as well as research that examined volunteers who held roles within formal, organised volunteer groups involved in emergency response. Articles were identified through general searches of scholarly databases as well as targeted searches of key specialist academic and practitioner journals that had considered the role of volunteers during emergency response. Here we included literature that considered both natural (e.g. floods, hurricanes) and human-made (e.g. 9/11) disasters. The aim of the literature review was therefore to consider the involvement of volunteers across a range of different emergency events from the perspective of relevant academic disciplines. Core themes from the literature review can be found in Section 4.

From the policy review we identified guidance documents and frameworks from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States - both governmental and non-governmental sources. These documents were identified through online searches and consultation with key academics and practitioners and ranged from checklist-style guidance to volunteer management resource kits that considered the need to prepare for volunteers, the infrastructure required to support their involvement in the response and on-going recovery, and advice on how to retain volunteers. The policy review can be found in Appendix D.

These themes informed the questions designed for the Stage 1 interviews. We continued to work on these reviews well after the data analysis to enable us to re-interpret our interview findings with knowledge of the literature.

Stage 1 interviews

12 interviews were conducted at Stage 1 aiming to scope the operational challenge of spontaneous volunteers. These interviews were with individuals from: voluntary organisations; central and local government; Category 1 responders; independent consultancies; and academic institutions. These interview schedules were informed

by the academic and practitioner literature and policy review and were designed to uncover the breadth of issues associated with spontaneous volunteering as well as to scope the operational challenges arising from their involvement in flood response and recovery. These interviews enabled us to build a comprehensive model of spontaneous volunteering in flood situations as well as to identify Stage 2 participants. An interim report outlining the challenges of involving spontaneous volunteers was presented at the first Advisory Board meeting and feedback was sought. Stage 1 interview questions are detailed in Appendix A.

Stage 2 interviews

50 interviews were conducted at Stage 2. This included 13 interviews with spontaneous volunteers, 16 interviews with representative of and volunteers from voluntary groups and 21 interviews with official emergency responders. These interviews were, in addition to the academic and practitioner literature, further informed by the insights gained from the Stage 1 interviews and were designed to identify the issues that officials may need to address when considering a stance on spontaneous volunteering. These interviews explored issues such as the allocation of tasks; supervision and volunteer coordination; the ways in which volunteers and officials worked together; how working practices between volunteers and officials could be improved, how volunteers could be better prepared for future flooding as well as whether or not a spontaneous volunteer policy would be desirable for officials. These issues were explored from a range of perspectives to understand how they may affect the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in an emergency response and recovery. An interim report was presented at the second Advisory Board meeting. The two sets of Stage 2 interview questions are detailed in Appendices B and C.

Case studies

Visits were made to each of the case study locations by two researchers. The time spent on location enabled us to understand what happened, meet key people and conduct data collection activities with spontaneous volunteers and others. Reflective assessments of the site visits were discussed between project members to share lessons learned and to report our own reflections on the visit. These visits provided a useful context and helped the project team to explore some of the physical, social and local political issues.

The case studies (Section 5) explore the contextual factors related to the spontaneous volunteering in each of the three areas, providing an in-depth analysis of the involvement of spontaneous volunteers to three different flood event types: river flooding, coastal flooding and flash flooding. Multiple data sources were

consulted to build up a picture of spontaneous volunteering during these floods. This included interview data, information from social media and official briefings and reports. The use of multiple case studies covering different flood types therefore enabled a detailed examination of the common and differentiating factors (Bryman, 2004) influencing the involvement of spontaneous volunteers.

In the three case studies volunteers in Tonbridge and Boston were spontaneous, coming together as a result of the 2013/2014 winter floods. Volunteers in Bodenham were organised, they initially volunteered in response to 2007 floods. These volunteers have now formed the Bodenham Flood Protection Group which meets to carry out the physical work of clearing watercourses in alternate weeks over the summer and hold monthly meetings throughout the year to discuss flooding issues. In addition to providing a timeline of events these studies also explore the nature of volunteer involvement during the floods including the initial activities spontaneous volunteers were involved with. Each of the three case studies concludes with some key learning points regarding spontaneous volunteering during flood events.

Of the Stage 2 interviews, 24 interviewees belonged to one of the three case study locations, 16 of these were volunteers and 8 were official emergency responders. The interview findings from these three case studies were used to inform the findings in Section 5 and also helped us to bring to life the experiences of volunteers in Section 6. Both these sections also feed into Section 7 where we discuss the overall findings of the project.

Analysing the data

62 people participated in an interview resulting in 29 hours and 10 minutes of recorded interviews to be analysed. Below we detail how this data was analysed.

Analysing open-ended questions:

Most interview questions in Stages 1 and 2 were open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are where the interviewee provides a narrative response by talking freely and sharing their (potentially unstructured) views (see Figure 3.2).

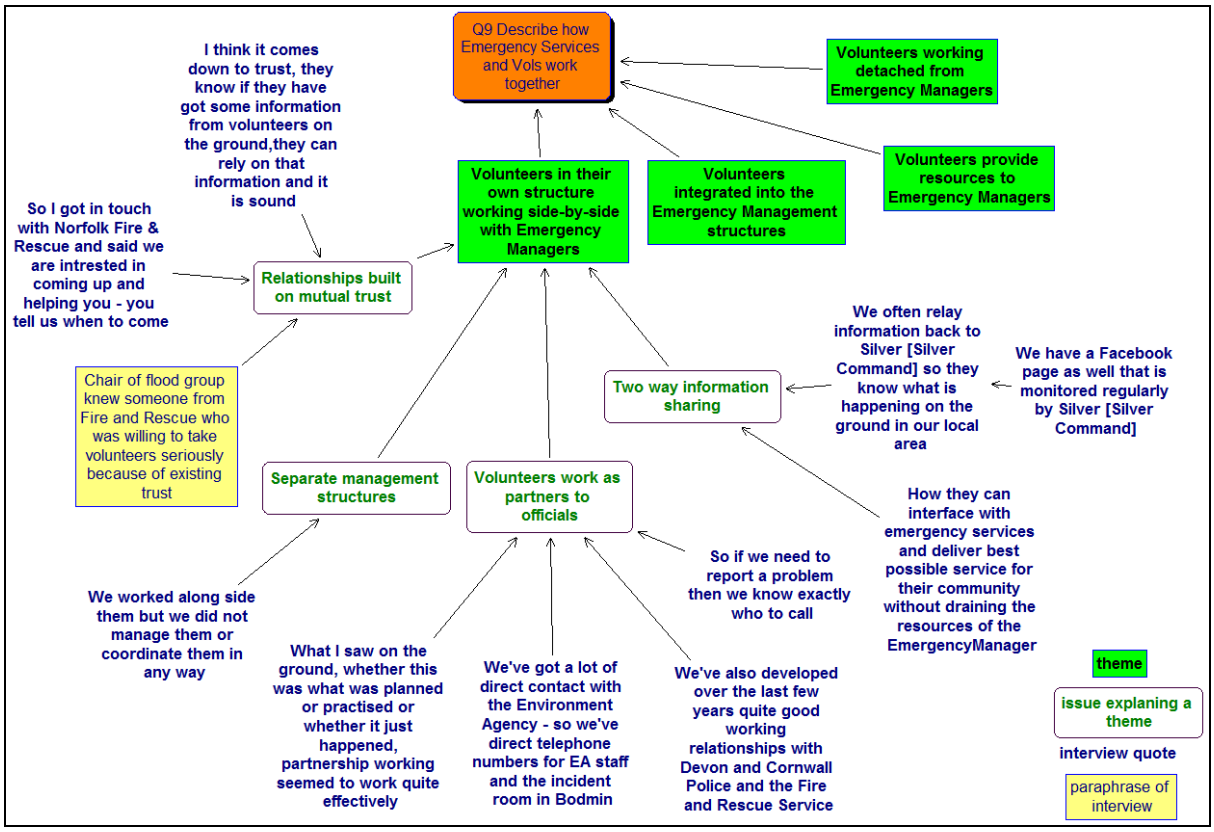
Figure 3.2: Examples of open-ended questions from spontaneous volunteer interview schedule

1. How were you affected during the floods?
3. What voluntary tasks did you do?
8. What should be done differently to make spontaneous volunteering more effective during a flood?
10. How should we prepare volunteers for future floods?

To analyse responses to such questions it is important to structure the data to discover its emergent properties. In this project we identified this structure as follows:

a. The data were analysed using the technique of cognitive mapping (similar to mind mapping) (Shaw, 2006). This technique helps an analyst to structure a discussion of the issues and ensure consistency in the way that the data is understood. The maps were built using the audio recordings, handwritten notes and transcripts as available. Each piece of data was considered in terms of how it contributed to the overall picture of the responses.
b. The first stage, open coding, involved a researcher going through each interview (or other piece of data) in order to generate the overall themes. At this stage, anything that appeared relevant to the project (e.g. concepts such as insurance, risk assessment, safety) was coded into categories. For example, any data that related to how volunteers worked in a separate organisational structure alongside officials was coded "Volunteers working in their own structure side-by-side with emergency managers"**.**
c. The second stage, axial coding, is where the higher-level categories created tend to group together several of the categories found by the open coding. This enables relationships between the categories in the data to emerge. This stage was carried out through analysing the categories found in the previous stage and establishing common themes, under logically named higher-level categories. For example, the open code in the example above was grouped under a high-level category called '*officials working with volunteers*'.
d. In the final stage, selective coding, categories were refined until clear relationships between them were identified, leading to the development of a theory about the data. This stage was carried out in this project by merging similar/overlapping categories together and removing any duplication. This led to the production of a refined linked structure of categories, which enabled the researcher to identify the important themes within the data.
e. The findings from the qualitative analysis were themes that form the central pillars of this report (see Figure 3.3). For a more detailed description of these themes please see Section 6 titled "Findings from the interviews". Under each theme is a density of codes and information from the range data that explain the variation in perspectives.
f. Using this method to analyse the data from the two sources (face-to-face and telephone interviews) we recorded our emerging results in substantial maps (akin to Figure 3.3). These maps are the central findings log for the project as they represent a comprehensive picture of interviewees' perspectives.

Figure 3.3: A map to illustrate themes found through the data analysis



Presentation of interview data:

The findings of the analysis are presented as a complete set and do not differentiate who has said. Only when it is necessary to provide clarification do we identify whether the issue is from spontaneous volunteers, organised volunteers, or officials/emergency responders. There are many reasons for this choice, such as:

- We talked to a lot of people and many of the issues are shared across different types of interviewees.
- Some of the issues arose from the literature review, not from interviewees.
- The outcome of this project is findings for government and the decision on policy needs to balance the views of all constituents.
- We treat all views equally and do not prioritise those from one group differently to other groups.
- We want to focus on the themes, not on the people who identified the themes.

We now present the findings from the first activity, reviewing the literature.

Section 4. Findings from the literature

Key points:

- There is little consistency in the use of terminology. Various academic/practitioner publications and policy/guidance documents use terms including spontaneous volunteer, convergent volunteer and unaffiliated volunteer.
- Emergency response officials should prepare in advance for the presence of volunteers. Their involvement needs to be carefully managed to optimise their involvement as a resource.
- Individuals may volunteer for a variety of different motives/purposes. This may be to support the official response or to provide additional services not offered.
- Spontaneous volunteer groups may also form to satisfy unmet need.
- The risks associated with emergency volunteering need to be recognised. Untrained volunteers may be more at risk than individuals who have previously been trained within voluntary organisations.
- Emergency volunteering can help to build future community resilience. Volunteers gain experience of self-organisation, forming new long-term structures that may help communities to respond more quickly to future events.

Introduction

Natural disasters, such as flood emergencies, put significant strain on the capacity of the official response to meet the needs of those affected. Despite the disruption to social, political, economic and ecological systems caused by these situations of collective stress (Drabek & McEntire, 2003), emergent behaviour such as the convergence of volunteers to emergency events is a common and enduring aspect of a community's response (Fritz & Mathewson, 1957). The convergence of volunteers and the emergence of spontaneous helping behaviour can enhance community resilience through providing needed skills and resources. However, the careful management of these resources is required if they are to help (Tierney, 2003; Orloff, 2011) and not overwhelm official responders (Quarantelli, 1989; Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2001a). Volunteers who are left unmanaged and unsupervised may also hinder the response and recovery activities of official emergency responders (Sharon, 2004). Thus, volunteering can give communities a route to prepare, endure and recover from emergencies (Rotolo & Berg, 2010). However, volunteering can

also challenge responders as spontaneous volunteering can be both a help and a hindrance (Barskey et al. 2007; Orloff, 2011).

This review explores the academic literature and policy on spontaneous volunteering and scopes out the operational challenges of their involvement in the response and recovery to emergencies. In doing so, the review identifies the key theoretical concepts that informed the empirical stages of this research.

Defining volunteering and Spontaneous Volunteering

Volunteering is any form of **freely chosen unpaid work** that is conducted **without obligation or coercion** for the **benefit of others** (Smith, 1975; Ellis Paine, Hill & Rochester, 2010). Volunteering may vary in terms of its formality (informal -> formal), pre-planning (spontaneous -> planned) and longevity or intensity (one-off -> regular) (Cnaan et al. 1996; Penner, 2002; Snyder & Omoto, 2008).

Spontaneous and convergent volunteering are forms of emergent behaviour defined by Britton (1991: 405) as when individuals voluntarily "come together for the first time to pursue a specific task or series of related tasks prompted by changing, often unexpected situations requiring immediate action." Britton's (1991) notion of emergent behaviour is similar to what Zurcher (1968) defines as the ephemeral role of emergency response, a term used to describe the transitory behaviours and expectations that develop as part of ad hoc emergency structures.

There are different forms of volunteering, as presented in Figure 4.1. Adapting Britton's (1991) voluntary action typologies we identify the four most commonly associated with spontaneous volunteering:

- Bystander, a person who is first at the scene who provides immediate relief e.g. the person who gives first aid in the street to someone taken ill.
- Convergent volunteer, a specific term to describe a person who converges to where officials need help and accepts direction on how to support the official response.
- Spontaneous volunteer, a more general term to describe a person who is stimulated by the emergency but who wants to freelance their volunteering or provide support to an official response organisation.
- Emergent volunteer groups, a collection of people who establish themselves to provide support to a community as freelancers.

Spontaneous volunteering is distinct from other forms of associational behaviour that might be present during the response and recovery to an emergency. To explain a little more, the activities of those who are first to attend an emergency and offer immediate-term relief are often termed as *bystander interventions.* The demands of

such situations (e.g. the obligation to help immediately) mean that this type of behaviour is not considered as volunteering (Penner, 2002). Bystanders can become volunteers if they make the conscious decision to continue helping out over a period of time. Various factors influence an individual's potential to be a bystander such as: the number of other known individuals in close proximity, perceived likelihood of future face-to-face interactions with these individuals, social responsibility, social identity, and proximity to the emergency (Darley & Latane, 1968; Lavine & Thompson, 2004; Avedeyva et al. 2006).

Emergent volunteer groups may be set up to satisfy unmet needs in a local area and are unaffiliated to, and independent of, the official response (some of these are reviewed in the case studies in Section 5). Well-established voluntary groups may also be present such as groups with either an emergency focus (e.g. the Red Cross, RNLI) or a more general constitution (e.g. a charity shop donating goods). These will include associational and permanent emergency volunteers (e.g. members of emergency response organisations such as the RNLI) (Britton, 1991).

Figure 4.1 summarises the different emergency volunteer types and considers the organisational context within which such activity occurs, the frequency of risk exposure and individual cost (Britton, 1991). What is common across all the types of emergency volunteer in Figure 4.1 is that the people who volunteer may themselves be victims of the emergency. Despite this, there is little evidence of panic or exploitative behaviour among these people (Quarantelli, 1986). Instead, as Drabek & McEntire (2003) suggest, individuals often respond in a pro-social manner by developing innovative solutions to the problems posed by emergencies. Such issues will be considered later in Section 4 as next we focus on spontaneous and convergent volunteering.

Figure 4.1: Emergency volunteer types

Type	**Description**	**Organisational context**	**Frequency of risk exposure**	**Individual cost**
Bystander interventions	Reflexive behaviour, strong situational demands	Non-organisational, unaffiliated response (non-regular, new structures)	Unknown	Unknown
Convergent volunteer	Self-directed behaviour stimulated by event, individual converges to support official responders	Converge to official response and become affiliated (non-regular tasks, old structures)	Typically low but may vary depending on SQEP status	Typically low, tasks designed based on level of competence
Spontaneous volunteer	Self-directed behaviour stimulated by event, possibly freelancing behaviour or convergent to support official responders	Non-organisational unaffiliated Self-directed, behaviour (non-regular tasks, new structures)	Unknown	Unknown
Emergent groups	Self-directed. Individuals grouping together to satisfy unmet needs	Emergent organisational group, affiliated (non-regular tasks new structures)	Unknown	Unknown
Associational volunteer	Traditional voluntary organisational involvement in a non-emergency specific context	Organisational, membership based, therefore affiliated (regular tasks, old structure).	Low	Low
Permanent volunteer	Traditional voluntary involvement but in an emergency specific context	Organisational, membership, affiliated Hybrid organisations, command and control (regular tasks old structures).	Potentially high	High commitment, demands on time for training and acceptance of risk to physical/ psychological health

Spontaneous and convergent volunteering

Convergent, spontaneous and non-affiliated volunteering are all terms that appear to be used interchangeably in various academic and practitioner publications to refer to a similar form of behaviour. Cone et al. (2003: 457) define **convergent volunteering** as, “the arrival of unexpected or uninvited personnel wishing to render aid”. They also describe how such individuals may engage in freelancing therefore operating without the knowledge or direction of official responders.

Fernandez et al. (2006: 58) define **spontaneous volunteers** as, “those who are not with an assigned resource and have not been specifically recruited”. Drabek & McEntire (2003) define spontaneous volunteers as unaffiliated individuals who may or may not have relevant training, skills or experience. Recognising these concerns, in 2010 the Australian Government published their Spontaneous Volunteer Management Resource Kit which distinguishes between (1) *potential* spontaneous volunteers who have yet to be screened and officially tasked into the official response and recovery and (2) *spontaneous volunteers* including individuals who have presented to the authorities, have been screened and subsequently deployed within the official response. The British Red Cross (2010) define convergent volunteers as those who offer to help on a voluntary basis in connection with a specific emergency and are unaffiliated with the organisation.

The defining feature of convergent or spontaneous volunteering centres on the fact that such individuals are previously unaffiliated with the official response and hence have unknown levels of skills, training or relevant experience.

Although the definitions of convergent and spontaneous volunteering are similar, spontaneous volunteering refers to any unpaid activity whether that is associated with (or independent of) the official response. As this project is concerned with any association of emergent volunteers to the response, the term spontaneous volunteer is more appropriate for this DEFRA project. This is because a spontaneous volunteer could be an individual who makes an active choice to affiliate themselves with the official response by self-presenting to an official and would therefore fall under the jurisdiction of the official response if tasked. Or they could be an individual who does not self-present to an official, but the official needs to make provision for the volunteer’s activity because it brings additional risk to the emergency that should be managed. For this project an initial **working definition of convergent volunteering** was developed from the literature:

> “Convergent volunteers are individuals who are unaffiliated with existing official response organisations yet, without extensive preplanning, are motivated to work under their direction and willingly provide unpaid support to the on-going response and/or recovery to an emergency”

However, early on in the fieldwork it became apparent that the concept of convergent volunteering was wider than we had initially anticipated. We became aware of a vast amount of convergent volunteering that occurred outside the control of emergency managers i.e. spontaneous volunteering (reported in Sections 5 and 6). Retaining the definition above would have excluded those individuals from the scope of the study. Reflecting upon these early findings and the six reasons given in Section 1 for changing to 'spontaneous', **a revised definition was developed using the term 'spontaneous'**:

> "Spontaneous volunteers are individuals who are unaffiliated with existing official response organisations yet, without extensive preplanning, are motivated to provide unpaid support to the response and/or recovery to an emergency"

Additional characteristics

As outlined in Figure 4.1 there may be additional characteristics that can be used to refine our understanding of spontaneous volunteering during an emergency. Below we discuss: organisational context, risk and cost to the volunteer, structure and tasks.

Organisational context

The management of emergencies within the UK operates under a command and control response framework (Manyena et al. 2013). According to Vigoda (2002), these are epitomised by standard operating procedures, centralised authority, a reluctance to trust information from outside of official channels, and a reluctance to share and partner in activities (especially with unknowns). The ad hoc emergence of volunteers is often seen as counterproductive and citizens can be viewed as unqualified, passive non-participants (Drabek & McEntire, 2003).

In emergencies, the uncertainty and unfamiliar activities can drive responder organisations to take protective behaviours meaning they defend their own autonomy and so resist volunteers who would cause them additional effort to involve productively (Barsky et al. 2007). This has led several authors to highlight the need for greater coordination during emergencies (Quarantelli, 1989; 1997; Orloff, 2011; Waugh & Streib, 2006; Nolte & Boenigk, 2013). Better coordination can be achieved through needs awareness, the development of a common vision and shared goals, organisational structures capable of meeting these goals including the ability to adapt or create specialist resources to do so, and equity in decision-making (Tierney, 2003; Nolte & Boenigk, 2013). Diverse and responsive collaborations capable of

incorporating new actors and agencies were integral to the response on 9/11 (Tierney, 2003). Around this topic Waugh & Streib (2003: 138) write,

> "The response to natural disasters is, in large measure, an ad hoc affair involving organized nongovernmental actors, governmental actors, and emergent groups that often become well organized and long lived. No one can ever have complete control; it is not possible to fully command attention or to compel compliance".

However, inclusivity represents an organisational challenge (Orloff, 2011). In addition to the command and control principles that underpin emergency response certain strong organisational contexts (Snyder & Ickes, 1985), such as the police and fire services, may be unable to meet the motivational needs of individuals who wish to volunteer. Consequently, such organisations are less accustomed to the challenges of involving spontaneous volunteers.

Risk and cost to the volunteer

Britton (1991) identifies that emergency volunteerism presents additional risks to volunteers that are not often found in other forms of associational behaviour. Tierney (2003) comments that the successful involvement of resources during the response to 9/11 was partly due to the use of a credentialing system that provided official emergency responders with the ability to control volunteer movement and involvement. As well as risks to physical safety, emergency volunteerism has the potential to expose volunteers to distressing events (Britton, 1991; Orloff, 2011). Furthermore, the psychological effects of emergency volunteering may persist longer in untrained volunteers compared to professional emergency volunteers (Dyregrov et al. 1996). Sharon (2004) reports that without proper training volunteers can experience burnout, placing additional demands on the official response.

However, emergency volunteering can also result in life-changing transformations such as the development of new careers or the provision of regular assistance within the affected area (Clucky, 2010). Emergency volunteering can have a long-term positive impact on the individual, changing the ways in which they identify with other members of the community and even by influencing non- emergency related volunteer activities (Steffan & Fothergill, 2009). Consequently, because of the risks associated with flooded areas and emergencies more generally, many of the policy documents and frameworks identified suggest that volunteer involvement should be restricted to low-risk and low-responsibility roles (see Appendix D where existing policies are reviewed).

More specialist roles may be assigned to those who can provide evidence of their qualifications however there may be only limited opportunity to fully screen, train and

brief volunteers. Thus, it may be impossible to verify the capabilities of volunteers during the response (Wenger, 1991; Drabek & McEntire, 2003; Barsky et al. 2007). Without the ability to verify credentials, spontaneous volunteers may be seen as a liability both to themselves and others making officials less willing to involve them (Barsky et al. 2007). The policy review (in Appendix D) identified several ways in which these challenges may be addressed. For instance organisations may wish to identify skills gaps and formulate potential volunteer roles prior to an emergency via a volunteer needs assessment (CDEM, 2013) as well as recognising that not all volunteers can be accepted. The development of a volunteer 'Go Kit' prior to an emergency could provide officials with the resources required to establish a reception centre for volunteers and include key documentation such as: volunteer instructions; registration forms; release of liability forms; interview forms; safety orientation checklists including dynamic risk assessments; role descriptions, sign-in/out sheets as well as a system of credentialing spontaneous volunteers.

Structure and tasks

The last distinction between different forms of emergent behaviour can be made between the nature of the tasks performed (regular/non-regular) and the organisational structure (new/old) within which it is performed. Dynes (1970) uses these characteristics to distinguish between four types of emergent groups: established (regular tasks/old structures); expanding (regular tasks/new structures); extending (non-regular tasks/old structures) and emergent (non-regular tasks/new structures).

Figure 4.2 Characteristics of emergent groups (Dynes, 1970)

	Old structures	New structures
Regular tasks	Established	Expanding
Non-regular tasks	Extending	Emergent

As any spontaneous volunteer structure would not exist before an emergency such groups will be either 'expanding' or 'emergent', depending on the nature of the tasks performed. Volunteers may therefore bring relevant skills to the emergency response which may potentially free-up official responders to concentrate on other activities (Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2001b). Creativity is an important aspect of emergency response and volunteers can provide service and skills that go beyond those offered by the official response. For instance Kendra & Wachtendorf comment (2002:11),

> "Some of the volunteers exhibited skills that were quite entrepreneurial, not in a business or financial sense, but there was a kind of volunteer "market" in place; many people were competing for an opportunity to help, not in a direct sense but certainly implicitly. The imagination and resourcefulness of such well-meaning volunteers was sometimes an irritant to emergency managers, to say nothing of the creativity shown by exploiters and the disaster opportunists who also converged."

The motivation to volunteer

The motivation to volunteer typically extends beyond altruism (Smith, 1981) to encompass simultaneously both altruistic and egoistic motives (Shye, 2010). Lowe and Fothergill (2003) found that spontaneous volunteering in response to the events of 9/11 was influenced by both self and other-orientated motives encompassed by the need to transform the negative effects of the emergency into something positive. The functional perspective of volunteer motivation recognises that acts of volunteerism that seem similar on the surface are likely to reflect different underlying motivational processes (Clary et al. 1998). As such, the volunteer functions inventory developed by Clary et al. (1998: 157) uncovers six potential motivations served by volunteering:

- Values: Volunteering is an expression of important human values;
- Understanding: Volunteering serves as a means through which individuals learn more about the world, exercising unused skills;
- Social: Volunteering helps to strengthen social relationships;
- Career: Volunteering serves as a means of gaining career-related experience;
- Protective: Volunteering helps to reduce negative feelings such as guilt;
- Enhancement: Volunteering enables psychological growth and development.

The distinctiveness of these six motivations has been confirmed in various forms of volunteering including those who provide emergency relief (Clary et al. 1992; Clary et al. 1998). Individuals who reported that their motives were matched by their activities whilst volunteering were more likely to feel satisfied and want to continue in their roles (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Davis et al. 2003; Stukas et al. 2009) however, other research has shown the idiosyncrasy with which volunteers select tasks based on the motives they fulfil (Houle et al. 2005). Further research has also shown that the motives that prompt individuals to start volunteering are unlikely to be those that drive them to continue. Altruistic motives often give way to more self-orientated ones as volunteers begin to place more emphasis on the rewards provided by actions (Chacón et al. 2007).

Dynes & Quarantelli (1980) write that despite the vacuum of authority left in the wake of large-scale emergencies individuals often take on greater citizenship roles,

engaging in collective behaviour based upon a consensus over what needs to be done (O'Brien & Mileti, 1992). Individuals quickly perceive the immediate individual and community level needs and act accordingly to fulfil them, demonstrating the positive ways in which communities can respond to such events (Norris et al. 2007). The decision to volunteer may be on the basis that the official response is viewed as being poorly coordinated, or that the actions of the official response are not sufficient to meet a range of needs created by the emergency (Stallings & Quarantelli, 1985). In this sense spontaneous volunteering is partly driven by the identification of unmet needs and the desire to satisfy them.

Emergencies create opportunities in which individuals can view non-traditional emergent behaviour as timely, duty bound and appropriate (Aguirre et al. 1998). Such activity may be driven by a sense of community embededness suggesting that individuals make rational and strategic judgements about their level of involvement (Lee & Brudney, 2009). Emergency volunteering may equally be a means through which individuals can satisfy their curiosity surrounding such events or as a means to exert power over others (Wolensky, 1979). Fritz & Matthewson (1957) developed five typologies of informal, unofficial convergence during an emergency to illustrate the range of potential motivations that may be present:

- The *returnees* are those who have survived the initial incident and come back to offer assistance. These individuals are motivated by the goal of helping people, assessing damage and the desire to return to familiar surroundings to re-establish previous social relationships.
- The *anxious* are those who seek empowerment through helping and may be driven by the desire to search for missing friends and family.
- The *helpers* are those who provide informal help during an emergency. Fritz & Matthewson (1957) remark that the efforts of this group often go unrecorded, unnoticed or unevaluated by emergency managers.
- The *curious* are those motivated by the unusual circumstances created by emergencies and tend to be non-victims often from outside the affected area.
- The *exploiters* is the final category identified by Fritz & Matthewson (1957) and consists of those motivated by private gain following mass public misfortune.
- The *supporters* was added by Kendra & Watchendorf (2002) and consisted of individuals who appear at emergency events to 'cheer on' the official emergency response.

Other factors influencing involvement

Organisations should therefore make advance preparations for the convergence of volunteers, the importance of which is highlighted within the policy review (Appendix D). Sharon (2004), who analysed the volunteer response to 9/11, highlights three key themes that official emergency responders should consider when looking to

involve spontaneous volunteers. First, it is recognised that the management of spontaneous volunteers requires a coordinator. Sharon (2004) recommends the establishment of a registration site to process volunteers. A number of the policies reviewed highlight the importance of developing registration processes (including the necessary forms) and record keeping procedures in advance of any emergency. This enables volunteer coordinators to deploy to emergency events and quickly begin the process of registration should the involvement of spontaneous volunteers be deemed suitable. Second, volunteers wishing to provide assistance during an emergency need to be provided with training. Sharon (2004) suggests that appropriate training is essential not only for spontaneous volunteers, but also for 'professional volunteers' (e.g. medics) who offer assistance during emergencies. Finally, organisations hoping to involve spontaneous volunteers in emergency response/recovery need to develop a coordinated approach. Providing volunteers with a single source of information, either through the media or via direct communication, and helps to minimise the potential for conflicting messages to be delivered to volunteers.

Media coverage can have a substantial impact on the motivation to volunteer in response to an emergency and so influence the number of individuals presenting as spontaneous volunteers (Cottrel, 2010). Research conducted by the Australian Red Cross found that three-quarters of volunteers offered to help within the first week of an emergency. Altruistic motives were those most frequently given by volunteers whilst unused offers of assistance and the perception that skills were being underused were causes of dissatisfaction (Cottrel, 2010).

Social ties also play an important role in influencing whether an individual will volunteer for an organisation with an emergency-related purpose. Pre-existing relationships with current members of the organisation (Baxter-Thomas & Wallace, 2009) as well as being directly asked by someone from the organisation (Rotolo & Berg, 2010) are important factors of pre/post emergency volunteer recruitment.

Finally, studies have sought to identify various characteristics associated with emergency relief volunteers. Michel (2007) demonstrated that self-efficacy, education, religious attendance and organisational membership were all factors that increased the level of personal responsibility felt towards helping victims of Hurricane Katrina. Furthermore, levels of education, the presence of children at home, organisational membership, religious attendance and feelings of personal responsibility were all associated with an increase in the total number of hours spent on volunteering. These findings however may be context specific. Rotolo & Berg's (2010) analysis of nationally representative US survey data found that those volunteering for emergency relief tasks were likely to be younger and less educated than individuals volunteering to other tasks.

Spontaneous volunteering and resilience

A community's ability to self-organise in response to an emergency is central to social resilience (Folke et al. 2002). Social resilience refers to the ability of communities to deal with social, political and environmental disturbances (Adger, 2000). The ways in which communities adapt to flood emergencies through activities such as spontaneous volunteering are manifestations of adaptive capacity which, in turn, is influenced by both general factors (such as the capacity of the state to respond) and local factors (such as levels of social capital and personal networks) (Smit and Wandel, 2006). Therefore, the resourcefulness of organisations to manage spontaneous volunteering forms an important aspect of overall social resilience (Tierney 2003).

Despite the threats that events such as flood emergencies pose, they also provide opportunities for innovation, development and the formation of recalibrated structures through self-organisation (Gallopin, 2006; Smit & Wandel, 2006; Folke, 2006; Laio, 2012). Exposure to the effects of emergencies provides opportunities for social learning, as impromptu actions can become formalised into policies designed to inform the handling of future events (Cutter et al. 2008). In this sense spontaneous volunteering represents the embodiment of adaptive capacity that reflects the learning aspect of a community's response to an emergency (Carpenter et al. 2001). Policies designed to reduce exposure to flood risks, including activities such as the development of structural flood defences designed to resist water, may inadvertently inhibit a broader range of adaptive measures to cope with their occurrence (Harries & Penning-Rowsell, 2011). However, whilst resilient communities are potentially more able to respond and recover from emergencies than non-resilient communities, this does not suggest symmetry between the terms of vulnerability and resilience (Gallopin, 2006). Social systems create social vulnerabilities at the individual and community levels characterised by demographic, socio-economic and political characteristics and inequalities (Cutter et al. 2003). This highlights the important role played by institutions and governance systems in shaping vulnerability (Engle, 2011).

The ephemeral yet persistent nature of emergent pro-social behaviours during emergencies (such as spontaneous volunteering) suggests that they may reflect society's latent social capital or social resources. Pelling & High (2006) advise that such resources provide a way in which social attributes can be used to understand how societies build capacity in response to climate change. For instance, Milofsky (2013) demonstrated how communities with stronger, more experienced networks of service providers were better able to leverage organisational resources and pre-existing relationships into a more effective response, which also laid the foundations for future collaborations. US-based research also suggests that non-profit

organisations engage in emergency mitigation and preparedness activities making them important sources of additional resilience during emergencies (Chikoto et al. 2012). Milofsky (2013) suggests that resilience further enables the sustainability of communities threatened by environmental hazards such as floods.

Spontaneous volunteers therefore represent an important but under-researched and under-involved form of adaptive capacity that can contribute towards overall community resilience. However, there is surprisingly little academic research focussed on examining their involvement. Consequently it remains unclear how volunteers have previously become involved in flood response, how they have been deployed, which tasks they have been involved in or how official emergency responders, organised volunteer groups and spontaneous volunteers work together. Although many of the policy documents reviewed contain guidance on retaining spontaneous volunteers there is little evidence to determine the extent to which this is successful. Studies suggest that spontaneous volunteering can have a substantial impact on the individual's self-perception, prompting further acts of volunteering that may lead to individuals and communities being more resilient and therefore better able to address the demands for assistance created by emergencies.

Our model: Channelling the adaptive capacity of spontaneous volunteers to address unmet need during emergencies

Whilst governments plan for emergencies the demands created by such events often exceed the capacity of the emergency services to meet all needs. Whether individuals perceive that the response is poorly coordinated or insufficient (Stallings & Quarantelli, 1985) a gap is created between the services provided by official emergency responders and the needs of those affected by the emergency. The factors that drive individuals to volunteer are numerous and include internal motivators such as an individual's: self-perception; risk-perception; willingness to accept change; and motivation. However, internal motivation alone is not sufficient in addressing unmet need, as there must be some external, observable response. The external response is driven by an individual's level of social resources, their ability to self-organise and the nature of the work they can perform. The following two sections consider these factors and build a conceptual model of how spontaneous volunteering may offer one form of adaptive capacity that can be channelled towards addressing unmet need.

Internal motivation

Self-perception includes feelings of self-efficacy in relation to the ability to help during an emergency. As highlighted by Michel (2007) self-efficacy influences the level of impact or control an individual feels they have in a situation. Thus, it can increase a person's feeling of responsibility towards victims that, in turn, has been found to be a driver of volunteer participation (Gecas, 1989).

Risk-perception is a factor that can compel or constrain political, economic and social action to deal with threats (Leiserowitz, 2006). Lee & Brudney (2009) demonstrated how individuals often make rational choices when considering the costs and benefits associated with volunteering. However, Leiserowitz (2006) argues that the mental models that individuals develop around certain risks can be misconceived and inaccurate. Miceli et al. (2008) found positive correlations between emergency preparedness and flood risk perception, and that protective behaviours were linked to socio-demographic factors such as age, proximity to watercourses and previous participation in civil defence activities.

Spontaneous volunteerism can serve as a means through which individuals seek to turn the negative effects of an emergency into something positive (Lowe & Fothergill, 2003). Based upon a consensus regarding what needs to be done (O'Brien & Mileti, 1992), individuals seek to reverse the negative impact of the emergencies and are thus unwilling to **accept the changes** forced upon them by it. However, other people accept the inevitability of change following flooding and expect to adapt to their new environment without fear or unwillingness (Shaw et al. 2014). Therefore **propensity to accept change** influences individual action. Both categories of people may be likely to act positively and help others to respond, albeit for different reasons.

The final factor influencing an individual's propensity to act is their underlying **motivation**. Whilst emergency volunteering provides an opportunity in which individuals can exercise their power (Wolensky, 1979), others have identified a range of different motives guiding both general volunteering (Clary et al. 1998; 1999) and emergency-related volunteering (Fritz & Mathewson, 1957). These motives may be self-orientated, other-orientated or a combination of both and are therefore likely to influence the nature of the voluntary activities that individuals pursue.

External response

The identification of need may not alone drive an individual's action. Individuals may be highly perceptive of risk yet unable to act and vice versa. The factors associated with internal motivation are inextricably linked with the various resources that drive an observable external response such as an individual's level of social resources,

their ability to self-organise and the nature of the work or practical element of their volunteerism.

When individuals decide to respond to an emergency by spontaneous volunteering they draw upon and are influenced by a range of **social resources**. Social capital refers to the aspects of social life that enable individuals to pursue shared objectives (Putman, 1995). Whilst this includes the nature of the social relationships between different groups in society, Putnam (2000) highlights the importance of trust and reciprocity within society. When individuals act as spontaneous volunteers they may draw upon latent social capital to mitigate risk i.e. individuals act, and are effective, because they are trusted by their recipients and able to draw upon and build social networks.

Aligned to this is the ability of spontaneous volunteers to exploit or harness their own social resources to **self-organise**. Such linchpin individuals play an important role in the external response to emergencies by helping disparate groups of individuals to form a cohesive, organised spontaneous response. They may be the visionary, the gel and the organiser who pulls strangers into being an operational unit.

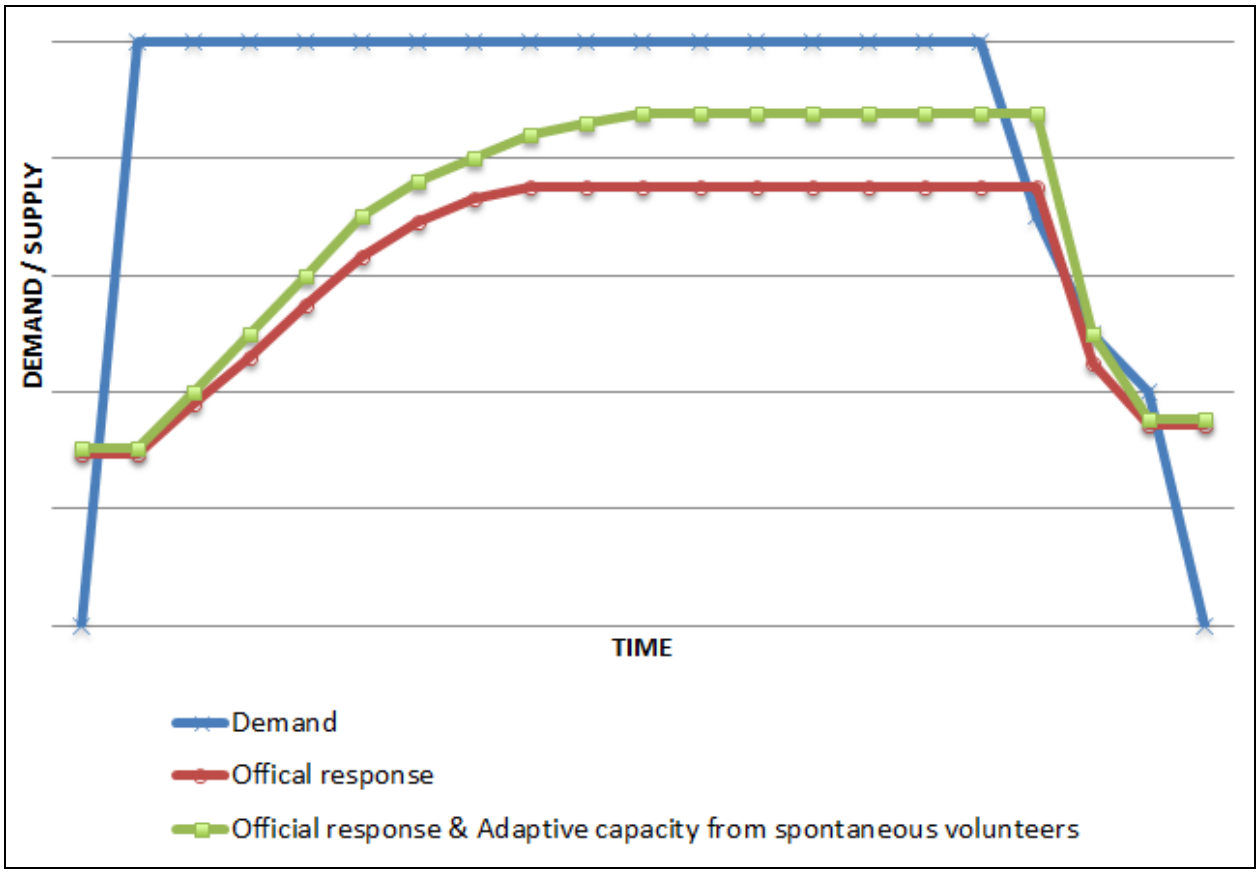
The final element influencing the external response refers to the **nature of the work** or the productive element of the volunteering activity. Whilst a volunteer response may involve hundreds of people, the ability of this number to address need is related to the nature of the work they perform. The nature of the work must interest or excite the internal motivations of the volunteer so that they see the direct value of them volunteering. So, the nature of their task, whether front-line or support, must provide enough perceived impact in reducing the need in the environment.

Figure 4.3 presents a conceptual model of the discussion above by reflecting: the level of demand for emergency assistance in the community (blue line) created by a no notice flood event; and how the official response (red line) and spontaneous volunteers (green line) aim to address this need. As demonstrated in Figure 4.3, a no notice event creates immediate need represented by the steep gradient of the blue line. Official responders will have limited resources already in place to immediately react to this need but these will be insufficient to meet the total demand that exists. Additional official responders will be available but they will take time to arrive and will still fail to satisfy the overwhelming demand.

The internal motivation of individuals initially drives a volunteer’s response to such no notice events. During or immediately after a flood, volunteers begin to appraise their ability to help, assess the risks of helping, determine their willingness to accept the changes to the physical and social landscape caused by the event and establish their motivations for wanting to help (self/other-orientated). The total space between the official response and the demand represents the potential internal motivation, as

the various factors identified earlier influence the overall perception of unfulfilled need.

Figure 4.3: Conceptual model of channelling the adaptive capacity of spontaneous volunteers to addressing unmet need



The size of the area between the official response (red line) and the adaptive capacity (green line) from spontaneous volunteers reflects the actual external response by spontaneous volunteers. This reflects the ways and extent to which individuals help and so depends on the amount, impact and nature of the work carried out by the volunteers. The adaptive capacity grows slower than the official response as they are waiting for information on the demand, are less organised and are not practised.

The size of the area between the adaptive capacity and demand reflects the unmet demand – which is essentially a failure of the performance of the adaptive capacity to respond (assuming official response is fixed). This gap in the performance of spontaneous volunteer response is represented by a mis-calibrated internal and external response of spontaneous volunteers meaning victims go unaided, while other potential spontaneous volunteers perceive there is no need to respond and

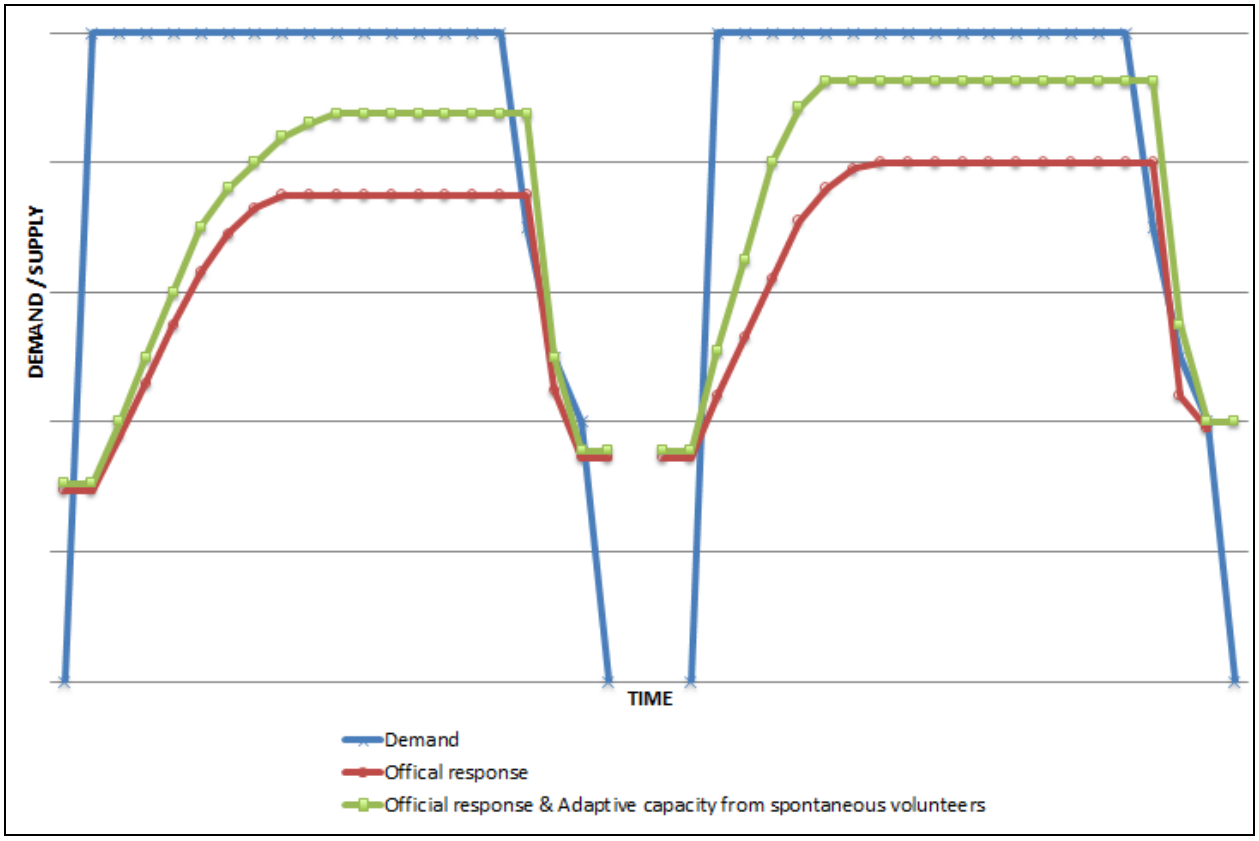
provide assistance. This gap is the internal response of spontaneous volunteers minus their external response, formulated as:

> GAP = (self-perception + risk-perception + propensity to accept change + motivation) – (resources x self-organisation x nature of the work)

This model helps to explain how the adaptive capacity of spontaneous volunteering may reduce exposure to the emergency by providing added resilience. The social learning that occurs on how to organise spontaneous volunteers means that the community finishes the response with a higher amount of latent adaptive capacity available for the next emergency.

The model also predicts that prior involvement in flood-related response activities may help to reduce the gap between the official response, adaptive capacity and demand in future emergencies. This is reflected in Figure 4.4 which represents a sequence of two no-notice flood emergencies. The first wave is identical to Figure 4.3. However, because of the social learning from Wave 1 on how to configure spontaneous volunteer resources, the adaptive capacity for Wave 2 begins from a higher start point. Also, social learning means that the use of the adaptive capacity is quicker (and possibly more effective) in Wave 2 – represented in a disproportionately steeper adaptive capacity line in the early phases of the Wave 2 response. The same is true for the official response. Also, the total adaptive capacity is higher in Wave 2 as more people volunteer after hearing the positive experiences from the first wave. Thus, demand is more quickly addressed as communities respond more quickly and in greater numbers. Again, the added learning that occurs on how to organise spontaneous volunteers means the response ends with a higher latent adaptive capacity than when it began.

Figure 4.4: The adaptive capacity for two flood emergencies



Conclusion

UK flood policy increasingly seeks to spread responsibility across state institutions, communities and individuals. Thus, a new multiple approach may be needed that combines government-led interventions designed to protect human and natural environments alongside self-help behaviours from individuals and communities (Penning-Rowsell et al. 2008). Although this literature review has identified the potential benefits associated with volunteer involvement in the response and recovery to emergencies it is also important to recognise the challenges associated with this.

Emergent behaviour such as spontaneous volunteering is a frequent response to emergencies. Individuals can volunteer hoping to turn a negative event into something positive (Lowe and Fothergill, 2003). Volunteering provides a means through which individuals can prepare, endure and recover from emergencies (Rotolo & Berg, 2010). However, it is important to recognise the challenges of doing so (e.g. Barsky et al. 2007). If not anticipated and planned the volume and speed of spontaneity of uncoordinated individuals to a response area can quickly overwhelm the official emergency responders (Quarantelli, 1989; Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2001a)

and result in ineffective management as resources are directed away from managing the response (Tierney, 2003). It is also important to recognise the risks that emergency volunteering poses as untrained individuals may be less able to cope with the stresses associated with emergencies (Dyregrov, et al. 1996). As such, many of the policies and guidance documents that consider the involvement of spontaneous volunteering highlight their suitability for low responsibility, low risk tasks. Clearly the careful management and involvement of volunteers is vital in any response.

Despite the challenges associated with their involvement, the literature suggests that volunteers have the potential to bring much needed skillsets to emergencies (Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2001d) and develop creative solutions to problems (Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2002). Consequently, the literature proposes that spontaneous volunteers represent a form of hidden social resilience that, if appropriately directed, may help to reduce the immediate and on-going need created by emergencies and help to build more resilient communities in the face of future events.

We now discuss the three case studies examining the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in three specific flood type events in the UK. Following that, we present the findings from interviewing 62 strategic and operational managers, officials, organised volunteers and spontaneous volunteers to understand more about the potential for spontaneous volunteering in response to flooding.

Section 5. Case studies of spontaneous volunteering

Key points:

- Each group was set up in response to a flood event allowing previously unconnected individuals to work collaboratively to address need.
- Social media played a prominent role in helping organise the activities of volunteers in Tonbridge and Boston.
- Key linchpin individuals emerged as group coordinators, taking responsibility for organising key events, disseminating information from various sources and in some cases dealing with disputes and friction from within the groups.
- Friction was evident within the spontaneous volunteer groups and between them and other members of the community (Bodenham), officials (Tonbridge and Boston) and other voluntary organisations (Boston).
- The groups became a place where individuals could offer practical assistance and donations as well as receive and disseminate information.
- These groups have continued to operate beyond the official recovery phase, helping individuals get back into their homes, including fundraising activities.

Introduction

We chose three case studies which showed different examples of spontaneous volunteering. Figure 5.1 compares those case studies to give a general overview of their scope and activity. In brief, Bodenham was chosen as an example of a community that began as spontaneous volunteering during a flash flood and continued their activities to become an organised volunteer group that has been working for the last 7 years. Tonbridge was chosen as an example of a river flooding and Boston was chosen as an example of coastal flooding. Both involved spontaneous volunteers.

Figure 5.1: Characteristics of the case study locations

	Bodenham	**Tonbridge**	**Boston**
The interviewees			
Volunteers	4 interviews	10 interviews	3 interviews
Emergency Managers	0 interview	0 interviews	7 interviews
Total duration of interviews	1 hour: 56 mins	4 hours: 9 mins	4 hours: 51 mins

The context			
Type of flood	Flash flood (Rain and River Lugg)	River (River Medway)	Coastal (North Sea)
Where did it happen	Herefordshire	Kent	Lincolnshire
When did it happen	20th July 2007	24th December 2013	5th December 2013
Why did it happen	Rainfall from blocked/inadequate drains/culverts	Heavy rainfall, Leigh FSA unable to cope	Coastal surge
Number of people affected	40 residential properties	250-270 properties	1800 properties
How long did the water stay	Hours	Hours	Hours
The Spontaneous Volunteers			
Phase of emergency	Response/on-going	Recovery	Recovery
SV structure	General convergence then organised by 2 linchpins & helpers.	Two linchpins & Facebook helpers.	Handful of linchpins & Facebook helpers (incl 'Fenside Mums').
Initial activities	Moving possessions upstairs, sandbagging.	Cleaning up houses, rugby club, town centre, distributing flood guides.	Cleaning up houses, distributing goods, impact statements.
Continuing activities	Formation of the Bodenham Flood Protection Group (BFPG). Prevention - clearing drainage channels, fundraising, lobbying with local town planners regarding new housing development.	Getting people back in their homes, fundraising. Formation of the Tonbridge Area Flood Support (TAFS) group to provide further assistance.	Recovery - distributing goods and getting people back in their homes. This includes the purchasing of white goods etc. to replace those damaged by flooding.
After the emergency	Individuals formed a self-help group to carry out necessary action to monitor and	Core group members (approx. 11) continued to help flood victims. Formation of	Getting displaced members of the community back into their homes. Fundraising

	maintain drains/water-courses. This later became the Bodenham Flood Protection Group.	TAFS.	including Boston Flood Aid event.
Other items of note			
Tension and irritations	BFPG members expressed irritation towards residents who receive help but did not volunteer themselves. Tension was found between BFPG and housing developers (new development) and the local authority.	Difference as to what volunteers could do between two close geographical areas. Also between volunteers and the Environment Agency/ officials regarding the operation of Leigh Flood Storage Area and provision of flood warnings.	Between 2 SV groups, emergency managers and OVs.
Interesting feature	Individuals with high social capital have rallied local residents into a formal volunteer group.	Two linchpins responsible for early action. The core volunteers have formed a new volunteer group to offer further assistance.	Lots of strong personalities. Apparent disconnect between the emergency planners perception of the response/recovery and the volunteers. Several different SV groups in operation.
Working with officials	Limited and weak interaction with officials.	Worked alongside officials helping with clean-ups and loading soiled belongings into vans.	Worked under officials as part of the same system, reporting directly to Emergency planners at Boston BC.
Motivation rhetoric	Fear of being flooded in the future as well as social cohesion.	Social cohesion as well as helping others who have been affected.	People who are not affected help those who are affected.

We now present the case studies of spontaneous volunteering in these three locations.

Case Study 1 - Recovery from flash flooding in Bodenham, Herefordshire.

Introduction

This case study examines the involvement of volunteers in activities to reduce flood risk following a flash flood event in July 2007. It illustrates how the self-directed action of key individuals can build resilience through the formation of a flood protection group. The Bodenham Flood Protection Group (BFPG) was constituted in August 2008 and conducts on-going maintenance of drains and culverts as well as monitoring flood telemetry systems and providing flood warnings to local residents.

AT A GLANCE

Flood type:

- Flash flooding (July 2007)

Area flooded and impact:

- 40 residential properties
- Damage estimated at in excess of £500,000

Active volunteer groups:

- Bodenham Flood Protection Group

Key volunteer activities:

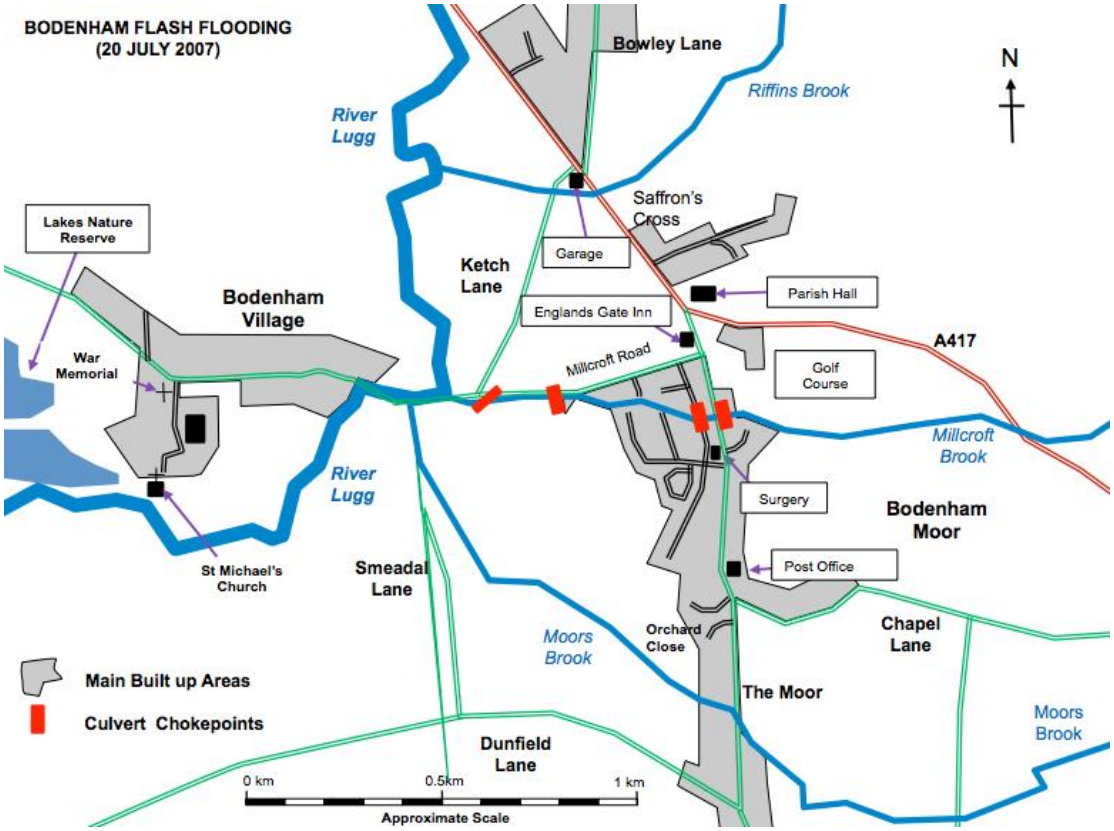
- Regular meetings
- Working parties
- Fundraising

Context

The village of Bodenham is located in the county of Herefordshire and sits astride the River Lugg. During June and July 2007 Bodenham and its surrounding areas received heavy rainfall resulting in ground saturation, increasing the amount of water running into drains and culverts which channelled into the River Lugg. Blocked and

inadequate drains and culverts restricted the flow of water before it could reach the River Lugg and when there was a day of particularly heavy rain this resulted in the flooding, mainly in Bodenham Moor (see Figure 5.2). BFPG was established after this flood to look at how the village's vulnerability to flooding could be reduced.

Figure 5.2: Map of the 2007 flooding in Bodenham



Timeline of key events

- On 20 July 2007: the village of Bodenham experienced a flash flood in which 40 residential properties were flooded and 50 more had water in garages and outhouses. Individuals within the community came together to help one another however, there was no coordinated community response or help from the emergency services.
- On 22 January 2008: Bodenham Parish Council held a public meeting to discuss what measures could prevent the reoccurrence of the floods. The cause of the flooding was identified as being the blocked and inadequate drains and culverts restricting the flow of water into the River Lugg. However, the Parish Council identified that the local authorities did not have sufficient resources to undertake the work it considered necessary to reduce the risk of future flood events.

- On 4 February 2008: the Parish Council made the decision to form their own self-help group responsible for monitoring drains and watercourses, keeping them clear of debris and taking other precautionary action (e.g. maintaining sandbags, identifying vulnerable residents).
- On 13 February 2008: the Bodenham Flood Protection Group (BFPG) holds its first informal meeting. These informal meetings continue for another five months.
- On 19 August 2008: BFPG formally establishes itself. Key features include:
    - Its own Constitution, funding held within the Parish Council's account and insurance cover provided under the Council's policy.
    - An elected committee representing each area of the Parish.
    - Membership of approximately 50 volunteers.
    - Meeting on the last Tuesday of every month (with the exception of December). 28-30 volunteers regularly attend.
    - Working party sessions every other Friday evening (April-October). 12-15 volunteers regularly attend.
    - Coffee mornings and quiz evening to raise funds for the group, as well as social events (barbecue party and bonfire party).
- On 17 October 2008: a second public meeting is held to discuss issues raised by BFPG with Herefordshire Council Highways Authority. BFPG raises concerns about the flood risk to additional properties within Bodenham as well as the inability of the twin Ketch Lane culverts serving the Millcroft Brook, the main watercourse through Bodenham Moor, to cope with flash flooding. Approximately 100 residents attended the meeting.
- On 12 May 2011: The Environment Agency allocates finances to help protect 34 properties in the Parish. This resulted in 'Project Bodenham' and became the group's primary purpose for the next 12 months. By December 2011, 26 of the 34 properties identified had flood defence equipment installed and the project was completed by November 2012.
- 12 October 2011: BFPG wins the 'Environmental Champions' category of the 2011 Pride of Herefordshire Awards.
- 9 May 2012: Flood warning telemetry system installed at Brockington Road bridge providing BFPG with advance warning of any flash flood. The enables BFPG to provide warnings to local residents in the event of possible flash flooding.
- 13 September 2012: BFPG holds an open day to raise awareness of their activities in the village. At this event the group also showcased flood protection equipment to non-BFPG members, providing them with the opportunity to purchase such equipment at a discount.
- 7 November 2012: A county-wide flood protection open day is held in Bodenham Parish Hall.

Initial activities

BFPG was formally established on 19 August 2008. Two local residents coordinate the BFPG's activities: Tony, the group's Chairman; and his wife, Babs, the group's Secretary and Treasurer. Tony and Babs were amongst those flooded during the 2007 event. BFPG's initial objectives were:

- To monitor drains and watercourses and clear them of debris when necessary.
- Consider a broad range of precautionary measures to reduce flood risk.
- Identify vulnerable residents who would need assistance in an emergency.
- Establish contact with other national and local organisations.

The Parish Council provided BFPG with an initial loan to purchase the equipment necessary to start its work (e.g. spades, mattocks, buckets, drainage rods, waders). The group immediately sought to become self-sufficient and held a number of coffee mornings and quiz nights to repay the council's loan as well as to cover expenses such as the cost of hiring rooms for meetings. The group also secured two financial grants from the Bodenham Community Charity enabling the purchasing of additional equipment (e.g. pumps, a trailer to transport equipment) as well as metal cages used to store sandbags at strategic locations. Further donations were received for additional resources including safety equipment for the working parties.

BFPG's initial activities sought to raise awareness of flood risk in the local area. BFPG provided information to local residents and also highlighted the vulnerability of particular areas (e.g. Orchard Close) to Herefordshire Council. Following an investigation into the causes of flooding within Bodenham requested by BFPG, the group also raised concerns about the inability of the twin culverts on the Millcroft Brook at Ketch Lane to cope with flash flooding (identified as one of the major contributors to the 2007 flooding). Further work commissioned by Herefordshire Council highlighted the flood risk posed by these culverts. This report also identified the need for regular maintenance such as the removal of silt from the channel.

On 12 May 2011 The Environment Agency allocated £144,500 to help protect 34 homes in Bodenham identified as being at most risk of flooding as part of a £2m country-wide initiative. Work to implement these improvements became known locally as 'Project Bodenham'. The 34 homes were provided with items such as automatically closing airbricks, non-return valves for drains and flood barriers for doors. BFPG helped to facilitate this work by providing the contractor with local knowledge and acting as the main communication link between the firm, local residents, Amey Herefordshire and the Environment Agency. Here the aim of BFPG was to keep the administrative costs of 'Project Bodenham' to a minimum to ensure that as much as possible of the allocated funding went towards flood defences. Whilst monitoring this installation work and talking to the residents concerned BFPG

became aware that some of the initial surveys had been inadequate and that for some properties the risk of flooding had not been fully mitigated. Having raised their concerns to the Environment Agency they secured an additional £16,000 to complete the work.

On 9 May 2012 the Parish Council was donated a flood warning telemetry system, which was installed at the Brockington Road bridge. This telemetry system enables members to monitor water levels in the Millcroft Brook and sends automatic telephone, SMS and e-mail messages to key BFPG members if a rise in the level indicates a potential flash flood. This means the Group are able to give residents advance warning if there is a risk of flooding in time for them to take any necessary precautions.

BFPG continues to play a proactive role in raising flood awareness in the local area:

- BFPG continue to press for Herefordshire Council to take responsibility for maintenance of the local drains, culverts and watercourses as well as for the replacement of the Ketch Lane culverts. Meanwhile it acts to reduce flood risk by conducting regular maintenance and by ensuring that precautions (e.g. sandbag stocks) are in place.
- BFPG contacts Mary Dhonau, an independent flood protection consultant, who helps the group to arrange an open day (13 September 2013). The aim of the open day is to raise awareness of the flood defence measures being taken in the area amongst those not included in the Environment Agency's initial funding. It also provided residents with the opportunity to purchase flood defence items privately should they wish to do so.
- BFPG look to spread the flood protection message across the county. A county-wide flood protection open day is held on 7 November (2012) supported by BFPG members. This event acted as the launch for the 2012 Know Your Flood Risk Campaign.
- BFPG helps local residents who are having difficulty with flood insurance by directing them to specialist brokers.
- BFPG has presented their work at other Parish Council meetings and has been successful in encouraging the formation of other flood protection groups (e.g. Brimfield & Little Hereford).
- BFPG members regularly 'walk the brooks' to identify any areas of concern that may be dealt with by the next working party.
- BFPG continues to monitor water levels using the flood telemetry system and local Environmental Agency data.

Working parties: An important task undertaken by BFPG volunteers is the proactive maintenance of watercourses and drains in Bodenham. BFPG working parties still meet every alternate Friday evening from 18:00 hrs between the months of April and October of each year. The purpose of these is to clear drains and watercourses of silt and vegetation as well as stockpile sandbags. Each working party lasts

approximately 60-90 minutes, after which the group often holds a small social event to thank the volunteers for their participation.

***An organised community response*:** In addition to the proactive work conducted by the working parties, BFPG has developed a response strategy for future floods. The Chairman and Secretary operate a central communications hub, which includes monitoring of the flood warning system. Volunteers within BFPG can apply to become an Area Representative (see Appendix F), each responsible for a small number of properties in the Parish. These individuals are responsible for offering flood advice to residents and disseminating warnings in future floods. BFPG also operates a 'buddy system' where volunteers assist other residents (not necessarily BFPG members) within the village should there be potential or actual flood .

***Tension*:** Various sources of tension were identified within Bodenham. One source concerned two potential new housing developments in the village. BFPG members were concerned about the impact of additional housing in the area and the potential for this increasing the risk of flooding.

Further tensions were identified between BFPG and local authorities. BFPG believe that the local authorities should be conducting regular maintenance of the drains and culverts. It is the recognition that the local authorities do not have the resources to undertake such work that caused the formation of the Group, but the BFPG is campaigning for the local authority to replace the Ketch Lane culverts.

There was also tension between BFPG and Category 1 responders. BFPG feel that they are in a strong position to provide help to the local community in the event of a flood; however current emergency response plans do not include the group. Therefore, whilst the group is excluded from emergency planning activities local official emergency managers also fail to benefit from the local knowledge (e.g. vulnerable persons/properties) developed by BFPG.

A potential source of irritation was also identified between locals who did (and those who didn't) participate in flood prevention activities. This was particularly prominent where individuals had received flood defence equipment from 'Project Bodenham' but did not offer to participate in any of the working parties. Some members of BFPG expressed irritation in potentially having to provide further assistance to these residents in the event of a future flood. Another irritation was between the BFPG and residents who would not allow the group to work on their property or who extend their gardens into a watercourse. For instance the group found that some residents would not allow them access to clear the drains on their properties but were also unwilling to carry this work out themselves. However, blockages to these drains pose a flood risk not only to the landowner denying access, but also to other residents. The same applies to actions which narrow or otherwise divert a stream.

Key points/take home messages

- BFPG highlights how, through coordinated on-going action, communities can take ownership of local problems. Here, BFPG has worked to raise awareness of flooding and have taken proactive steps to lower the flood risk. Recognising that the statutory authorities did not have sufficient resources to maintain the drains and culverts, BFPG undertakes its own on-going inspections and maintenance. BFPG campaigns for the local authority replace the Ketch Lane culverts.
- BFPG were influential in securing funding for the installation of flood defences on local properties. The group acted as a facilitator, providing local knowledge and information as well as providing a communication channel between the contractor asked to install the defences and local residents, as well as linking both to Amey Herefordshire and the Environment Agency. This helped to reduce the administrative costs of the project and ensured that as much of the money as possible went towards flood defences.
- In addition to its preventative work the group has also developed an organised response strategy. The group has a central communications hub, a flood warning system and volunteers who provide advice and assistance to residents in the event of a flood. The group is not currently integrated into the official emergency response plan.
- In addition to helping to maintain the local watercourses, BFPG and its regular working parties provide a social outlet for volunteers in a rural community as well as emotional support for those who have suffered flooding.
- Sources of tension were visible within Bodenham, particularly with those residents who had received flood defences and did not volunteer or residents who did not allow the working parties to conduct maintenance on their land.
- The success of the BFPG ‘model’ led to its adoption in other areas at risk of flooding.

Case Study 2 - Recovery from river flooding in Tonbridge, Kent.

Introduction

This case study examines the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in the recovery of large-scale river flooding in the town of Tonbridge (Kent) on 24th December 2013. It illustrates how community linchpins can use their own social networks to initiate and organise spontaneous volunteers to disseminate information to the wider flood-impacted community as well as into working parties that provide on-going support. Sources of friction were identified between spontaneous volunteers and officials in different areas of the borough with regards to the provision of information and the nature of the volunteer work permitted.

The case study demonstrates how previously unconnected residents can form a small but cohesive volunteer group that has continued its activities well after the official recovery phase has ended and shows the power of social media in supporting this. Also evident was the formation of new branch-off volunteer groups and events to raise awareness of community flood plans and personalised home flood plans as well as fundraise.

AT A GLANCE[3]

Flood type:

Flooding of the River Medway due to heavy rainfall

Area flooded and impact:

Approximately 270 residential properties were identified by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council as being flooded:

- Hildenborough: 117 properties
- Tonbridge: 92-102 properties
- Golden Green: 2 properties
- East Peckham: 40-50 properties
- Businesses in High Street and the Pavilion shopping centre
- Leisure facilities including local swimming pool

Active volunteer groups:

- The Only Way Is Tonbridge (Facebook)
- Help & Support for Tonbridge & surrounding areas affected by the floods (Facebook)
- 4X4 Response
- Red Cross (rest centre in East Peckham)
- St John Ambulance (provided hot food/drink to residents on 27th Dec)

Key volunteer activities

- Distributing goods to replace damaged items
- Sharing information on who to contact
- Fund raising
- Volunteer 4X4 Response evacuated residents in Tonbridge
- Clean-up (Danvers Rd, Barden Rd, Avebury Ave, Juddians Rugby Club)
- Distribution of flood recovery packs

[3] Information taken from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Cabinet, Report of the Management Team (4th February, 2014) and as well as the Kent and Sussex Courier and BBC websites

Context

Tonbridge is located in the county of Kent. The town has prior experience of flooding (1960, 1968) with the latter event resulting in the flooding of the High Street to a depth of 2 metres. In 1982, the Leigh flood storage area (FSA) was constructed to help reduce the flood risk to 965 properties and 300 businesses in the town of Tonbridge. Leigh FSA was designed to restrict flow along the River Medway at peak times and store water upstream. Within the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling some 3396 properties sit within the floodplain.

Between the 19th and 25th of December 2013 the Medway catchment area received over 110 millimetres of rainfall. Initial flooding occurred on the evening of the 24th December. Over the Christmas/New Year period over 6,000 sandbags were distributed to residents.

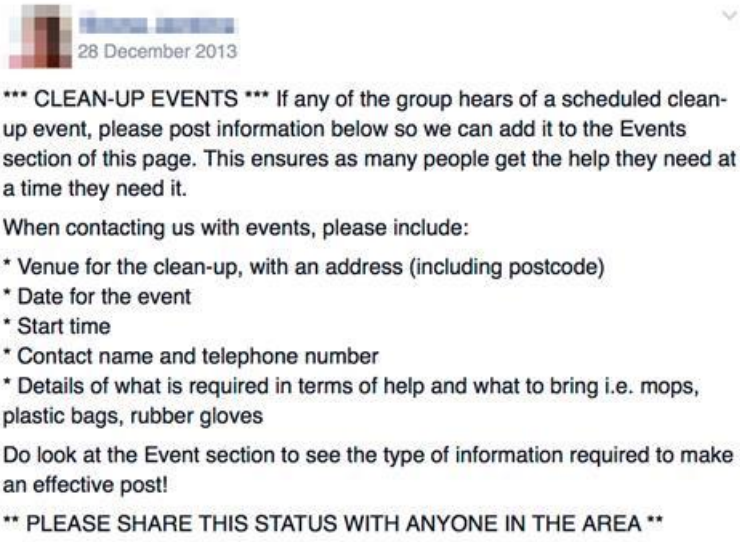
Timeline of events[4]

- 23rd December:
  - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council received advice from the Meteorological (MET) office and Environment Agency (EA) that flooding in the Borough was likely.
- 24th December:
  - Start of the response phase following heavy rainfall over the last 5 days.
  - At 05:00 hrs, the River Medway was flowing unrestricted and no water was being held at Leigh FSA.
  - At 10:10 hrs, flood warning advice was communicated to residents (e.g. move furniture upstairs, turn off power).
  - At mid-afternoon, the Borough Emergency Centre was activated.
  - Incident Liaison Officers were deployed to areas of Tonbridge to help coordinate evacuations. This included the involvement of **volunteer 4X4 drivers**.
  - At 18:20 hrs, the first evacuated residents arrived at Tonbridge Rest Centre (Weald of Kent School).
  - At 20:00 hrs, the FSA was storing close to 5.5 million cubic metres of water – just 10 millimetres from its maximum limit.
- 25th December:
  - At 01:20 hrs, the last evacuated residents arrive at the rest centre.
  - During the morning, flood waters decreased.
  - At 11:15 hrs, the rest centre closed and all evacuees left to return to their properties.
  - At 13:15 hrs, the Borough Emergency Centre closes.
- 26th December:

[4] Information taken from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Cabinet, Report of the Management Team (4th February, 2014) and as well as the Kent and Sussex Courier and BBC websites

- Further flooding was expected so the Borough Council anticipated further evacuees by leaving rest centre supplies in place. Rainfall levels did not exceed the 20mm level that would have resulted in further flooding.
- At 19:06 hrs, a Facebook group called 'Help and support for Tonbridge and surrounding areas affected by the floods' was established to help residents. The number of people joining the Facebook group quickly increased following the flooding and since peaking in February has remained steady:
  - 26th December: 147 likes
  - 29th December: 1,000 likes
  - 2nd January: 1,351 likes
  - 2nd February: 1,700 likes
  - 23rd July: 1697 likes
- At 23:25 hrs, clean-up events are advertised on the Facebook group's wall

- 27th December:
  - Start of the recovery phase.
  - Danvers Road clean-up (see Figure 5.3).
  - The Pavilion clean-up.
- 28th December
  - At 10:34 hrs, flood warnings are removed.
  - Environment Agency begins to engage with Facebook group to disseminate information regarding the operation of Leigh FSA.
  - The group continues to try and coordinate clean-up activities:


28 December 2013

*** CLEAN-UP EVENTS *** If any of the group hears of a scheduled clean-up event, please post information below so we can add it to the Events section of this page. This ensures as many people get the help they need at a time they need it.

When contacting us with events, please include:

* Venue for the clean-up, with an address (including postcode)
* Date for the event
* Start time
* Contact name and telephone number
* Details of what is required in terms of help and what to bring i.e. mops, plastic bags, rubber gloves

Do look at the Event section to see the type of information required to make an effective post!

** PLEASE SHARE THIS STATUS WITH ANYONE IN THE AREA **

- 29th December:
  - Tonbridge Juddians Rugby Football Club clean-up:

- 30 December:
  - Organisations such as the EA begin disseminating information via the Facebook group:

- 31st December
  - Avebury Avenue and surrounding area clean-up:

- 4th – 6th January
  - The storage of donations becomes an issue for the Facebook group. The Bridge Trust Tonbridge offers space to store small and large donations.
  - Flood recovery guides delivered to flood affected homes by volunteers:

4 January

This morning, I had the privilege of meeting a colleague of for the very first time, despite swapping Facebook messages for over a week.

These people are generously donating their time to distribute the 1000 Flood Protection Guides, which were kindly given to us by Landmark UK at Mary Dhonau's suggestion.

Meeting these amazing people (not forgetting for taking delivery of the guides too) has been a real honour.

They are the nicest people you could wish to meet and have a cracking sense of humour too!

A positive upshot of this awful situation is that the community is working together and through this group we are meeting lovely people.

I hope we all remain in contact!

#OurCommunityMatters

- 8th January
  - The group begin to coordinate donations via the Bridge Trust:

8 January

PLEASE make sure any items being donated to the Bridge Trust are suitable items, the space for small items is only a small space. PLEASE also ensure you pass the information about donations to people who have been affected by the floods as many aren't really looking on facebook at the moment and aren't aware of the donations and the availability to them.... I am aware that some people are displaced from their homes at the moment but it's worth looking at the smaller items which are available for free.

small items (which are in the small room) are FREE to anyone who shows a utilities bill or similar with their address on it (obviously showing they are in a place that has been flooded).

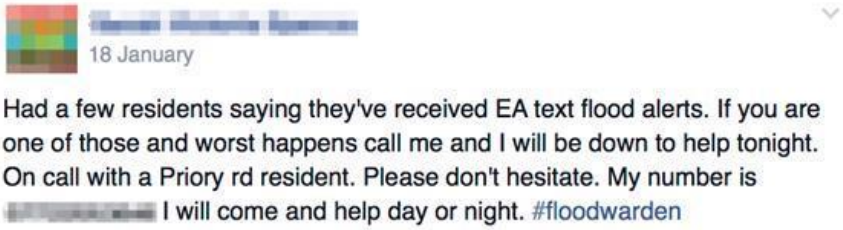
Any larger items (sofa, bookcases etc) that are donated will go in with the usual Bridge Trust stock and victims of the flood will be able to buy ANY of the Bridge Trust stock at a discounted price on production of their proof of address. All proceeds go towards the Bridge Trust charity which is for homeless people.

All electricals will be PAT tested by the Bridge Trust before a customer can take them.

By donating your unwanted items to the Bridge Trust, you are helping out both the victims of the flood AND to homeless people. Please be generous but also ensure all donations are in good condition, the Bridge Trust will use their discretion. Any sofa's and mattresses have to have a British Standards label on them (ie be fireproof)

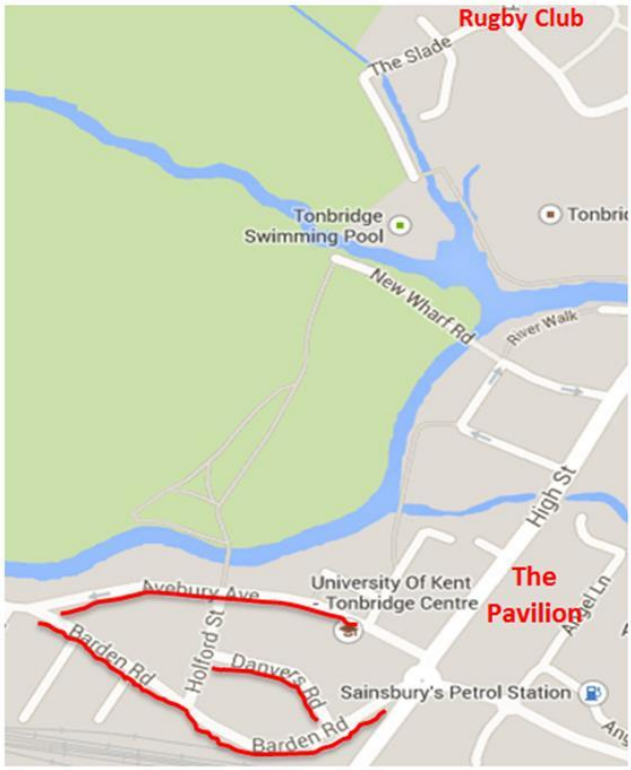
Bridge Trust will deliver items to Tonbridge for £10 per trip.... please ask for delivery costs to other areas

- 18th January
  - Further flooding in low-lying land areas within Tonbridge. Individuals continue to offer support to those in need through the Facebook group:



- 4th-5th February
  - Community meeting held in Hildenborough (4th) and the Danvers Road area (5th) to discuss the flood response. During this meeting the operation of Leigh FSA is explained to residents.
- 6th February
  - At 20:58 hrs, flood warning advice issued to residents. This warning was removed the following day (7th February) at 12:02 hrs.

Figure 5.3: Map of the most affected areas of Tonbridge (Avebury Avenue, Barden Road, Danvers Road)



Volunteer involvement during the floods

Volunteer involvement in Tonbridge was coordinated by Jean and Phil. Although both of these individuals held posts within the Borough and County Councils those roles were not associated with flooding or emergency management. Thus, they acted as volunteers who were able to use their local authority knowledge to

disseminate information and organise activities. Both were most active in the recovery phase.

Jean was largely involved in the running of a Facebook group which was set up to disseminate information following the floods in Tonbridge. Having identified that it was difficult for local residents to get the information the needed (e.g. around accessing council services), this individual continued to answer questions posted on the group regarding telephone numbers etc. From this early activity the individual's role grew and they are still actively involved in the day-to-day running of the group on a voluntary basis despite not being a local resident of Tonbridge. Their role was virtual (on the internet), not at the site of the floods.

Phil was responsible for organising several of the clean-up activities that took place in various locations across the most affected areas of the town centre. They were responsible for coordinating the volunteers, sourcing cleaning supplies and acted as a liaison to emergency planners and officials, representing the affected community. Their role was an on-the-ground coordinator and manager at the flooded areas.

For both Jean and Phil, there was a sense of urgency to identify residents who were most in need and to provide help to bail out flood waters from shops and residences. In particular there was recognition that the High Street and shops needed particular assistance to help them resume trading as soon as possible.

Activities

***Facebook*:** A Facebook group called "Help & support for Tonbridge & surrounding areas affected by the floods" was formed on the 26th December 2013. Anyone was able to join the group however, it was not necessary to do so in order to access the information. The number of people joining the group during the recovery phase grew to a height of 1,696 people. It provide a virtual space in which individuals could share information about the recovery (e.g. telephone numbers as Council emergency numbers were not well publicised) as well as make practical offers of assistance to those affected by the floods (e.g. offers to wash clothes, look after pets and children). One of the central concerns was that it was it did not seem clear to flood victims how to access help and assistance or who took ownership of certain activities/services following a flood. The group therefore played a central role in disseminating information as well as organising other spontaneous volunteer activities in the immediate aftermath of the flood and continues to play a key role in the continued recovery efforts.

The issue of misinformation was present during the recovery phase fuelled by the Facebook group. For example, the operation of the FSA by the Environment Agency became a point of confusion within local communities following the flooding due to

misconceptions surrounding the way in which it was designed to operate. This erupted on Facebook, spreading misinformation (which became ‘fact’) and united the community against officials who were perceived to be ineffective in preventing the flood due to maloperation of the FSA. In contrast, the officials believed that they had used the FSA as it was designed and sought to correct this misinformation through the Facebook group.

In light of this heated issue the administrator of the Facebook group developed closer links with the Borough Council and Environment Agency to ensure that, “we were working in harmony with them and not just seen as a bunch of militants to make the work of the officials harder”. In subsequent months, officials attempted to again correct the misinformation through town hall meetings with residents – advertised, in part, through the Facebook group.

Clean-ups: Various clean-up activities were organised by Phil to take place in flood-affected areas. These activities were advertised and coordinated via the Facebook group and the local newspaper. Clean-up events were organised on various days (27th-31st December) at various locations including shopping areas, residential streets and community centres. Volunteers wore high-visibility jackets and assisted with cleaning shops and houses as well as moving flood damaged furniture outside. Local businesses donated free cleaning equipment to assist volunteers in clean-up activities.

Although the clean-up activities were coordinated by one individual, health and safety restrictions were applied differently by officials in different local authorities bringing irritation to volunteers on the Facebook group where frustrations were again vented. For instance residents in Tonbridge were able to remove items of furniture from homes and load these into skips whilst volunteers in Hildenborough were not allowed. This led to conflict between officials and volunteers who felt that they needed to be doing more to help but were being held back by different local interpretations of the same health and safety guidance.

Distribution of flood recovery guides: Shortly after the need for clean-up had reduced (4th to 6th Jan), spontaneous volunteers helped to deliver flood recovery guides to affected streets (Danvers Road, Holford Street, Barden Road, Gladstone Road, Northcote Road). Copies were also left at various local businesses and public building. This was advertised across the Facebook group and locally managed by the second individual.

***Continuing Activities*:** Following the floods a number of meetings were arranged during which the Environment Agency explained the operation of Leigh FSA. The initial purpose of these meeting was to provide the Environment Agency with the

opportunity to inform residents as to how Leigh FSA was designed to operate. The EA also engaged with the Facebook group to further disseminate information.

'Help & support for Tonbridge & surrounding areas affected by the floods' is still active with 1697 Facebook users signed up to the group. Requests for assistance dropped around March 2014 but have since increased perhaps due to issues concerning flood insurance, the drying out process and moving back home.

The Tonbridge Area Flood Support (TAFS) group has been established by 11 volunteers from the initial Facebook group who wanted to provide further support to individuals in the Tonbridge area. An event has been planned for October 2014 in which community flood plans and personalised home flood plans will be promoted.

Key points/take home messages

- Two sorts of leaders were evident. One in cyber-space to manage the online coordination of requests for help and offers of assistance. One on-the-ground to manage the spontaneous volunteers who turn up on the day. Due to the intensity of each, dividing these across different people may be best.
- Friction between the local authority and volunteers and residents was apparent throughout the recovery phase. For example, there was a lack of consistency regarding the nature and extent of volunteer involvement in clean-up operations, and confusion over the purpose of Leigh FSA and its role in flood prevention. At a later meeting to discuss the operation of the FSA local residents stated that they had felt 'let down'. This was due in part to a belief held by local residents that the FSA would be capable of protecting the town from flooding rather than restricting the flow by storing water further back up stream. The establishment of a technical volunteer team was mooted as a possible means by which local residents could engage with the FSA team and report back to their communities on its operation.
- Lack of information concerning 'what to do' and 'how to recover' from a flood was an issue addressed by the Facebook group.
- Information management is key, as most residents converged online to the Facebook group this was where many of them sought information. In Tonbridge the administrator of this group knew the council system and was able to direct people effectively. However some misinformation still spread

Case Study 3 - Recovery from coastal flooding in Boston, Lincolnshire.

Introduction

The following case study examines the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in the recovery of large scale coastal flooding in Boston (Lincolnshire) on 5th December

2013. It illustrates how social media can be used to coordinate a community response. Certain individuals emerged as leaders/linchpins, taking responsibility for specific tasks and coordinating the involvement of other volunteers. This case study demonstrates the tensions that can arise between officials, organised voluntary groups and spontaneous volunteers. It highlights the potential for friction, especially where relationships (e.g. in a memorandum of understanding) have not been stress tested.

AT A GLANCE[5]

Flood type:

- Coastal surge

Area flooded and impact:

- 607 residences identified as flooded by Boston Borough Council
- 203 persons received evacuation assistance (78 households)
- 44 persons and 2 pets rescued from flood water
- 121 businesses and 1,700 hectares of agricultural land flooded
- £8.1m damage to infrastructure
- 350 tonnes of flood contaminated waste collected
- 18-20km of flood defences overtopped, 4 breach locations

Active volunteer groups:

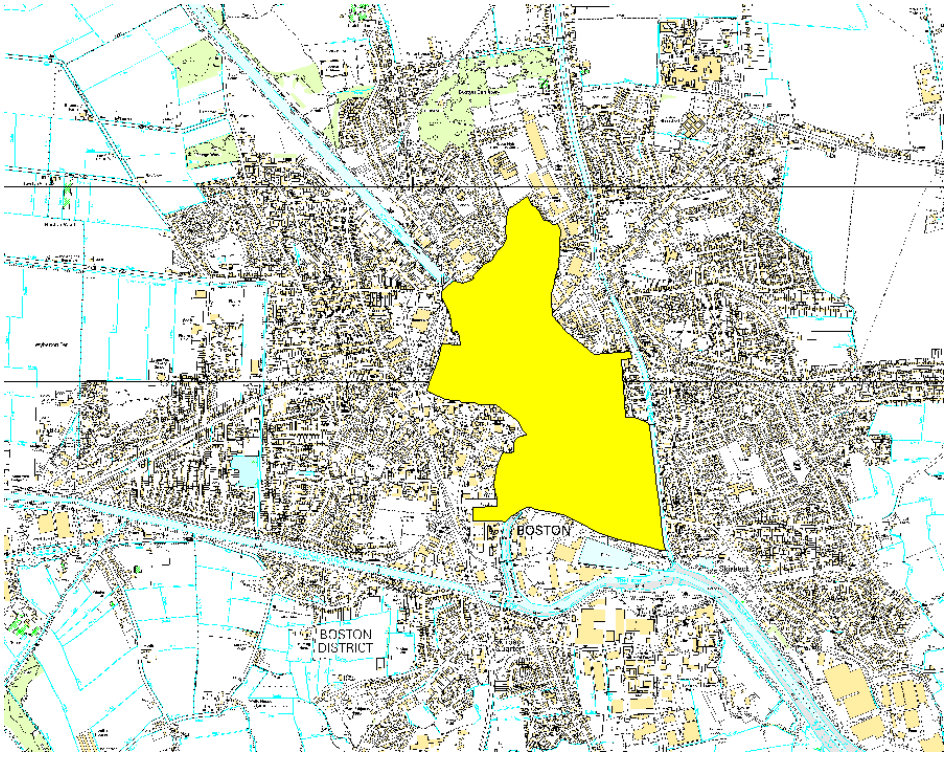
- Boston Borough Council's community impact volunteers
- British Red Cross (BRC)
- Get Boston Back on its Feet – a Facebook group that shared information and coordinated a relief effort
- 'Fenside Mums' – a group from the Fenside area who distributed items

Key volunteer activities:

- Community impact statements
- Clean-ups
- Collection and distribution of donated goods
- Fund raising including Flood Aid Boston 2014

[5] Information obtained from Lincolnshire Resilience Forum's Tidal Survey Response & Recovery 'After Action' Report (2014).

Figure 5.3: Map of the extent of the flooding in Boston



Context

Boston is located in the county of Lincolnshire. The town has a history of flooding with such events recorded in 1931, 1953 and 1978. The weather conditions on December 5th 2013 led to Boston experiencing the largest coastal surge since 1953 (see Figure 5.3). Advances in surge forecasting, flood prediction, flood defences and contingency planning gave Boston time to prepare for potential flooding (e.g. issuing of flood warnings). However, substantial damage was caused to residential properties and businesses. Many of the residents who were flooded during 2013 did not have flood insurance. Furthermore, the high percentage of non-English speaking residents in Boston challenged the communication of flood recovery information.

Timeline of events[6]

Early warning phase (2nd – 3rd December)

- *2nd December:*
    - At 10:30 hrs, the Environment Agency's (EA) Northern Area first notified of risk of tidal surge. A "Yellow" Flood Guidance Statement

[6] Information obtained from Lincolnshire Resilience Forum's Tidal Survey Response & Recovery 'After Action' Report (2014), Facebook and interviews with emergency planners and spontaneous volunteers.

(FGS) was issued indicating the "very low likelihood of significant coastal impacts on the east coast of England".

- *3rd December:*
  - At 13:00 hrs, the MET office issued a Yellow Alert for strong west to north-westerly winds predicted for the 5th December.
  - At 13:00 hrs, east coast LRFs to participate in a precautionary 'response coordinating group' teleconference.
  - At 14:00 hrs, a precautionary Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) is briefed on the emerging situation.

Threat assessment and preparation (4th-5th December)

- *Wednesday 4th December:*
  - At 12:45 hrs, the MET office issued an Amber Alert. Winds were assessed to be strong enough to cause damage to particular structures, such as the Christmas market stalls in Boston.
  - At 14:00 hrs, weather conditions posed the risk of possible overtopping and spray of flood defences along the open coastline. A tidal surge along the River Haven was predicted to reach a height of 5.72 metres, with defences in Boston standing at 6 metres.
  - At 18:00hrs, a Flood Alert was issued for potential tidal flooding on the Lincolnshire Coastline.
  - Emergency planners were tasked with identifying vulnerable individuals, premises and assets.
- *Thursday 5th December (before 10am):*
  - At 06:00 hrs, the EA Area and Catchment Flood Incident Room was opened. Coastal floodgates are closed in preparation for high tides.
  - At 07:30 hrs, the flood risk for the whole of the north east coast of England raised to Amber.
  - The increased level of risk led to the activation the LRF's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with voluntary sector. This enabled the coordination of voluntary sector responses by the BRC to support the emergency services.
  - At 08:00 hrs, County Emergency Centre opened.
  - At 08:00 hrs, full SCG met. Evacuation procedures are discussed.
  - At 08:50 hrs, flood warnings issued by the EA to 30,300 homes advising residents to be prepared.
  - At 09:00 hrs, full Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) meeting held. A 'battle rhythm' (pace of meetings/reporting) was established. Command support functions were extended to support evacuation planning.

Impact phase (5th-6th December)

- *Thursday 5th December (10:00 hrs onwards):*
  - At 10:30 hrs, TCG confirms evacuation planning based on three scenarios i) 'most likely' affecting 600 properties; ii) potential breach affecting 6,000; and iii) worst case scenario affecting 38,000 properties.
  - At 10:30 hrs, an evacuation hub (assessment centre) and forward base of operations is established at the Princess Royal Sports Arena

(PRSA) in Boston. Plans for the evacuation of residents are established.

- Official emergency responders confirm a capacity of 240 boat rescues per hour.
- At 11:05 hrs, the situation was declared as an emergency (as per Civil Contingencies Act) due to the potential impact of the severe whether on communities and the environment:
    - Key infrastructure assets and known vulnerable people continued to be identified.
    - Early school closures requested to facilitate additional transportation.
    - Self-evacuation of vulnerable premises was initiated.
    - Boston BC decided not to deploy sandbags however; these are sent to strategic locations along the coastline to be used if needed.
- At 13:00 hrs, DCLG RED confirmed higher than expect surge, LRFs enter impact phase of response.
- At 13:30 hrs, Boston Borough Council began evacuating known vulnerable people residing within the predicted flood zone.
- At 14:30 hrs, threat level raise to ‘Red’ (highest risk) in Lincolnshire.
- At 15:10 hrs, EA issued ‘Severe Flood Warnings’ to 12,300 properties in Boston.
- At 15:10 hrs, flood boat rescue teams deployed (Louth).
- At 15.30 hrs, ‘Strategic’ large-scale evacuation centres opened. This included an evacuee processing hub/assessment centre at PRSA and two evacuation centres at ‘Parents Get Lost’ (PGL) and Prince William of Gloucester Barracks (PWOG).
- At 17.00 hrs, Lincolnshire Police report a rise in the number of calls from members of the public seeking advice regarding evacuation and offers of assistance.
- At 17:45 hrs, EA advised partners to prepare for possible flood defence breaches in Boston at high tide due to higher than expected surge heights. Evacuation process was fully initiated.
- At 18:00 hrs, Police receive reports from officers and members of the public regarding flooding impacts along coastline resulting in road closures, evacuations as well as the provision of warnings and information.
- At 18:10 hrs, first flooding in Boston (Church Street) reported. The number of flood-related calls increased significantly, lasting for approximately 3 hours.
- At 18:15 hrs, temporary alternative evacuation centre established at Stickney following the re-routing of evacuees from Boston. Local community assists, providing food and blankets to evacuees.
- At 18:25 hrs, amount of radio traffic causes system to reach capacity. Police are called to deal with members of the public who ignore requests to stay away from flood impacted areas.
- At 18:40 hrs, police report over 50 flood-related incident calls. Available mutual aid and local resources are fully deployed.

- At 19:15 hrs, Humber LRF reports higher than predicted surge level. Messages advising the public to seek a place of safety (including vertical evacuation) are sent out. Flood water in some areas too deep/fast flowing for police to respond.
- At 19:32 hrs, first critical high tide at Boston. Significant flooding to waterside properties in Boston reported.
- At 21:15 hrs, approximately 220 evacuees are moved from PRSA to PGL and PWOG.
- At 22:00 hrs, impact of flooding extensive but in line with original threat assessment from EA.
- At 22:11 hrs, a member of the public creates the Facebook group 'Get Boston Back on its Feet'. The group's initial description is, "to coordinate offers of help to clean-up after the awful floods of 5 December, 2013. Within 2 hours 370 people had joined the group.
- By 23:18 hrs, the Facebook group had:
  - Initiated the process of starting Just Giving webpage to receive financial donations.
  - Arranged for a central coordination depot to collect/ distribute goods.
  - Arranged a meeting to help with clean-ups.
  - Received offers from tradespersons donating time and expertise.
- At 23:00 hrs, overnight staffing of evacuation centres, continued assessment of flood impacts.

- *Friday 6th December:*
  - Between 02:00 and 06:00 hrs, impact assessments continue over night in advance of next high tide. Police prepare for house-to-house visits to establish flood impact and need.
  - At approximately 05:30 hrs, users of the Facebook group report warning from the EA to expect severe flooding and should prepare to be evacuated.
  - At 07:30 hrs, FGS maintains "Red" flood risk.
  - At 08:00 hrs, Boston BC confirmed to lead community response to flooding. Second critical high tide.
  - At 09:00 hrs, East Lindsey District Council deployed housing teams to coastal areas where overtopping had been reported to complete impact assessments.
  - At 09:35 hrs, the Facebook group is informed that Boston BC is willing to accept offers of help from the public. The group users are advised to coordinate efforts with the Operations department at Boston BC to help with the disposal of rubbish and other flood-damaged materials.
  - At 10:00 hrs, first local recovery meeting held between Boston BC and police to discuss impacts and way forward. PWOG evacuation centre closed.
  - At 10:28 hrs, the number of people joining the Facebook group exceeds 500. B&Q and Tesco stores donate cleaning materials to Facebook group clean-up operations.

- At 11:00 hrs, residents arrange a meeting at The Britannia (public house) to organise clean-up operations.
- At 11:50 hrs, Facebook group informed that the Zion Methodist Church is accepting donations between specific times.
- At 12:00 hrs, Boston BC confirmed 263 evacuations, 40 vulnerable persons relocated for immediate care, 3 non-serious casualties.
- At 17:00 hrs, FSG flood risk for Lincolnshire “Amber”, due to the need for flood defence inspects or damaged flood defences. In other areas of the east coast/north risk level was “Yellow”.
- At 17:55 hrs, Boston BC informs the Facebook group coordinator that BRC are standing by to assist. A message is posted asking the group’s users if they have any contacts with the BRC so the group’s coordinator can contact BRC for information.
- At 18:47 hrs, the number of people joining the Facebook group exceeds 650.
- At 20:27 hrs, Facebook coordinators report difficulties/tensions in organising clean-up operations due to issues of liability:

6 December 2013 · Boston

Please all group members read this....

This group was set up to get people together to offer help and support to those affected by the floods...

We have been trying to coordinate with the council and the Red Cross however we are hitting our heads up a brick wall.

I propose the following...

If you are in need or know of anyone in need please post a help request on here. We have an incredible number of willing volunteers ready and able to help.

Volunteers can then pm or inbox those needing help and coordinate assistance directly....

Due to bureaucracy and red tape if we organise a clear up directly and someone was injured we would be held liable.. It is utterly ridiculous I know but that is the way the world turns...

- At 20:30 hrs, high tide passes without any further flooding.
- At 22:00 hrs, Severe Flood Warnings removed. Remaining evacuees relocated from PGL, the last of the evacuation centres closes. Arrangements are made with Boston BC and health partners to assist “self-presenters” who required assistance overnight.
- At 22:28 hrs, the Facebook coordinator informs the group of the “all clear”:

6 December 2013 · Boston

We have just received an "All Clear" message from the environment agency for evacuated people to return home.....

Let the clean up commence..... Spread the word everyone and we can make these poor peoples lives a little easier.....

- At 00:00 hrs, SCG declares emergency response phase completed.

- 700 people joined the Facebook group Get Boston Back on its Feet within its first 24 hours.

Handover to recovery (7th-8th December)

- *7th December:*
  - At 11:00 hrs, Boston BC holds a meeting attended by police, fire and the Local Authority. A large volunteer turnout is expected at this meeting (approximately 500). However, only 6 volunteers attend.
  - At 11:06 hrs, the number of people joining the Facebook group reaches 1000. The group's structure becomes more formalised and responsibility for coordination of key activities is allocated to 3 individuals by the group's main coordinator (Shaun). Key activities include: clean-ups (organised by Jane), collections (organised by Simon) and fundraising (organised by Rita).
  - 11:30 hrs, Volunteers meet at the Robin Hood Pub. Activities arranged via Facebook include a 'door knock' to check on the elderly and the vulnerable.
  - At 20:49 hrs, an update is provided to the Facebook group concerning the days activities:

7 December 2013 · Boston

An amazing day on so many different levels... Door knocking, community engagement, furniture and clothing donations, Christmas parcels all from the people of our town....

This group has brought together the very best of our community and we have achieved an amazing amount.

Tomorrow is another day and the work continues.

To the new members of the group , welcome... It's time to get your sleeves rolled up and hands dirty to help those less fortunate.

I will post an update later to inform you of events tomorrow... In the meantime, sleep well and be ready for another incredible day that will restore your faith in our community and prove that Boston is a great town with great commitment to its residents.....

- *8th December*
  - At 09:00 hrs, another 'door knock' was arranged to assess flood impact. Volunteers met at the council offices.
  - At 09:50 hrs, requests are made on the Facebook group page for additional volunteers to assist the police with 'door knocks'.
  - Between 12:00 and 14:00 hrs, volunteers organise a collection of Xmas presents for flood victims.
  - At 12:03 hrs, Boston BC, BRC and the Facebook group agree to coordinate their efforts:

8 December 2013 · Edited

********** IMPORTANT UPDATE PLEASE ALL READ **********

We have had a meeting with the Council, Police and Red Cross this morning to coordinate all of our efforts.

Please can we all be patient as we need to have a structured plan to make sure that all of the donations are given to the right people at the right time. In light of this please hold onto your donations for the time being and further details will be posted on here of what you will need to do to get these to those in need. Please also look out for Council communications on this page.

Plans are currently being made with Council and Red Cross to:-

1. Establish central points for food, cleaning products and household goods.
2. Establish the families in need in the worst areas of flooding.
3. Establish a point for all cash donations to be coordinated through and plans for onward distribution.

At this stage the police and volunteers are completing an impact assessment of the flooded areas, when this is completed further planning can be completed.

Meeting has indicated that most peoples clothing has not be damaged. At this point the clothing collected to date will support those in need. Please still hang on and if more is needed we will update on this page.

Remember collections are on going in Pescod Square for Christmas Presents for children affected by the flooding.

- At approximately 2:00 hrs, LCC and BRC hold a coordination meeting with the Facebook coordinators and Fenside Mums. Both groups agree to take direction from Boston BC and are provided with basic training and PPE. By agreeing to take direction from Boston BC both groups are informed that, provided individuals sign indemnity insurance forms, they will be covered under LCC's Employer Indemnity Insurance Policy. The types of activities covered included: door knocking; community impact statements; delivering donated goods; providing advice to members of the public. Lincolnshire CC/Boston BC reassures the groups that they retain ownership of their activities.
- At 15:38 hrs, Zion asks for donations to stop as they reach capacity. Requests are made for volunteers to help move donations to victims. Only non-perishable food is accepted.
- At 20:45 hrs, a further update is provided to the group as certain individuals feel that the response is not moving 'rapidly enough'. Tensions concerning the council's/BRC acceptance and use of donated goods begin to emerge. On the Facebook group it is reported that donated goods are being disposed of if they did not meet certain criteria. For instance white goods must have passed a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) before they could be distributed to flood victims. Requests for PAT qualified volunteers are made on the Facebook group to speed up this process. Misinformation concerning the potential disposal of inappropriate donations causes tensions within the Facebook group. To address this the group develops its own guidelines concerning donations:

In respect of Donations we now need to regroup and follow the guidelines as below:-

1. At this time, until as have arranged suitable storage and ability to test goods please keep your furnishings and electrical items to hand. We will post what's needed as this becomes known.
2. The Zion Church Brothertoft Road will now only be accepting Food items.
3. The Baptist Church High Street will be now only accepting and distributing cleaning materials.

In respect of any cash donations I will have an update on this tomorrow about how and where these can be sent and coordinated.

Again a massive thank you from the Get Boston Back on its Feet Team 🙂

- At 21:52, a request is made via the Facebook group for translation services to assist non-English speaking residents.
- During the day, the Fenside Community Centre starts taking donations. A group of local residents, known to Boston BC as the 'Fenside Mums', gain permission to use Fenside Community Centre to collect and distribute donations.
- Community impact assessments continue to be conducted by police, local council, BRC, and spontaneous volunteers over 7th and 8th December. Focus on public health messages, identifying vulnerable persons.

Recovery phase (9th December 2013 – 4th February 2014)

- *9th December*
  - At 09:47 hrs, a request for support at Fenside Community Centre to help sort out donations is made via the Facebook group.
  - At 11:57 hrs, Facebook group coordinators circulate a request from Boston BC for clean-up volunteers with experience of cleaning contaminated areas. Due to health risks the request asks that volunteers have prior training and experience.
  - At 22:58 hrs, an update is provided to the Facebook group. This includes confirmation of the relationship between the group and Lincolnshire CC. The group is reassured by Shaun that Lincolnshire CC is not trying to assume control of the group's activities.
  - Over 700 community impact assessments are completed over the first weekend of the flooding, 400 with flooded-affected residents. Spontaneous volunteers play an important role in achieving this objective.
  - Volunteers continue to assist in the recovery, helping to conduct community resilience questionnaires with victims. Boston BC engages with Mary Dhonau, a prominent community flood consultant, to help identify and support needs.
  - BRC Fire Support Teams provided assistance to flood victims in affected areas.
  - Voluntary donation of goods collection point established and run by volunteers at Zion Methodist Church.

    - Over the New Year period volunteers assist with revisits to affected properties as part on on-going needs assessment.
    - On-going clean-ups continue throughout December/January
- *10th December:*
    - Activity at the Fenside Community Centre begins to scale down as the site returns back to its normal activities. Council's Fen Road Depot opened to handle donations.
- *Work to assist flood victims continue throughout the recovery*:
    - 1st February Flood Aid: Launch Party.
    - April – volunteers from Boston receive recognition from the Prime Minister.
    - 26th July Flood Aid: Music.
    - 27th July Flood Aid: Family.

Volunteer involvement in the floods

There were a number of different types of volunteer involvement in Boston. Some of this volunteering was spontaneous, in that a group of volunteers converged at an agreed time and date organised by the council to assist Boston BC with its Community Impact Assessments. Here, volunteers worked alongside the police, the British Red Cross and council employees. The volunteer involvement was coordinated by Michelle (from Boston BC) and Alex (from Lincolnshire County Council).

Shaun was largely responsible for the running of the Facebook group, 'Get Boston Back on its Feet', set up to help organise the community response. The group quickly expanded and two other individuals emerged as linchpins, coordinating different types of activities. Jane organised various clean-up activities. Simon, Shaun, Rita, Anna coordinated the collection and distribution of donated goods from the Zion Methodist Church and Unitarian Chapel. Shaun, who acted as the group's administrator, also took responsibility for fundraising via the Just Giving website.

Another group of volunteers, identified as the 'Fenside Mums', helped to collect and distribute donated goods from the Fenside Community Centre. Although this group's organisation was separate to that of the Facebook group, the two appeared to coordinate their efforts jointly.

Activities

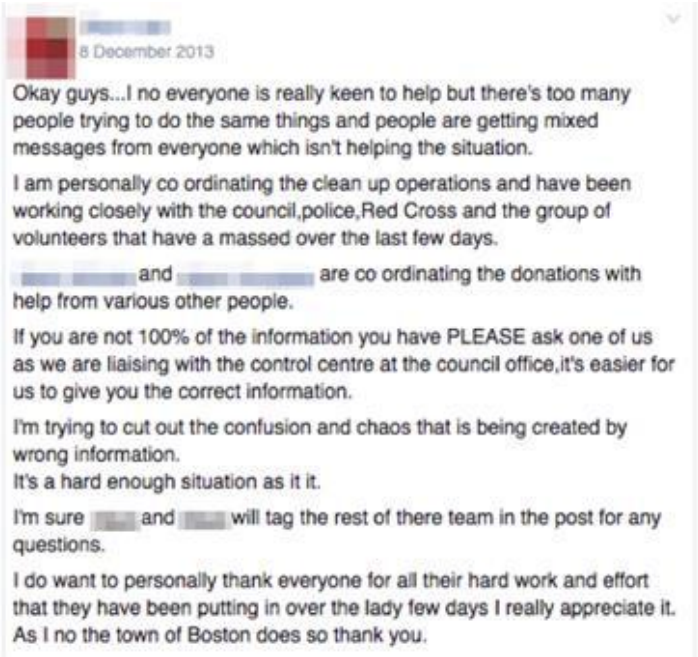
Facebook: The Facebook account "Get Boston Back on its Feet" was formed on the 5th of December. Anyone was able to join the group however; it was not necessary access the information. Within 24 hours 700 people had joined the Facebook group. During the response this grew to a height of 2,100 people. The group provided virtual space in which individuals could share information (e.g. let people know about

volunteer activities), make practical offers of assistance to those affected by the floods (e.g. offers from skilled labourers), offer goods (e.g. white goods, beds, sofas, mattresses etc.) as well as request specific help. The Facebook group took responsibility for three key tasks:

- Clean-ups
- Donations
- Fundraising

***Clean-ups*:** During the initial stages of the response users of the Facebook group expressed concerns that not enough was being done by Boston BC to help the flood victims. One of the group's users (Jane) had attempted to organise a 'clean-up' event however, volunteers were informed by Boston BC that they would be individually liable in the event that anyone was hurt. In response to this, the group organised smaller 'unofficial' clean-ups where those requiring assistance posted a message on the groups' wall and potential volunteers responded directly to those requests. The extent to which this happened is unclear but this demonstrates the potential issues that can be encountered when an enthusiastic group of volunteers is not provided with an appropriate outlet to help flood victims.

Responding to concerns over duplicated effort Ben, who had proposed the initial clean-up, began to coordinate the various clean-up activities. The Facebook group took clear steps to address these concerns and maintain their own efficiency:


8 December 2013

Okay guys...I no everyone is really keen to help but there's too many people trying to do the same things and people are getting mixed messages from everyone which isn't helping the situation.

I am personally co ordinating the clean up operations and have been working closely with the council,police,Red Cross and the group of volunteers that have a massed over the last few days.

and are co ordinating the donations with help from various other people.

If you are not 100% of the information you have PLEASE ask one of us as we are liaising with the control centre at the council office,it's easier for us to give you the correct information.

I'm trying to cut out the confusion and chaos that is being created by wrong information.
It's a hard enough situation as it it.

I'm sure and will tag the rest of there team in the post for any questions.

I do want to personally thank everyone for all their hard work and effort that they have been putting in over the lady few days I really appreciate it. As I no the town of Boston does so thank you.

As the group became more established they were able to forge closer links with Boston BC and the BRC. Shaun provided regular updates regarding any meetings etc. By 9th December a formal agreement had been reached between the Facebook

and Lincolnshire County Council concerning the groups' involvement in recovery activities. However, it was necessary for Shaun to reassure the group that they would not be taking control of the group's activities.

***Donations*:** Donations were accepted at three locations during:

- Fenside Community Centre.
- Zion Methodist Church.
- Unitarian Chapel.

Anna was responsible for coordinating the collection and distribution of goods at the Fenside Community Centre, whilst Simon, Shaun and Rita helped to coordinate across the other two locations. Tensions began to develop between Boston BC, the BRC and SVs over the quality and safety of donated goods. Volunteers were eager to distribute the goods however, any electrical goods needed to be PAT tested whilst furniture needed fire safety certificates. As donations continued, storage became an issue. The council opened one of its own depots to hold white goods, providing volunteers with access to the site to enable them to distribute the donations. Reports on the Facebook group suggested that non-flood victims were accepting donated goods. This led to instances were individuals asked for money when donating goods.

***Fundraising*:** Shaun took responsibility for fund raising, using the Just Giving website.

Community impact statements: In the immediate aftermath of the flooding Boston BC collected community impact statements from over 700 residents affect by the flooding. Here SVs were integrated into the official emergency response and worked alongside police, other council employees and BRC. For some SVs who were involved in this activity there was a sense of frustration that they were not able to provide practical assistance to flood victims. From Boston BC's perspective these impact assessments were vital to enable a targeted response directed towards those in greatest need.

***Continuing activities*:** The Facebook group continues to function as it did during the response and recovery, with users posting information about flood insurance/grants, offers/request for assistance and donations of goods.

Users of the group recently organised and ran a 'Flood Aid Boston 2014' concert. The aim was to raise further funds to help flood victims. The group estimates to have helped 150 households since the flooding, Flood Aid, which raised approximately £8,000 has enabled them to provide assistance to further 15/20 homes.

***Tensions*:** BRC volunteers took an initial lead on volunteer management, deployment, advice and engagement in community resilience work. This included directing the efforts of spontaneous volunteers. The MoU between Boston BC and

BRC operated as intended however; this MoU only covered the response phase. As Boston BC moved into the recovery phase, assumptions were made about the continuing role of BRC that were not included in the MoU. This misunderstanding was a source of tension as Boston BC expected BRC to conduct tasks that were not part of any formal agreement between the two parties. As there was no MoU concerning the management of SVs during the recovery phase, BRC were redeployed to other activities. Boston BC then assumed the role of managing the spontaneous volunteers.

Further tensions between the Boston BC, organised voluntary groups and individual local volunteers were also identified in Boston. Spontaneous volunteers became frustrated during the initial stages of the recovery, particularly during the process of collecting community impact statements. Volunteers wanted to provide immediate practical assistance however, Boston BC wanted to conduct impact assessments so that those most at need would receive help first. This led to freelancing during the early stages of the response, as flood victims would contact volunteers directly through the Facebook page to ask for assistance. Another issue arose when volunteers posted pictures on social media outlets of police officers and council officials on their rest breaks in council buildings, suggesting that they were not doing enough to help flood victims. This added to tensions between police officers and volunteers, with officers less willing to take volunteers out with them to complete impact statements.

Tension was also found concerning the collection and distribution of donated goods. There were 3 volunteer run collection points (Zion Methodist Church, Unitarian Chapel, Fenside Community Centre) as well as the Council Depot collecting donations. Tension began to mount when the council became involved in the distribution of electrical goods. These required safety testing before they could be distributed to victims. However, delays in completion of these tests led to frustration, as volunteers were eager to distribute these items. There were also reports that members of the community were donating inappropriate items (damaged/broken) as well as non-flood victims responding to donation offers on the Facebook group page.

Tensions were observed between the ‘Fenside Mums’ and the BRC. The BRC wanted to manage the donations at the Fenside Community Centre under their own protocols. This move was strongly resisted by the ‘Fenside Mums’ who retained responsibility for their operations after agreeing to take direction and control from Boston BC. Tensions were also apparent between the ‘Fenside Mums’ and the manager of Fenside Community Centre who both wanted to take the lead on the activities. Boston BC often found that it was refereeing such situations.

Facebook group users also reported being the target of abusive language and threats. On a number of occasions Shaun had to intervene. One Facebook group user reported being told to ‘watch their back’, and eventually left the group:

10 December 2013 · Boston

Important update.....

Good morning kind people of Boston!!!

Unfortunately I have had a number of people coming to me having been victims of online abuse on the page. People are being criticised for their actions when all they are trying to do is help others. This page is here to coordinate the relief effort on behalf of the hundreds of amazing volunteers that are working incredibly hard to help our community..

Therefore we are having to implement some simple rules for posts.

1. Please do not use this site to criticise others... This does not help the cause. If you have a concern please raise it with the relevant authority.

2. Online abuse or criticism of others in the group will not be tolerated. If you witness this happening please report to admin, [redacted] We will the deal accordingly.

3. If a post is found to be abusive in any way it will be removed. If this happens a second time we will have to ban the user.

We are only taking these measures to ensure we focus on the job in hand. To support all those in need takes a huge amount of effort and we do not want the people who are giving up every waking hour to be hampered in any way. Please please please if you have an issue with any of the authorities please direct you concerns at them.....

Thank you everyone, I know you will all understand.....

9 December 2013

Hey guys me again!! Can I just say that if your not happy with the way something is being done please bear in mind it is being done like that for a reason there are protocols that need to be followed I'm afraid. Please don't get into the organisers as they are only trying to help.

10 December 2013 · Edited

Being messaged and told to 'watch your back' is not what I came on to this page for, or gave up my weekend to end up with. I shall continue supporting and helping the families I'm currently supporting, but then I'm out. I wish the people who are doing their best/volunteers and the guys running this stuff all the best - sounds like some exciting stuff coming up. I don't need threat's adding into my life right now. God bless x

10 December 2013

I'm done with this page. [redacted] feel free to message or phone me if you feel there is anything else I can do to help. To those hell bent on slagging others off and bitching, enjoy.

Key points

- The Boston case study represents an instance where several different voluntary, community and statutory sectors groups worked together.

- Boston BC assumed control of the recovery stage and integrated spontaneous volunteers into the response through the collection of community impact statements.
- Boston BC had expected a large volunteer turnout (over 500) at its initial briefing based on interest over social media however, only 6 volunteers attended. This highlights an important point concerning social media and the level of various group users' involvement. Although the number of people joining the Facebook group exceeded 2000 it remains unclear how many individuals were actively volunteering/donating and how may had joined the group primarily to receive information about the flooding.
- The Facebook group 'Get Boston Back on its Feet' started as one individual's idea to help their local community in the immediate aftermath to flooding. The number of people joining this group grew rapidly. Immediate offers of assistance were provided and the group quickly established a formal structure with key individuals responsible for coordinating various different events. Importantly the Facebook group was run and managed by a member of the public for the benefit of the local community.
- The Facebook group was keen to engage with the Local Authority and quickly established formal relationships with Lincolnshire CC, Boston BC and the BRC. This further enabled both the Facebook group and the Local Authority to disseminate information and communicate with a large group of potential volunteers. The Facebook group was keen to remain autonomous from the Local Authority. Emergency managers suggested that the group might have been distrusting of the Local Authority.
- The group's activities have continued months after the initial flood events. Social activities such as a Flood Aid concert have been organised.
- Various sources of tension were observed. Perhaps the most unexpected was between the Local Authority and the BRC, leading to the eventual deployment BRC to other tasks within the official response. Although the MoU with the voluntary sector operated as intended, tensions around the management of spontaneous volunteers arose because the MoU did not cover the recovery phase.
- The case study also indicates how tension can arise between and within different voluntary groups. For instance, tension was found between the BRC and the 'Fenside Mums', who resisted the involvement of the BRC in their activities. The tension became so significant that Lincolnshire CC and Boston BC utilised a substantial amount of resource to managing such relations. Tension was also evident within the Facebook group and between the manager of the Fenside Community Centre and the 'Fenside Mums'.

Section 6. Findings from the interviews

Key points:

- This section brings together the findings from the fifty Stage 2 interviews.
- Stage 2 involved the interviewing of 21 emergency managers, 16 representatives from organised volunteer groups and 13 spontaneous volunteers.
- The responses from all Stage 2 interviews were considered alongside one another and themed based on how they answered the nine research questions.
- The detail of each theme is expanded in this section to provide a rich picture of the responses across the interviews.

This section shows the breadth of topics mentioned by respondents on the topic of spontaneous volunteers. It is split into the three research priorities (and their associated research questions) that were presented in Section 2:

a. The challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers in the operational response to a flood event.
b. The interplay between spontaneous volunteers, official emergency responders and organised voluntary groups.
c. Whether a policy or guidance document on spontaneous volunteering would be useful.

These findings, along with the conclusions from the case studies in Section 5, are used to establish the strategies presented in Section 7.

Research priority a: The challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers in the operational response to a flood event

This sub-section is organised according the research questions in Section 2:

i. What are the motivations and aims driving individuals to converge as volunteers during a flood event?
ii. How have spontaneous volunteers been involved in flood response and recovery?
iii. What are the issues in managing spontaneous volunteers?
iv. How do organisations monitor and supervise spontaneous volunteers?

We now present the detailed answers to these questions.

i. What are the motivations and aims driving individuals to converge as volunteers during a flood event?

The most usual reason for spontaneous volunteers to involve themselves in the relief effort was the desire to help local people and help the community. Thus, we split these findings into:

- The motivation of spontaneous volunteers to getting involved [Point 1]
- The aim of spontaneous volunteers in getting involved [Point 2]

1. **The motivation of spontaneous volunteers to get involved**: Often spontaneous volunteers could not see what the council was doing, but noticed the community's response through practical activities and social media. The reasons for them getting involved included:
   - ***Just wanted to help***: Often spontaneous volunteers talked about watching local people with lots of problems and feeling that they wanted to help and put something back into the community. Sometimes their response was practical, other times it was providing information.
   - ***Survivor's guilt***: Some people felt guilty about not being affected by the floods and knew how horrible it would be if it happened to them so decided to help. As the most recent flooding occurred just before Christmas spontaneous volunteers appeared to empathise with the plight of flood victims, feeling it necessary to provide assistance around that time of year in particular.
   - ***They were my friends***: The people who were flooded were neighbours, friends, school-mates, colleagues and members of the same clubs and associations. Some volunteers spoke of a strong connection felt towards the local area and therefore found that the flooding had a profound indirect impact on them.
   - ***Help was needed***: Some people were phoned and asked for help, so they responded.
   - ***Other people were helping***: Some people responded because they heard that others were helping and they wanted to join them.
   - ***I was affected***: A few interviewees were personally affected by the flood (e.g. their vehicle, house or business was affected) and were possibly looking for ways to distract their attention from the harm caused, and wanted to help others who may have been more affected.

   Some interviewees talked about how their volunteering has given them friends for life, integrated them into the community, and how the community spirit has strengthened following the floods. Social media helped to recruit and organise spontaneous volunteers e.g. Facebook provided a means for individuals to find out what was happening, such as who was organising clean-ups in Tonbridge, and how information about practical support available. Although some EMs interviewed at Stage 1 expressed a concern that individuals may volunteer for selfish reasons, this view was not supported by the interview data collected at Stage 2 which included the views of SVs themselves. The Stage 2 interviews revealed predominately altruistic motivations for

volunteering, whilst neither EM nor OV interviewees provided any clear examples/anecdotes of selfish or malicious behaviour from the volunteers. We do not argue that this was not present, but our research questions did not seek to discover egocentric reasons.

2. ***The aim of spontaneous volunteers in getting involved***: Individuals became spontaneous volunteers for a variety of reasons however, these motives tended to be more altruistic and seeking to achieve other priorities, such as:
   - ***To get people back on their feet***: Volunteers recognised that they were not specialists in emergency response but still wanted to reduce the stress experienced by flood victims and help them to get their lives back to normal.
   - ***To build community spirit and future capacity***: Here volunteers aimed to develop a sense of community spirit to unite 'neighbours' and make them better prepared for future events. In Tonbridge, this was to combat a general sense of apathy from the wider community, so volunteers saw this as a means to develop a culture of community that had been lost.
   - ***To compensate for the inaction from emergency services***: Some individuals volunteered because they perceived there to be a lack of action from official emergency responders.
   - ***Unspecific aims***: Often spontaneous volunteers had no specific aims other than to help out in any way that they could.

ii. How have spontaneous volunteers been involved in flood response and recovery?

The three case studies in Section 5 detail the activities of SVs in UK locations. In addition, from the interview data there was a lot of varying practice on how spontaneous volunteers were initially received – some very formal (e.g. application forms), other informal (e.g. deployed to low-level, unsupervised tasks), or dismissive (e.g. sent to another organisation). Below are the themes for how SVs were involved:

- Directing SVs to other organisations [Point 3]
- Not involve SVs with specialist skills [Point 4]
- Involve SVs in non-physical, low-level activities away from the frontline [Point 5]
- Involve SVs in physical, low-level activities at the frontline [Point 6]
- Recognise that not all offers of help can be accepted [Point 7]
- Involve SVs to avoid them freelancing [Point 8]
- Involve SVs to get their local knowledge [Point 9]
- Involve SVs as they have social resources to help to organise [Point 10]
- Involve SVs later in the recovery stage [Point 11]
- A structured process of recruiting SVs and recording offers of help [Point 12]

Below we present the detail of these themes.

3. **Directing SVs to other organisations**: It was thought that if official emergency responders were unable to deploy volunteers immediately then the volunteers could be directed to other organisations that were accepting spontaneous volunteers. This may prevent the volunteer from feeling frustrated e.g. Cornwall Council directed spontaneous volunteers to Volunteer Cornwall.

4. **Not involve SVs with specialist skills**: We did not find examples of SVs being asked to conduct skilled tasks. Instead, most responders preferred OVs who could perform skilled tasks and were already known to them. This simplified matters, for example:
   - ***Already established the SQEP of volunteers***: The volunteers were known to the organisation so their skills, competencies and experience had already been established prior to the flood e.g. the British Red Cross staffs rest centres with its own volunteers. This reduced the uncertainty associated with spontaneous volunteers.
   - ***Involve volunteers with specialist skills to lower-risk roles***: For instance, one fire officer spoke of how members of the local 4X4 Response voluntary organisation were asked to ferry flood victims from 'Lillypads', places that were relatively safe, back to a designated point.
   - ***Targeted skill requests via media briefings***: So that volunteers with particular skillsets knew they were needed, the location that they should volunteer to, and what to take with them.

5. **Involve SVs in non-physical, low-level activities away from the frontline**: Some organisations chose to give their volunteers non-physical, low-level roles away from any immediate danger, for instance cleaning a rest centre, providing emotional support to flood victims, helping these individuals to complete insurance claim forms, making the tea and providing food. Volunteers could also be involved in engagement activities, for instance engaging with local businesses to encourage donations of cleaning equipment. Alternatively, in Bodenham, volunteers have access to flood warning telemetry system to monitor the water level in the main watercourse through the village and they also keep close watch on the level of the River Lugg via data on the internet from the local Environment Agency gauge. This enables them to act before any flooding, helping residents to erect flood defences or, if necessary, to evacuate before any danger.

6. **Involve SVs in physical, low-level activities at the frontline**: Here SVs were asked to carry out physical activities in flood-affected areas however tasks were low-level, lower risk. For example, across a number of different flood-affected areas spontaneous volunteers were clearing out flooded homes and businesses and distributing goods and flood recovery guides. In Boston, volunteers identified flood-affected homes through Flood Impact Assessments, whilst in Tonbridge volunteers helped move flood-damaged items outside as well as helping to clean public areas. Members of the Bodenham Flood Protection Group actively 'walk the brooks' to identify tasks for the next volunteer working party. This would then involve a team of around

10-15 volunteers carrying out activities such as removing silt and vegetation from brooks. Important here was the need to coordinate volunteers into supervised teams to ensure their safety.

7. **Recognise that not all offers of help can be accepted**: Due to the risks associated with flood volunteering not all offers of help can be accepted. In some instances the involvement of SVs was considered too high risk. It was also recognised that volunteers may have a health condition or disability that makes their involvement unsuitable.

8. **Involve SVs to avoid them freelancing**: It was thought that SVs have to be managed else they will 'freelance' i.e. engage in their own activities away from the guidance of officials so officials would not have any oversight of their activities. This may happen if their offer of assistance was declined by officials, or if SVs were not achieving their own aims from volunteering. By operating outside the command and control structure, individuals who freelanced represented a danger to themselves and others. So, it was thought, it may be better to put them into a structure rather than have them freelancing. From the SV's perspective, some preferred freelancing as no one could tell them that they have broken any rules.

9. **Involve local SVs to get their local knowledge**: Turning SVs away meant that official emergency responders lost a potentially valuable source of local information. It was recognised that local people could provide EMs with important local information such as the identity and location of vulnerable persons, property and business owners and general information about the area. So, there may be a case for using them, but away from where they could be harmed. There is also possibly greater scope to harness the local knowledge of residents e.g. their in-built communication channels.

10. **Involve SVs as they have social resources to help to organise**: Here the coordination of spontaneous volunteers could be managed by other volunteers with the necessary skills and experience to do so. For instance, Yarmouth Borough Council have four urban groups of volunteers each managed by individuals holding high status roles.

11. **Involve SVs later in the recovery stage**: Volunteers could also be involved in managing the on-going recovery to a flood. This included:
    - ***Longer-term roles***: Volunteers were engaged in longer-term roles rather than in the immediate response. For instance, Tunnel2Towers[7]

[7] Tunnel2Towers is an voluntary organisation consisting of retired and operational firefighters who offer assistance during the recovery stage of an emergency. The group, who attend emergencies when requested by EMs, conduct activities such as cleaning up homes, shoring-up buildings and electrical re-wiring. Tunnel2Towers was active in Norfolk (Walcott) following the tidal surge and resultant flooding in December 2013. Here the group also took responsibility for managing SVs, providing a structure for them to work within (sign-in/out forms, supervision) as well as a t-shirt clearly identifying the SV as member of the group.

established an emergency committee consisting of local volunteers who were gradually trained to manage the on-going recovery.

- ***Ensuring continuity after emergency services leave***: Recognising the vacuum often left when blue light organisations leave a flood-affected area, this incorporated a gradual process whereby the management of the recovery was handed back to volunteers, first under supervision, then independently e.g. Tunnel2Towers.
- ***Providing on-going emotional support***: Other organisations provided on-going emotional support for flood victims and provided transport to help them get to medical appointments.
- ***Rebuilding social groups***: Organisations generally helped to rebuild social groups whose activities had been disrupted due to the flooding, thereby supporting the wider recovery.

12. **A structured process of recruiting SVs and recording offers of help**: Although it was acknowledged that not all offers of help can be accepted, some organisations implemented a structured process for recruiting volunteers as well as recording offers of help from the public. The following issues were mentioned:
    - ***Recording details of volunteers***: Keeping records was very important so they knew who was volunteering, including when they began and stopped work in a day to avoid overworking.
    - ***Application forms***: Some organisations had application forms for volunteers to complete which would capture information such as: personal details, skills and experiences, where the volunteer lived, and the amount of time they could offer.
    - ***Keep contact details for using later***: If spontaneous volunteers could not be immediately deployed then logging their interest was important so they could be contacted later and deployed for roles later in the recovery.
    - ***Volunteers declaring themselves fit for work***: Volunteers were responsible for declaring themselves fit to work e.g. informing a volunteer coordinator if they had a pre-existing medical condition that might make them unsuitable for a role they've been assigned. Obviously, organisations also had an obligation towards volunteers regarding their health and safety (e.g. ensuring that the roles assigned to volunteers were appropriate for the individual).
    - ***Matching volunteers to the needs assessment***: It is not clear the extent to which this was an aspiration or something that interviewees felt was done well.

    Later, in Point 31, we present the interviewees responses on a structured process for managing SVs during a response and recovery.

<u>iii. What are the issues in managing spontaneous volunteers?</u>

There was recognition that SVs would come – whether they were encouraged, discouraged or initially ignored. There was also a view that SVs would freelance. So, from the perspectives of EMs and OVs, when managing SVs there were a number of issues around the management of risk, for example:

- Protecting spontaneous volunteers who participate in hazardous activities [Point 13]
- Protecting the reputation of their organisation [Point 14]
- Establishing the credentials and training of SVs [Point 15]
- EMs not having the capacity to coordinate SV groups [Point 16]

There were also non-risk related issue in managing SVs, including:

- Internal friction within SV groups [Point 17]
- Coordinating spontaneous volunteers [Point 18]
- Deciding what needed to be done and in what order [Point 19]

Below we present the detail of these themes.

13. **Protecting spontaneous volunteers who participate in hazardous activities**: This aspect focused on concerns about risks to the SVs and ensuring that officials do not engage with people who would put themselves or someone else at heightened risk. This was explained as a very strong self-help mentality, so people just get on and fix things before officials even find out about it, but this may give responders "more bodies to rescue". Protecting SVs from themselves has involved:
    - ***Doing the risk assessment for them***: To make spontaneous volunteers aware of any potential hazards they might expose themselves or others to.
    - ***Educating them***: So spontaneous volunteers know how to act in emergencies. For example, making sure that people understand that flood water is dangerous and not to go into it.
    - ***Sending them home***: If, for example, they have inappropriate clothing or no low-level PPE, such as wearing sandals in flood waters.
    - ***Classifying tasks that can/cannot be done by SVs***: SVs should not take on tasks that were inappropriate e.g. working with people who had quite significant care needs.
    - ***Only working during daylight***: This may mean only tasking volunteers from 10:00am to 4:30pm.
    - ***Asking them to accept the risks***: Spontaneous volunteers taking responsibility for themselves by acting safely and cautiously.
    - ***Providing a structure to manage them***: Whether this is from EMs, Parish Councils, or voluntary organisations, but some structure may help.

    There was an awareness that responders would need to deal with the aftermath of SVs putting themselves at risk e.g. rescuing them, political/media fallout. However, some responders were more reassured when SVs organised themselves into SV groups and had an overarching structure as it provided a means to guide the SVs.

14. **Protecting the reputation of their organisation**: This was mentioned by voluntary organisations who were concerned that SVs were not trained to operate according to their procedures and so may deviate, bringing reputational damages. Also reputational damages may arise from SVs hurting themselves or others. Protecting reputation involved:
    - ***Doing the risk assessment for them***: To make spontaneous volunteers aware of any potential hazards they might expose themselves or others to.

- ***Giving them low-risk tasks***: So as not to put them in dangerous situations.
- ***Giving them the correct PPE***: Organised volunteers were mindful of a litigious culture, specifically around not providing the correct PPE.
- ***Pulling them out of the situation early***: SVs can be withdrawn from a hazardous setting earlier than official emergency responders so as not to put them at risk.

However, giving a volunteer a high-visibility jacket and a torch (or other items) could give them the feeling of empowerment – which is good as they will feel their task is worthwhile, but this may make them feel more invincible and encourage them to stretch beyond their capabilities, bringing risks.

15. **Establishing the credentials and training of SVs**: The training of SVs and establishing their credentials would help to reduce the perception of risk to SVs and prevent them from getting into risky situations without appropriate training. This included:
    - ***Vetting***: There were questions around vetting and the appropriate level of checks needed.
    - ***Lack of understanding over credentialing***: It was felt that it is not possible to prove qualifications during an incident/response and proving experience is equally difficult.
    - ***Working with SVs you know***: If working with SVs then EMs wanted to work with people who were known to them or had particular roles in the community, as they perceived that this indicated whether the SV was a reputable, responsible, reliable person.
    - ***Matching people with task***: Some respondent's thought that a check was needed on whether there was a match between the capability of a SV and the hazards they may encounter.
    - ***Building confidence about a SV***: Overall, things that would help build confidence in someone's suitability would include: PPE, EM structure, a little training, their experience (e.g. job, previous volunteering, training, expertise), their physical capabilities. Hazard-specific training could also help.

    Overall, no common approach was evident but the preference was to identify volunteers before an incident so they could be trained and not arrive as unknown SVs.

16. **EMs not having the capacity to coordinate SV groups**: As the SV groups emerge so quickly and grow, Councils and officials do not have the capacity to coordinate them. Thus, EMs cannot deploy them because they exceed their capacity for coordination. This arose because of:
    - ***The speed of social media***: Social media sites allowed SV groups to emerge and grow so quickly that it was unlike what EMs are used to.
    - ***Local self-organisation***: This meant that SV groups self-organised away from the EMs so there was no/little contact with officials.
    - ***Forming unknown to EMs***: Officials were unaware of the SV groups until after they formed, meaning the EMs were playing catch-up with SVs.

- ***Can't control SVs***: SVs spontaneously take on tasks and it is more effort sometimes to control/manage them than it is to let them do it, even if the task is not immediately helpful. So, it may be easier for EMs to keep away and not interfere in some of the tasks.

In addition to not having the capacity, some officials felt that they "haven't got the time to 'mess around' with volunteers" as they are getting in the way. This meant that:

- ***SVs were waiting for officials***: EMs were busy on response and thinking about recovery which meant they were unable to task SVs. So, the SVs became frustrated.
- ***No EM structure for managing SV***: There was no process within the emergency management structure (or person responsible) for managing the SVs.

In such situations, some EMs/OVs took the decision to decline offers of help from SVs whose level of training or knowledge of how to operate in hazardous conditions could not be confirmed (SQEP), whilst others did not want to disenchant SVs by telling them not to do anything.

17. **Internal friction within SV groups**: When SVs self-organise into autonomous groups, it was noticeable that tensions can arise within these groups as strong personalities can clash. Taken to the extreme, each personality may create their own splinter group which adds to the official's effort to coordinate groups. Settling frictions within SV groups can take a lot of effort from EMs during/after an emergency to, almost, refereeing disputes and ensuring situations do not boil over. A structure to support these groups may help lessen the need for EMs to intervene.

18. **Coordinating spontaneous volunteers**: A variety of people emerged as the coordinators of volunteers – sometimes from within local government (either officially or unofficially), from key community linchpins, from joint responsibility of volunteers, or from the emergency services:
    - ***Local Authorities***: Some Local Authorities took responsibility for managing spontaneous volunteers. In Boston, the involvement of spontaneous volunteers was organised by two individuals – one from the Borough and one from the County.
    - ***Community linchpins***: Key community figures took responsibility for coordinating the efforts of other volunteers. For example, in Tonbridge one individual took responsibility for coordination through Facebook whilst another organised various clean-ups.
    - ***From within the spontaneous volunteer group***: Coordination was conducted by members of the groups themselves.
    - ***Social media***: Social media often played a significant role in the coordination of volunteers. Events could be promoted via social media and messages informing individuals on how to participate (e.g. time, location) and what to bring with them (e.g. gloves, boots, shovels). Social media also enables spontaneous volunteers to coordinate/communicate with each other before, during and after events.

- ***Tensions problematized coordination***: Spontaneous volunteer groups had informal coordination frameworks allowing strong personalities to lead. Differences of opinions between members could lead to in-group tensions about the ways things should be done.
- ***No coordination***: Here there was a concern that communities expected the Local Authority to organise spontaneous volunteers.

19. **Deciding what needed to be done and in what order:** There were four main responses to how those coordinating SVs decided what needed to be done:
    - ***We used 'the plan' to decide***: Most volunteer coordinators used a plan if there was one that was available. Here, volunteers whose involvement was guided by a clear plan had the most structured involvement in activities. Also, responders:
        - ***Applied command and control principles***: Emergency managers within blue light organisations would apply command and control principles to their involvement as a means to try and 'get ahead' of any volunteer convergence.
        - ***Established an organised structure***: This structure enabled EMs to "give them (spontaneous volunteers) something to volunteer for". There was a concern from EMs that without such organisation self-presenting volunteers represented a potential danger to themselves.
        - ***Involved established flood-related voluntary groups***: Organised voluntary groups also had structured means of involving their members. For instance, members of the Bodenham Flood Protection Group would regularly patrol the local area to identify issues that would be addressed during the next working party. Similarly Tunnel2Towers established a central control desk to collect intelligence and then direct groups of regular trained volunteers and spontaneous volunteers.
        - ***Report tasks upwards***: Any jobs that were considered to be too big or for which the group of volunteers did not have the correct equipment, training or authority would be reported up to officials for prioritisation and solving.
        - ***Given our own area***: Spontaneous volunteers were designated an area to find out what were the needs of the public.
    - ***We used data and intelligence***: This information came from:
        - ***Community impact statements***: Some spontaneous volunteers were sent out with police officers, PCSOs and council officials to gather local intelligence about the extent of the flooding. For instance, SVs in Boston were initially primarily involved in the completion of community impact statements**.** This information would be used to inform the on-going recovery and to direct the efforts of officials. EMs indicated that it was important to ensure that volunteers felt that they were achieving something useful for their community.

    - ***Intelligence hubs***: Some organised voluntary organisations established 'hubs' as a means to organise volunteers and to gather incoming intelligence about the impact of the flood and emerging need. This information would be sent to area reps who would act.
    - ***Other organisations***: Organisations shared information with each other (and asked questions) to build a bigger and richer picture of the situation.
- ***We didn't have our own plan so we used someone else's***: Where no plan was available a variety of different solutions were found regarding spontaneous volunteer involvement. This included:
    - ***LRF & Blue-light plans***: Some officials deferred the responsibility for involving spontaneous volunteers to the blue light organisation in charge of the particular areas of need whilst others worked through existing structures such as the LRF, Local Authority or a multi-agency approach.
    - ***Community Flood Plans***: These plans were used to guide spontaneous volunteer involvement. In some cases spontaneous volunteers were only involved if there were clearly defined roles for them.
    - ***Local council plans***: SVs attempted to make use of council plans for volunteer involvement. These were often perceived to contain too much irrelevant information or were too complex to be of use to SVs.
    - ***Officials tasked us***: Officials deployed volunteers so volunteers did not know what the plan was, but they followed the official's direction anyway.
- ***We didn't use a plan***: In some instances there was no formal plan to guide the involvement of spontaneous volunteers. Where no plan was available individuals would use their own initiative. They had no way to gauge whether this was right or wrong other than common sense. In such instances SVs felt that they would be better placed to self-organise should another flood occur.

iv. How do organisations monitor and supervise spontaneous volunteers?

There were lots of comments from EMs and OVs about not knowing what spontaneous volunteers were doing, in part, because they organised so quickly that officials could not keep up and because SVs should have been doing low-level tasks so it was less important to know. The themes around monitoring the work of spontaneous volunteers included:

- We ensured they were supervised working (no lone working) [Point 20]
- We didn't need to monitor them as they were doing non-urgent work as a PR exercise [Point 21]
- We didn't need to monitor them as we knew them [Point 22]
- We trusted them to complete their simple tasks so did not monitor them [Point 23]
- We had constant two-way communication with volunteers [Point 24]

Below we present the detail of these themes.

20. **We ensured they were supervised working (no lone working)**: Spontaneous volunteers were not put into situations where they would be working by themselves. Issues here include:
    - ***Use team leaders***: These leaders would be responsible for the welfare and conduct of the volunteers in their team. Although some organisations did not want to doubt the credentials of spontaneous volunteers their safety was of primary concern. Supervision could come from paid members of staff such as team leaders or from other experienced volunteers who were trained and credentialed.
    - ***Use a buddy system***: Some organisations used a buddy system pairing up volunteers to work together whilst others had direct (eyes-on) supervision over volunteers under their control.
    - ***Make volunteers visible***: Tunnel2Towers gave their volunteers brightly coloured t-shirts so that it was clearly visible to the organisation which individuals were acting on their behalf. This helped Tunnel2Towers maintain control over these individuals.
    - ***Use sign in/out forms***: Volunteer involving organisations used sign in/out forms to keep track of who was volunteering and when.

    These practices also enabled organisations to check the hours that volunteers had been working as there was a concern that individuals could 'put in too many hours'.

21. **We didn't need to monitor them as they were doing non-urgent work as a PR exercise**: Some volunteers were provided with non-urgent work. This was often done to ensure that the initial enthusiasm to volunteer was not lost. For instance, EMs felt powerless to stop volunteers who started moving sand from a street as they didn't want to dampen the volunteer spirit – even though they had scheduled a digger to carry this task after the weekend. In other cases organisations felt obliged to involve local communities in response or recovery activities even if there was no vital role for them to carry out. The pressure to involve spontaneous volunteers meant that the exercise felt more like a "PR exercise".

22. **We didn't need to monitor them as we knew them**: This was only possible when existing known organisations converged as a group and EMs sought to involve these groups (e.g. Parish Councils) in briefings. EMs were able to trust the group and draw on their infrastructure. This helped the different organisations to get to know each other's capabilities and build knowledge and confidence of what these volunteers could deliver.

23. **We trusted them to complete their simple tasks so did not monitor them**: Some organisations recognised that it they were unable to monitor volunteers. Where this was the case they gave them:
    - ***Non-critical areas***: Spontaneous volunteers were assigned to non-critical areas, usually within a controlled environment.

- ***Low-level tasks***: Volunteers were provided with low-level tasks (e.g. making beds in rest centres) with clearly visible outcomes and therefore required little or no supervision.
- ***Independent tasks***: Coordinators provided volunteers with roles that they felt could be completed independently (e.g. distributing leaflets) and trusted that they could complete the tasks.
- ***To another voluntary organisation***: So they did not need to monitor activities. For instance, Tunnel2Towers were formally tasked with involving spontaneous volunteers who self-presented.

In some cases EMs only became aware of acts of volunteering after the event itself. For instance, Fire Officers stated that sometimes they only found out a long time after the event that volunteers had been active in the area. It was said by an EM that official responders are not really in charge – so it's not their duty to monitor them.

24. **We had constant two-way communication with volunteers**: Organisations used a variety of means to communicate with volunteers such as:
    - ***Regular face-to-face briefings***: In some cases this was initially three times a day in Town Halls which meant that spontaneous volunteers were kept up to date.
    - ***Communication over radios***: Organisations borrowed radios from local search and rescue for volunteers to use – and then used a different bandwidth to the emergency services. For example, Keswick Flood Volunteers are able to borrow two-way radios to communicate with each other however their radios were on a different bandwidth from the official response.
    - ***Social media***: Using technologies such as Twitter and Facebook helped to recruit and organise spontaneous volunteers e.g. Facebook provided a means for individuals to find out what was happening, such as who was organising clean-ups in Tonbridge and how information about practical support would be made available.
    - ***Formal IT system***: Some voluntary groups had developed their own systems of communication to ensure that any central coordination hub could communicate with its volunteers. For instance, 4X4 Response used a IT ticketing system to task individual volunteers and monitor the work they are conducting.

    However, having their own separate communication systems also meant that volunteers were unable to communicate with the emergency services – which made them feel isolated from the rest of the response.

Research priority b: The interplay between spontaneous volunteers, official emergency responders and organised voluntary groups

This sub-section is organised according the research questions:

v. How do spontaneous volunteers work alongside different elements of the official response and recovery?

vi. How could spontaneous volunteering be made more effective?
vii. How should potential volunteers be prepared for future flood events?

Below we present the detailed answers.

v. How do spontaneous volunteers work alongside different elements of the official response and recovery?

There were several themes that described how the Emergency Services and volunteers worked together:

- Volunteers in their own structure working side-by-side with EMs [Point 25]
- Volunteers integrated into the EM management structure [Point 26]
- Volunteers provide additional resources to EMs [Point 27]
- Volunteers working independently from EMs [Point 28]
- Tension between different volunteer groups [Point 29]
- SVs working with local businesses [Point 30]

Below we present the detail of these themes.

25. **Volunteers in their own structure working side-by-side with EMs**: Some volunteers had skills that were useful to the emergency response and made those available by working side-by-side with official emergency responders. Here, volunteers worked alongside officials with similar aims but without direct orders being made to volunteers. For example a voluntary organisation in Cornwall had direct contact with the Environment Agency, Police and Fire & Rescue Service to relay information about the flooding. Some key features of working side-by-side include:
    - ***Trusting volunteers***: Volunteers were trusted by EMs/officials and this trust was mutual.
    - ***Autonomous decision-making***: Groups of volunteers (either organised or spontaneous) worked under separate management structures giving them autonomy in decision-making.
    - ***Partnership working***: Volunteers were seen as partners by EMs.
    - ***Two-way information sharing***: Volunteers provided a source of information to EMs and were able to direct them to areas where volunteers needed additional support. SVs let EMs know what they were planning on doing next. Information sharing was two-way.
    - ***Formal arrangements of relationship and responsibilities***: Some EMs reported formal relationships with established OVs through a memorandum of understanding.

    Working s*ide-by-side* was often successful for both spontaneous volunteers (when their goals aligned with official goals) and officials (helping them to achieve their outcomes). Some EMs described it as a win/win situation with them empowering the community to do something positive for itself. This is illustrated in the Tonbridge case study where side-by-side volunteers were led by key individuals who coordinated support provided to officials.

26. **Volunteers integrated into the EM management structure**: Volunteers also worked within the official management structure for example going door-to-door with officials to collect information to aid decisions on the deployment of resources. Here, officials have more control over the activities of integrated volunteers as they report directly into their management structures. Some key features of working in an integrated way include:
    - ***Close supervision***: Volunteers were closely supervised by official emergency responders and had little autonomy.
    - ***Low skilled tasks***: The work that volunteers did tended to be very low-skilled tasks.
    - ***Under resourced***: Some EMs reported not having enough resources to manage integrated SVs despite putting plans in place for this.
    - ***Success from pre-engagement***: Many of these cases involved volunteers that were pre-engaged in these cases there was a higher degree of trust and the relationship seemed to work better, however these volunteers could not be considered truly spontaneous.
    - ***Expenses reimbursement***: Despite working directly under orders from EMs, SVs reported not being reimbursed for petrol costs etc.

    These volunteers tended to not talk positively about their experiences. They were often given very low-level tasks that they did not see as interesting and were closely supervised by officials, leaving them feeling not very productive or useful.

27. **Volunteers provide additional resources to EMs**: Volunteers were able to provide specialist local resources to EMs – particularly helpful when non-local official emergency responders were brought into the area to support the response. Some key features of volunteers providing resource include:
    - ***Provide knowledge***: Volunteers can provide knowledge to EMs to enable them to make better decisions, such as the locations of vulnerable people.
    - ***Provide manpower***: SVs offer capacity to deliver tasks, freeing responders for other tasks e.g. cleaning debris, leafleting and collecting information.
    - ***Filling gaps***: Some EMs felt perceived that SVs were filling gaps left from the public sector budget cuts.

    This theme represents an asset-based approach where EMs draw upon the assets held by spontaneous volunteers.

28. **Volunteers working independently from EMs**: Volunteers set up their own groups to achieve personal priorities rather than supporting officials to achieve their priorities. The groups are setup and run with little or no interaction with EMs. For example, local flood groups have been set up based on their own flood plans but have no input from EMs, these groups tended to operate in a vacuum away from officials. Some key features of independent volunteering include:
    - ***Poor communication between SVs and EMs***: Often poor communication between EMs and volunteer groups meant that information was not shared.

- ***Disjointed***: Volunteers felt there was a disjointed approach to flood management by officials.
- ***Reluctance from EMs to engage with SVs***: Volunteers felt there was reluctance from EMs to engage with volunteers.
- ***SVs have a local focus***: They tend to be focussed locally in meeting need and accumulating resources.
- ***Emergency services not visible to SV groups***: Some SVs reported not hearing from or seeing any EMs during their activities.

An example of working independently is Bodenham Flood Protection Group as discussed in the case study section. This sort of independent working could lead volunteers to feel disillusioned with EMs, but not with their personal goals.

29. **Tension between different volunteer groups**: Some EMs reported a tension between different volunteer groups. When spontaneous or organised volunteer groups with different priorities or aims had to work together there was often tension where the management structures clashed.

30. **SVs working with local businesses**: SVs reported getting help from local businesses. For example, Asda stores provided free microwaves for people of Boston who had lost cooking facilities due to flooding. Other firms provided cleaning equipment free of charge.

<u>vi. How could spontaneous volunteering be made more effective?</u>

Many EMs and OVs talked about the need to plan for SVs, anticipate they will present and be ready to coordinate them straight away, including communicating with them and involving them more. The main themes identified were:

- Establish a structure and plan that SVs can work through [Point 31]
- Involving SVs [Point 32]
- Being able to identify SVs [Point 33]
- Establish the principles of EMs communicating with SVs [Point 34]
- What messages to give to SVs [Point 35]
- What information can EMs provide to SV groups [Point 36]
- Training for volunteers [Point 37]
- Training for incident commanders [Point 38]
- Training for officials and people in the public eye [Point 39]

Below we present the detail of these themes.

31. **Establish a structure and plan that SVs can work through**: OVs, EMs and SVs all thought there needed to be a structure in place to manage SVs when they present. This structure should include:
    - ***Instant management of SVs***: Anticipate volunteers will come forward and include what to do with them in resilience plans. SVs tend to converge quickly and expect direction when they present

- ***Who is responsible for SVs***: There should be a clearer demarcation of which organisation is responsible for SVs when they present and if this changes when moving from response to recovery. This organisation should take responsibility for managing SVs.
- ***Dedicated point of contact for SVs***: Have a person who is in charge of managing SVs when they present. This could be through a voluntary coordination cell in the LRF, however in practice some of these cells have been under resourced during an incident.
- ***A plan for how to process SVs***: This plan should be communicated to partners in advance including tracking who SVs are working with and who has responsibility for tasking them.
- ***Tasking SVs***: Try to give SVs tasks they want to do, ensure they know what their role is and ensure they have the resources needed to carry out the task.
- ***What tasks can/can't SVs do***: EMs wanted clarity on what they were able to ask SVs to do. They recognise SVs want to help where they can but EMs are not sure what they can/cannot ask of them.
- ***Provide support for the SV***: Especially as they are working in situations that are potentially emotionally challenging. Other sorts of support include the provision of PPE to SVs.
- ***Briefing for SVs***: Make sure SVs who work with EMs get an appropriate briefing by someone who has got full sight of the incident.
- ***Have local representatives on the ground***: EMs found they didn't have enough staff at the local level to help manage SVs within their own community. Some local organised volunteers helped to provide structure. Two-way communication may ease this problem.
- ***To expect donations***: SVs noted that many people wanted to donate goods and money to help the recovery of the affected people and area. Prior planning could be given to how this will be managed and where donations can be stored.

If there is no structure for SVs when they turn up then they may freelance and put themselves at risk. Also, leaving SVs for hours while EMs consider how to deal with them has led to complaints and SVs contacting the media about the lack of action. This could lead to issues that detract from managing the flood event.

32. **Involving SVs**: EMs found there were different ways in which they could engage the SVs to encourage them to work with them during a flood event. These were:
    - ***Deploy SVs effectively***: To avoid them just wandering around trying to find people to help.
    - ***Understand SVs' skills***: When SVs present, find out what skills they can offer.
    - ***Involve volunteers in training***: EMs wanted to involve volunteers in training exercises to build trust and knowledge for future events.
    - ***Involve and develop existing networks***: Parish Councils were an example of where there was an existing network of people and

management structure providing opportunities for quick mobilisation of volunteers. This could present opportunities for EMs to link into.

- ***Engage with local people***: Engaging with people locally can give an avenue to direct SVs to when they present. For example, this could include community-owned flood planning to engage with local communities to help them design their own locally owned, locally activated flood plan.

EMs also recognised how flexible SVs could be, they can be quicker to adapt in changing conditions than more rigid organisations and so are able to service local needs.

33. **Being able to identify SVs**: SVs asked for items that would identify them as being officially tasked. This would:
    - ***Give them identifiable clothing***: Giving SVs matching PPE/t-shirt helps to identify them in the middle of a busy situation.
    - ***Build volunteer identity***: Giving them a sense of identity as well as feel under the command and control of the officials.
    - ***Identify they have been trained***: A Volunteer Card can identify people who have been trained as an emergency volunteer. These people will already have been security-checked and will have undergone some training.

    However, some SVs valued their independence from officials and felt that the reason they were successful was their independence from EMs and Local Authorities.

34. **Establish the principles of EMs communicating with SVs**: Having a communications plan that outlines the principles of EMs communicating with SVs may help to provide a rapid response. This may consider the following:
    - ***How to communicate with SVs***: In-person briefings were crucial. However, social media was key to how SVs organised in the most recent floods, so EMs could use social media as a means to communicate with SVs. Obviously local radio and TV are available sources that SVs may use.
    - ***When to communicate with SVs***: Perhaps some consideration of the risk thresholds would help to decide the stages to communicate with SVs and messages to give.
    - ***What message to give SVs***: This is considered in Point 35, below.
    - ***What two-way communication means***: SVs wanted information sharing with EMs to be two-way. They wanted to be able to find out who they needed to speak to, where they should look for information, how they could access information.
    - ***Whether EMs should help SVs to communicate with each other on-the-ground***: SVs asked for EMs help to communicate with each other – through handheld radios on a separate channel from the emergency services.

- ***Whether SVs should be able to communicate with EMs***: SVs asked for handheld radios and a channel to send information to EMs e.g. about the location of flood waters or the need for resources.
- ***Whether EMs contact past SV groups***: If another flood were to happen, EMs could contact past organisers of SV groups to quickly establish which SV groups will be mobilising. This may prevent EMs only finding out about such groups when the group has a problem or after the response is over.

35. **What messages to give to SVs**: Thought should be given to the messages sent to SVs before and during a flood event. For example:
    - ***Encourage and discourage SVs to present***: Depending on the type and phase of the flood event EMs may want to encourage or discourage SVs. The decision may be to put SVs on standby until they are needed e.g. wait for the recovery, and not involve them during the response. Prior consideration can be given to these messages.
    - ***Where SVs should meet, when and for what***: If requesting SVs, EMs should tell SVs where to meet, at what time, what they will be doing and what they need to bring with them. Some thought that this can be done in advance e.g. telling the community in advance about a hub where they can always converge to, such as local fire station. Obviously this may depend on the type of risk.
    - ***Availability of resources***: What resources are available to SVs for them to do their task e.g. sandbags.
    - ***Duplication of effort***: Freelancers may wish to do their own thing. A key message to SVs may encourage them to work with EMs to minimise duplication of effort.
    - ***Explain why the EM leadership style is how it is***: EMs recognise they take quite an autocratic leadership style and thought it may be helpful to explain to SVs why this is needed.
    - ***The risks***: Messages can help SVs to be more aware of the risks associated with a flood event. This knowledge may make them less inclined to freelance and put themselves at risk.
    - ***SVs liability and insurance cover***: SVs wanted clarity on liability and whether they are covered if they get injured.
    - ***Where to get more information***: So SVs are streamed appropriately to get direct information without becoming frustrated by clogged information channels.

36. **What information can EMs provide to SV groups**: Many SV groups form independently from EMs. These groups have been very useful for EMs as a route to contact volunteers and people affected by flooding. These groups may also want help from EMs. Some of the areas these groups reported wanting help from EMs with were:
    - ***Plan on a page for SVs***: SVs wanted a “plan on a page” to save them from having to go through a very large comprehensive council plan. This could give them information to follow, for example: who to contact; tasks to do; how to organise themselves.

- ***Sharing SV experience***: SVs wanted a place where they could share their own experiences of volunteering, so they may be useful to people in different areas affected by future events who decide to SV themselves. Social media was often used for this purpose.

37. **Training for volunteers**: How might SVs be trained to be more effective:
    - ***Know about contamination***: Flood water safety and information on contamination would be useful knowledge for volunteers, especially those who clear drains, as in Tonbridge case study.
    - ***On the job training***: Basic tasks such as filling/laying sandbags could be taught on-the-job by trained staff.
    - ***Flood wardens***: Some SVs thought that having trained personnel from the community who knows about the risks associated with flooding would help. Others rejected the idea of being a flood warden as they didn't want to have their hands tied by "red tape".
    - ***Fading memories***: One difficulty of training people in advance (e.g. as a flood warden) is the length of time between deployments, meaning people don't see value in their role and forget their training because they have not had to use it.

38. **Training for incident commanders**: Some EMs from a Local Authority said that the management of SVs was not included in either their training or their response/recovery plans and so they needed training**.** From their experience they see SVs as a potentially valuable asset and think they should be included in future commander training. At the very least, EMs should be aware what existing structures there are on the ground at the local level.

39. **Training for officials and people in the public eye**: There were examples of EMs going into a flood environment without the correct PPE. EMs should make sure these staff all set a positive example to SVs. Also, media personnel within the affected areas should have correct PPE, otherwise this communicates a false sense of safety in these areas and sets a poor example for SVs.

<u>vii. How should potential volunteers be prepared for future flood events?</u>

In addition to the above improvements to SV effectiveness, two additional preparations for future floods were:

- Converting SVs into regular volunteers [Point 40]
- Maintaining the current levels of higher resilience [Point 41]

40. **Converting SVs into regular volunteers**: Many organisations tried to convert SVs into regular volunteers, either for their own organisation or for other voluntary organisations. EMs did this as they didn't want to work with unknown volunteers, yet saw value in community response and pre-engagement with volunteers as this meant they could be trained and embedded into an official response (so become an OV rather than a SV). Many SVs told how they already volunteer regularly on non-emergency

activities – although many also disappeared back into the community after their involvement. This included:

- ***Converting SVs to organised voluntary organisations***: Dedicated OVs are trained, have PPE, are willing to work within the constraints of a command and control system, and have the confidence of EMs. Most EMs preferred to encourage SVs to become an OV through joining an existing group outside of the EMs structure e.g. the Red Cross or 4x4 Response. OVs also saw the opportunity to recruit new volunteers, or direct volunteers to other organisations e.g. the NSVO. Some EMs even suggested having different levels of volunteer commitment: Level 1 volunteers involved only during a flood event; Level 2 volunteers keep contact with organisers telling them of issues with blocked drains etc.; and, Level 3 volunteers who coordinate other volunteers.
- ***Converting SVs into EM organisations***: Some EMs encouraged SVs to sign up to their own official volunteer response e.g. as Flood Wardens.
- ***Converting SV groups to OV groups***: Some SV groups saw value in continuing their work and established themselves as an organised group to provide constant focus to their emergency-related volunteering.

However, some respondents thought it was unfair to ask SVs as it may apply pressure to people who had been affected by floods. For other voluntary organisations, the level of commitment they would expect required people to demonstrate enthusiasm – and the volunteer approaching them was one demonstration of this.

41. **Maintaining the current levels of higher resilience**: Some SVs, particularly those who continued their volunteering as an OV, felt that their communities were better prepared and informed i.e. that their efforts had increased resilience in their area. They could mobilise quicker, had better information, were generally more aware, had prepared better individually and had better contact with officials. They also hoped that officials have learned from their past mistakes.

    EMs and OVs wanted to make sure that volunteers' capacity and knowledge to help during a flood event is not lost between incidents. Also volunteer numbers may increase as they see the benefit of getting organised. Thus, it is important that resilience is not allowed to dwindle back to lower levels.

Research priority c: Whether a national policy or guidance document on spontaneous volunteering would be useful

This sub-section is organised according the research questions:

viii. Is a national policy on spontaneous volunteering desired by the emergency response community?

ix. On what questions could emergency responders benefit from having additional information regarding spontaneous volunteers?

Below we present the detail of these themes.

viii. Is a national policy on spontaneous volunteering desired by the emergency response community?

There are four aspects to this question:

- A national policy or guidance on spontaneous volunteers [Point 42]
- What guidance should include [Point 43]
- Legal liabilities for EMs and SVs [Point 44]
- Don't forget organised volunteers [Point 45]

42. **A national policy or guidance on spontaneous volunteers**: The majority of respondents were in favour of guidance (rather than a policy) as guidance would be more flexible and therefore applicable to their local context. However, some interviewees were keen for a policy, with a small minority not wanting either policy or guidance:
    - ***The majority favoured guidance***: The majority of EMs and OVs felt that guidance would be better than policy. Guidance was perceived to be more flexible than policy and this flexibility was useful as SVs are dynamic and no two incidents are the same. Guidance could include practical ideas and cases studies for how SVs have been (and can be) supported.
    - ***A few preferred a national policy***: Some EMs and OVs thought a policy would be helpful as it would: provide a consistent national approach that everyone can buy into; prevent local variations and inconsistencies; give clarity on issues such as insurance and liability; reduce duplicated effort across different organisations considering the same issues; and, could reduce the uncertainty for EMs so they can focus on protecting life and property.
    - ***A minority did not want a policy or guidance***: A minority of respondents didn't want any form of guidance or policy. They perceived that guidance turns into rigid policy, establishing a definitive expectation and therefore is not flexible enough.

43. **What guidance should include**: There were many comments on what the guidance should give in order for it to be helpful, including:
    - ***General principles***: The general principles of what a national perspective on SVs means for EMs, OVs and SVs.
    - ***Case Studies***: EMs were keen to see case studies demonstrating the successful involvement of SVs along with cases where there were learning points.
    - ***Funding for SVs***: EMs wanted to know who and how SV activities were funded. Although volunteers were not charging for their time there were still costs associated with their activities. Therefore EMs wanted to know who was responsible for covering these costs.
    - ***Strategy to communicate with the public***: How and if social media should be used to put calls out for volunteers. How EMs can collect information about a flood from SVs on the ground and how to communicate health and safety information.
    - ***Strategy to communicate with SV***: Under which circumstances do EMs want to put messages out to asking for SVs. What information should that

message include e.g. where to converge to, at what time, what to bring and what to wear.

- ***Who manages SVs and how do they do it***: Who has responsibility for managing SVs. Which type of management structure is best to manage SVs (Integrated, Side-by-Side etc.). The management style that should be taken with SVs and how this differs to OVs. What are reasonable expectations to have of SVs?
- ***How to make sure SVs are effective when present:*** Ensure they are given appropriate training, information about what is expected and who to report to and PPE. Some EMs have a storage facility to hold PPE for SVs.
- ***What work can SVs do:*** Some EMs suggested having guidelines outlining what roles SVs could perform***.***
- ***Maintaining future capacity to respond***: Some EMs wanted to store information about the SVs so that the additional capacity they create can be harnessed again if needed during a future flood event. Others suggested having someone to advise local flood groups with their planning and helping them to form.
- ***Vetting and security checks:*** EMs didn't know if vetting checks were required for SVs and this was seen as a potential barrier to the involvement of SVs.
- ***Credentialing and SQEP'ing SVs***: What is appropriate to validate claims from SVs they are trained or skilled for a specific task. One EM noted how they asked SVs to bring proof of useful qualifications (e.g. nurses), however in practice none were checked as there is insufficient time or infrastructure to do so. Inconsistencies across different LAs makes it difficult for EMs, OVs and SVs to operate. What is the responsibility of a SV to declare in advance of volunteering?
- ***How to risk assess***: Some EMs suggested there should be the clear standardised criteria used for all risk assessments which can be used to determine if SVs can be involved. Each organisation tasking SVs should treat them the same.
- ***What benefits are there to SVs***: Volunteers choose whether or not to engage with EMs and the extent to which they will take direction from them. EMs should plan what they will offer in return for volunteers converging to them. This could include resources, expertise, structure, insurance, funding.
- ***Declining offers of help from SVs***: Sometimes it may not be appropriate to involve spontaneous volunteers in the emergency response. Guidance on when and how SVs could be involved would be helpful.

All of these issues have been discussed and/or solutions presented in Points 1-42.

44. **Legal liabilities for EMs and SVs**: The legal responsibility of EMs with respect to SVs was the most common area where EMs and OVs wanted clarity. The key areas which they wanted a national position were:
    - ***Insurance***: Are SVs covered by any insurance held either by the LA or emergency services? What structure would a SV need to be operating in

to be covered? Should cover include personal injury or be limited to public liability? Some EMs suggested government should engage with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) to discuss this issue.

- ***Who is liable if something goes wrong***: What is the line between when a SV is liable for actions and an EM? What is the line between being a member of the public and a SV?
- ***Health and Safety***: What responsibilities do EMs have towards SVs when working in the same area about ensuring the health and safety of SVs. When should SVs take responsibility for their own actions?

EMs also wanted some protection, especially if guidance said that blue light organisations were wholly responsible for SVs actions. The absence of protection for the EMs may reduce the likelihood that they would be willing to involve SVs in response to a flood event.

45. **Don't forget organised volunteers**: SVs are not the only voluntary resources. OVs represent a potentially skilled and trained resource. At the most extreme, OVs could take a fuller role in community driven action rather than depending on an EM-dominated response. This suggested that local people should play an active role in solving problems within their community.

ix. On what questions could emergency responders benefit from having additional information regarding spontaneous volunteers?

Major questions from the interviewees included:

- Who has responsibility for SVs? [Point 46]
- Are SVs insured? [Point 47]
- What health and safety measures need to be considered before tasking SVs? [Point 48]
- Who is liable if something goes wrong? [Point 49]
- Could responsibility for spontaneous volunteers be included in MoUs with the voluntary sector in relation to response and recovery? [Point 50]

We discuss each question below.

46. **Who has responsibility for SVs**? There was no consistent view on which organisation should have responsibility for SVs during a flood event. Many of the EMs and officials interviewed provided reasons for why they thought it was not their organisation's responsibility. There was also a question about responsibility for SVs and whether this would change between response and recovery. Without a clear demarcation stating who has responsibility for SVs other issues such as liability and insurance, communications and organisational structure may not be addressed.

47. **Are SVs insured**? There was considerable uncertainty from EMs, OVs and SVs on whether SVs were covered under someone's insurance and who is liable for them. Some respondents thought SVs were covered under Police insurance or the LA's, but even the tasking organisations were often unsure if SVs were covered under their own insurance. Either way, who was responsible for covering (or the level of cover they would be provided with)

remained untested. Therefore, issues over liability meant that EMs were reluctant to involve SVs.

This was a significant topic and thought to be a barrier to community resilience as to whether EMs involved SVs. It was thought that clarity around this question (e.g. a formal government position on SV liability) could potentially lower the concerns around litigation, allowing more people to volunteer as Town/Parish Councils and LAs would feel more certain about driving forward community resilience.

48. **What health and safety measures need to be considered before tasking SVs**? There was confusion over what, if any, precautions EMs needed to take before allowing SVs to become involved in the response or recovery to a flood event. Clarity is needed on what the responsibility of EMs is with regards to training, risk assessments, PPE, vetting and credentialing, before a SV should be allowed to help.

49. **Who is liable if something goes wrong?** There was uncertainty over the circumstances under which an EM would be liable for the actions of a SV if something went wrong. EMs have a lower expectation of the capabilities of SVs, as there is a lower degree of trust and perceived higher degree of risk in involving them. Some of this stems from not knowing what liability is placed on an EM when involving SVs. There was also uncertainty over who was liable for the costs of incurred by SVs – the Local Authority or the SV – as some SVs reported not having expenses reimbursed.

50. **Could responsibility for spontaneous volunteers be included in MoUs with the voluntary sector in relation to response and recovery?** There are examples where a memorandum of understanding with the British Red Cross existed to coordinate the voluntary sector on behalf of the LA. There were questions over whether this was a viable route to also managing SVs in flood events.

Section 7. Strategies

Key points:

- This section draws together the findings from the Literature Review (Section 4), Policy Review (Appendix D), Case Studies (Section 5), and the Stages 1 and 2 Interviews (Section 6).
- The findings are arranged by each of the 50 themes identified in Section 6 – these are ordered by Research Question and Research Priority.
- Each theme is linked with a Strategy.
- Each Strategy is explained in detail at the end of each table.
- The section identifies fourteen Strategies which aim to enhance the working relationship between LRFs and spontaneous volunteers.

Below we present the strategies which synthesise the findings from all previous results sections of the report i.e. Sections 4, 5 and 6. Below are three tables, each presenting the relevant findings from one of the project's three research priorities (from Section 2). For each table:

- Column 1 in the tables presents the specific research questions that focus each research priority.
- Column 2 presents the numbered themes from Section 5.
- Column 3 describes what we expected to find based on the results from the literature review, the policy review and the Stage 1 interviews. Some of these expectations were not supported by data from the Stage 2 interviews or case studies – these appear in red/italic font to signal an expectation that was not supported by the actual results.
- Column 4 outlines what we found in the Stage 2 interviews and case studies.
- Column 5 identifies the strategies based on these findings.

The strategies span more than one theme and some instances address more than one question. Therefore all the main strategies from each research question are explained in detail after each research question. This explanation includes findings from the research on how the strategy could be addressed. Additional details on how these could be addressed can be found be looking back at the descriptions of the findings from interviews in Section 6.

The structure of the table is intended to provide focus and ensure the strategies are traceable back to the findings from where they were developed. The findings in the table are also clearly traceable back to the themes. The strategies and their descriptions have been written in a way that are action oriented, focussing the reader on the key points that should be addressed or considered.

Research priority a) The challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers in an operational response to a flood event

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected*** ***(From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found*** ***(In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
i) What are the motivations and aims driving individuals to converge as volunteers during a flood event?	1) Motivations of SVs to get involved	SVs are motivated to: • Help a perceived local need • Create something positive out of an emergency • Support the unusual circumstances created by emergencies • Exert the power of others	SVs motivations to get involved were because: • They wanted to help • They felt survivor's guilt • They wanted to help their friends • Help was needed • Other people were helping • They saw through social media	• Awareness building for EMs and OVs (Strategy 1) – include information on the motivations of SVs
	2) The aim of spontaneous volunteers	• Ascertain existing SV response • Fill the demand that was unmet by emergency services	Aims of SVs were to: • Get people back on their feet • Build community spirit • Fill the demand that was unmet by emergency services	• Awareness building for EMs and OVs (Strategy 1) – include information on the aims of SVs

Strategy 1: Emergency Managers and Voluntary Organisations should build their awareness of what motivates volunteers generally and spontaneous volunteers in particular: This should seek to help EMs and OVs (and others) to understand the personal and community motivations for individuals presenting and wanting to help. To address this strategy, organisations could:

- Disseminate the findings in this report, for example, through a national training programme, local seminars, information leaflets, an online training package or videos. Materials should recognise that it is not just the motivation of helping people nor filling an unmet demand. There are more complex motivations around guilt, community spirit and time of the year that encourage SVs to engage. However there may be also more egocentric reasons such as, meeting new friends, building personal respect from the community and other personal agendas.
- Consider the implications of different motivations on the receptiveness of SVs and the nature of tasks they may be more interested to conduct.
- Survey SVs after a flood to understand their local issues and update local materials with these.
- Talk to SVs about their experiences of recent floods.

Any awareness building needs to recognise that different motivations may need to be supported differently as personal motivations of volunteers will drive continual engagement with activities.

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
ii) How have spontaneous volunteers been involved in flood response and recovery?	3) Directing SVs to other organisations	• Relationships should be built between EMs and OV groups prior to an emergency • A coordinated approach with a single source of official information informing potential SVs how to volunteer	• Some organisations are willing and able to manage SVs on behalf of EMs	• Task an organisation to coordinate SVs on behalf of the LRF partnership (Strategy 2)
	4) Not involve SVs with specialist skills	• SVs may bring specialist skills and free up EM	• Where specialist skills are required, EMs involved OVs	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs

		capacity • *It is possible to verify SV's qualifications* • *EMs would want to involve SVs with specialist skills*	as SQEP is already established for OVs • OVs were found through targeted skills request via media briefings	(Strategy 3) – including: for specialist tasks
	5) Involve SVs in non-physical, low-level activates away from the frontline	• Identify skills gap, conduct volunteer needs assessment and identify potential volunteer roles.	Activities carried out by SVs were: • Cleaning rest centres • Collecting data on affected people • Distributing goods/ recovery guides	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3) – including: for low level tasks away from affected areas
	6) Involve SVs in physical low-level activities at the frontline	• Identify skills gap, conduct volunteer needs assessment and identify potential volunteer roles. • *SVs presenting with boats to rescue trapped people and their possessions*	Activities carried out by SVs were: • Distributing goods • Clearing out damaged goods from houses • Cleaning up affected areas	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3) – including: for low-level physical tasks at the frontline
	7) Recognise that not all offers of help can be accepted	• It's not always appropriate to accept offers of help from SVs • Record all offers as they may be useful at a later stage in the recovery • Unsuitable SVs should not be directed to other OVs	• Not all offers can be accepted due to risk to SV • Not all offers can be accepted due to health of SV	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3) – including: when to reject SVs offers of help
	8) Involve SVs to avoid them freelancing	• Independent volunteer groups may emerge. These should be engaged	• Some EMs involved SVs to stop them freelancing	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3) –

		with – even invited to assist the official response. They should be provided with information and training		including: minimising the risks of freelancing
	9) Involve SVs to get their local knowledge	• Pre-engagement with existing OV groups	• SVs with knowledge were usually members of the community so had local knowledge e.g. location of vulnerable people	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3) – including: recruiting SVs for their local knowledge
	10) Involve SVs as they have social resources to help organise	• *SVs converge to a member of the emergency services*	• Some SVs had social capital or existing networks which they used to manage other SVs	• Define the principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3) – including: recruiting SVs for their social networks
	11) Involve SVs later in the recovery stage	• All offers of help should be recorded as SVs may be involved later in the recovery stage. • SVs could be invited to join OV groups	Benefits to giving SVs longer term roles are they: • Ensure continuity after emergency services leave • Provide on-going emotional support • Help to rebuild social groups	• Define the role that SVs can play in the longer-term recovery (Strategy 4)
	12) A structured process of recruiting SVs and recording offers of help	• Develop a communications strategy to communicate the needs of the official response • Identify minimum standards for recruitment,	• When SVs present they want to be directed immediately, however they often were not	• Develop a framework for managing SVs (Strategy 8)

		induction, training and management • Identify a single location for SV registration • SVs converge to an organisation and are directed when they present		

Strategy 2: LRF partners should task an organisation with responsibility for managing and coordinating SVs on its behalf during a flood event: The partnership may decide that the involvement of SVs in the response is not desired. Nevertheless, experience suggests that SVs will present at the affected areas during the response and the LRF should ensure someone takes responsibility to implement the LRF's plan for SVs. This plan may consider:

- The principles for recruiting SVs (Strategy 3).
- How to engage SVs in the long term recovery (Strategy 4).
- Identifying the risks associated with involving SVs in the response and recovery efforts (Strategy 5).
- The principles for monitoring SVs (Strategy 6).
- The relationship the partnership will have with SVs (Strategy 7).
- The framework to manage SVs (Strategy 8).
- A communications plan for SVs (Strategy 9).
- Training requirements for SVs (Strategy 10).
- How to build future resilience with SVs (Strategy 11).
- How to adapt national guidance to be applicable in a local context (Strategy 13).

Strategy 3: The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the principles for recruiting SVs: This should help partners to make decisions on the circumstances for when SVs should be recruited to help in the emergency response and recovery. In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- Whether to try to establish the SQEP of SVs offering specialist skills.
- Appropriate tasks (including the physicality of the task, its low-level characteristics, and whether it is away from or at the frontline).

- How to leverage the local knowledge of SVs during an event.
- When and how to decline offers of help from SVs.
- The likely risks of freelancing to SVs and people they are helping and how to address them.
- How to organise SVs including the possibility to leverage SVs existing networks and people of high social capital.
- Pre-engaging with SV groups and individuals where possible and developing plans to communicate with these groups.

This strategy aims to begin the consideration of whether, when and how to involve SVs in a multi-faceted response.

Strategy 4: The organisation that coordinates SVs should put plans in place for involving SVs in the longer term recovery: This should consider the longer term roles that SVs can have in the on-going recovery to ensure continuity after emergency services have left. In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- The provision of on-going emotional support to those affected by the flood and to help rebuild social groups and networks.
- What will remain in place after the official response and recovery phases have ended.
- The role of the community in its own long term recovery.

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
iii) What are the issues in managing spontaneous volunteers?	13) Protecting spontaneous volunteers who participate in hazardous activities	• Consider the paid resources required to manage the volunteer response • Conduct a hazard analysis prior to emergency to identify potential local needs	To protect SVs EMs can: • Do the risk assessment for SVs • Educating SVs • Send SVs home • Classify tasks that can/cannot be done by SVs • Only allow SVs to work in daylight • Ask SVs to accept the risks • Provide a structure to manage SVs	Identify acceptable risk exposure for SVs (Strategy 5) – including: what can be done to reduce the level of risk, the acceptable level of risk, and how to measure that risk

	14) Protecting the reputation of their organisation	• Conduct DBS checks or involve SVs working in occupations that require screening (e.g. teachers)	To protect their organisation EMs can: • Do the risk assessment for SVs • Give SVs low risk tasks • Give SVs the correct PPE • Pull SVs out of the situation early	Identify acceptable risk exposure for SVs (Strategy 5) – including: how to communicate risk and its mitigation to the public
	15) Establishing the credentials and training of SVs	• Identify minimum standards of training. • Develop a credentialing system valid for a specific period of time	• There is a lack of understanding over credentialing • No common approach was evident These risks were reduce by: • Vetting • Working with SVs you know • Matching people to tasks • Building confidence about a SV	Identify acceptable risk exposure for SVs (Strategy 5) – including: identify the training/credentials that SVs should have
	16) EMs not having the capacity to coordinate SV groups	• Overall volunteer plan should be scalable to the size of the emergency (e.g. infrastructure during larger emergencies to cope with volunteer response) • SV involvement plan needs to complement existing response structures	EMs are outpaced by SVs forming because: • The speed of social media • Local self-organisation • Forming is unknown to EMs • EMs can't control SVs • SVs are frustrated waiting for officials • There isn't an EM structure for managing SVs	Establish a structure to manage SVs (Strategy 8) – including: resources needed to facilitate this

	17) Internal friction within SV groups		• There was noticeable tension within the running of some of the SV groups that formed	Establish a structure to manage SVs (Strategy 8) – including: how to minimising tension within SV groups
	18) Coordinating spontaneous volunteers	• Volunteer coordinators manage SV involvement • Develop communications protocols prior to emergency • Consider the use of social media	SVs were coordinated by: • Local Authorities • Community linchpins • People within SV groups • Social media However not all coordination was successful, sometimes: • Tensions hindered coordination • There was no coordination	Establish a structure to manage SVs (Strategy 8) – including: how SVs will be coordinated
	19) Deciding what needed to be done in what order	• Where involved in the official response, SVs should briefed/debriefed • SVs act upon a consensus over what they perceive needs to be done. This may differ from the EMs perception • SV responses can be innovative and in some cases entrepreneurial	Groups decided what to do by: • Using 'the plan' to decide • Using data and intelligence • Using someone else's plan as the didn't have their own	Establish a structure to manage SVs (Strategy 8) – including: how SVs will know what to do

Strategy 5: The organisation that coordinates SVs should define what is an acceptable level of risk to expose SVs to, how to measure that risk and what steps can be taken to reduce that risk: This should seek to protect SVs who participate in hazardous activities while reducing the reputational risks of the EMs through proper training and credentialing. In a plan for

managing SVs, EMs should:

- Identify the risks that SVs should be able to take whilst under their direction.
- Carry out risk assessments on typical tasks/situations and thereby identify which tasks SVs can and can't do.
- Identify where/if risks can be minimised by educating SVs about the potential risks and hazards.
- Include ways of minimising risks e.g.
    - Only letting SVs work in acceptable conditions such as daylight
    - Avoiding swift water
    - Providing PPE
- Redeploy SVs when risks cannot be mitigated.
- Develop a framework to establish the credentials needed by SVs and how this is measured at the point of convergence e.g.
    - Whether to try to credential unknown SVs' specialist skills
    - Physical ability of SVs to do the task
    - Appropriate clothing for the conditions
    - Willingness to listen to direction

These activities should seek to mitigate risk and make a potentially hazardous working environment safer for all people working in it.

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
iv) How do organisations monitor and supervise spontaneous volunteers?	20) We ensured they were supervised working (no lone working)	• SVs should be in low-risk supervised roles – use of a buddy system	Way to remove lone working were: • Team leaders • Buddy systems • Make volunteers visible • Use sign in/out forms	Define the principles for involving SVs (Strategy 6) – including: how to supervise SVs' working
	21) We didn't need to monitor them as they were doing non-urgent work as		• Some SVs were accepted to reduce the risk of freelancing but were given very low level tasks that didn't need	Define the principles for monitoring the tasks done by SVs (Strategy 6) – including: how to

	a PR exercise		supervision	supervise SVs' working
	22) We didn't need to monitor them as we knew them		• Some EMs knew the SVs well as they were from existing structures (such as parish councils) so EMs didn't need to monitor them	Define the principles for monitoring the tasks done by SVs (Strategy 6) – including: how to monitor SVs' working
	23) We trusted them to complete their simple tasks so did not monitor them		Some tasks didn't need monitoring because they were: • Non-critical areas • Low level tasks Or they were not managed by EMs because: • Independent tasks • Managed by a voluntary organisation	Define the principles for monitoring the tasks done by SVs (Strategy 6) – including: how to monitor SVs' working
	24) We had constant two-way communication with volunteers	• On-going feedback should be provided to volunteers to relay the importance of the work, praise good work and devolve responsibility to those volunteers that demonstrate ability	Two-way communication was through: • Regular face-to-face briefings • Communication over radios • Social media • Formal IT system	Define the principles under which SVs are communicated with (Strategy 9)

Strategy 6: The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the principles for monitoring the tasks done by SVs: This should help EMs to reduce risk by ensuring SVs are monitored correctly for the role they are performing. In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- The need to minimise SV lone working by using team leaders or buddy systems.
- How to keep records of where SVs are working and their hours they have worked.

- When responders should accept offers of help to reduce SVs freelancing without any support.
- Trusting existing SV management network when SV groups are well-known to EMs.
- If SVs also need to be monitored when completing non-critical or low level tasks.

Giving consideration to how/if SVs will be monitored should reduce risk to EMs and SVs, and make SVs more effective in their role.

Research priority b) The interplay between spontaneous volunteers, official emergency responders and organised voluntary groups

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
v) How do spontaneous volunteers work alongside different elements of the official response and recovery?	25) Volunteers in their own structure working side-by-side with EMs	• SVs can expand the number of activities conducted within new structures (regular tasks, new structures)	Volunteers in these groups were: • Trusted by EMs • Autonomous in their decision-making • Worked as partners to EMs • Shared and received information with EMs • Sometimes had formal agreements with EMs	Define the type of relationship EMs should have with SVs (Strategy 7)
	26) Volunteers integrated into the EM management structure	• SVs complement established working structures (regular tasks, old structures)	Volunteers in these groups were: • Closely supervised • Given low skilled tasks • Unclear if SVs are reimbursed for costs of volunteering (such as fuel)	Define the type of relationship responders should have with SVs (Strategy 7)

			• More successful if there was pre-engagement due to increased trust • EMs sometimes didn't have enough resources to manage SVs	
	27) Volunteers provide additional resources to EMs	• SVs extend the capacity of EMs within emergent structures (non-regular tasks, old structures)	These volunteers were able to: • Provide knowledge to EMs • Provide manpower to EMs • Fill gaps left through budget cuts	Define the type of relationship that responders should have with SVs (Strategy 7) – including: what SVs can contribute
	28) Volunteers working independently from EMs	• SVs extend the range of activities conducted within emerging structures (non-regular tasks, new structures)	SVs felt there was: • Poor communication from EMs • A disjointed approach to flood management from officials • A reluctance from EMs to engage with SVs • A lack of visibility of SV groups by EMs • A more local focus from SVs in their goals and aims	Define the type of relationship EMs should have with SVs (Strategy 7)
	29) Tension between different volunteer groups		• SV groups can disagree about the best course of action • EMs may need to help resolve problems to ensure both groups can be productive	Define the type of relationship that responders should have with SVs (Strategy 7) – including: how to manage the tensions that can arise

	30) SVs working with local businesses		•SVs and EMs reported getting help and donations from local businesses	Understand what assistance local businesses may provide during the response and recovery to a flood event (Strategy 8)

Strategy 7: The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the type of relationship that official emergency responders should have with SVs and how this will affect how they work together: This should seek to help EMs and OVs to understand the different ways through which SVs can be managed. The four different relationships between SVs and responders identified were:

- SVs that work side-by-side with responders.
    - These SVs were autonomous in decision-making and worked as partners to EMs
    - Information was shared between SVs and responders utilizing each other's resources
- SVs that were integrated into the EM structure.
    - These SVs were tasked by responders, they were closely supervised and only performed low skilled tasks
    - These SVs reported lower satisfaction with their role as their expectations were not met
- SVs working independently.
    - These SVs had little to no engagement with responders and served their own goals.
    - These SVs develop their own management structures and procedures so can be quite effective at meeting local needs
    - These SVs felt there was reluctance from responders to engage with them
    - With a clear management structure, human resources and knowledge of local issues, these could provide a valuable resource for EMs during a major flood event
- SVs providing resources to responders.
    - These SVs support responders by providing resources locally to aid the emergency response in a local community
    - As there is a degree of specialism often this can be done more effectively by OVs

In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- How the benefits and challenges presented by these four types of relationship will help EMs decide if they want to integrate SVs or have them managed at arm's length and, whether they should engage with established groups.

- From the four types of relationship, what combination of different types of relationships are appropriate for working with SVs and SV groups.
- Whether EMs should be available to address the tensions that can arise within SV groups and across different SV groups. As a group's structure is emergent there are not clear hierarchy, goals and standard operating procedures. While this makes SV groups very adaptable it can lead to disagreements which may benefit from EM support, especially when they affect the ability to provide relief.

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
vi) How could spontaneous volunteering be made more effective?	31) Establish a structure and plan that SVs can work through	A plan for SVs should: •Be scalable to the emergency •Consider the level of emergency at which SVs are accepted •Consider compatibility with existing response structures •Consider the resources required to manage SVs •Develop processes and materials to SV involvement (e.g. forms, induction, training, credentialing) prior to emergency •Understand the skills that might be required of SVs	A plan for SVs should include: •How to involve them instantly when they present •Who has responsibility for SVs •Who is the dedicated point of contact for SVs •How to process SVs when they present •How they are tasked •What type of task they can/can't do •The support they have during their volunteering •How they are briefed/ tasked •What EM representation will be on the ground •What to do and where to store donated goods for flood	Develop a structure within which SVs can work (Strategy 8) – including: writing a plan for how to manage SVs

		to develop roles prior to an emergency • Outline a SV deactivation process	victims	
	32) Involving SVs	• Command and control structures may be resistive to SV involvement. It may not be possible to have complete control over SVs	The ways EMs found they could engage SVs were: • To actively task them • To understand what skills the SVs had • To involve them in training exercises to build trust • Engage SVs through existing network (e.g. Parish Councils) • Engage with people locally before flood events	Develop a structure within which SVs can work (Strategy 8)
	33) Being able to identify SVs	• Credentialing system (e.g. ID badge) valid for a specified period of time	EMs should build a shared volunteer identity by: • Providing identifiable clothing • Giving shared sense of identity • Finding way to identify if SVs have had specific types of training	Develop a structure within which SVs can work (Strategy 8) – including: building a shared identity across SVs
	34) Establish the principles of EMs communicating with SVs	• Develop a communications strategy prior to emergency, consider on-going communication e.g. social media	The principles of communicating with EMs should include: • The channels to communicate with SVs • When to communicate with	Establish a communication plan relating to SVs (Strategy 9)

			SVs •If communication should be two-way •If EMs should help SVs communicate with one another •How SVs will share information with EMs •Whether EMs want to involve past SV groups	
	35) What messages to give to SVs	• Volunteers may offer assistance in the early stages of an emergency. Different messages should be developed to reflect the stage of the emergency	EMs should communicate: •Whether they want or do not want SVs to present •Where and when SVs should meet •What task SVs will be doing •What resources EMs will be providing •Where to get more information from •If there are issues of liability •The risks involved •Why the style of leadership is autocratic •That SVs should engage with EMs to reduce duplication of effort	Establish a communication plan relating to SVs (Strategy 9)
	36) What information can	•Regular updates regarding risk and offers of training	SV groups wanted: •A plan on a page to work off	Establish a communication plan

	EMs provide to SV groups	should be provided to SVs groups who do not wish to engage with EMs	• A resource where they could share their SV experience and learn from others	relating to SVs (Strategy 9)
	37) Training for volunteers	• Minimum standard of training should be identified. • The tasks given to SVs should reflect the limited amount of time available for screening and training (e.g. Just In Time training)	• SVs should be trained on contamination of flood water • SVs should be trained on the job for simple tasks • Training flood wardens in advance of flooding can be a way to skill a community • The downside of advanced training is fading memories as time passes between training and action	Identify what on-going training should be offered (Strategy 10) – including: training for SVs
	38) Training for incident commanders		• Training for incident commanders on SVs should include how EMs can utilize SVs	Identify what on-going training should be offered (Strategy 10) – including: training for incident commanders
	39) Training for officials and people in the public eye		• EMs need to set a good example for SVs ensuring their staff on the ground have the correct PPE • The media and others in the public eye should also set a good example	Identify what on-going training should be offered (Strategy 10) – including: training for responders and others in the public eye

Strategy 8: The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish a framework under which they will manage and task SVs: During a flood, EMs do not have time to develop plans on how to manage SVs. Thus, using the principles for involving SVs

(Strategy 3), a clear structure or framework should be agreed in advance to guide how SVs will be managed during a flood event. In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- How those responsible should coordinate SVs.
- What tasks SVs can do.
- Who has responsibility for SVs.
- Who is the point of contact for SVs.
- What is the process for SVs when they present to ensure they are properly SQEPed, trained and offers are recorded.
- What support do EMs need to provide on the ground for SVs.
- How SVs will be briefed.
- Where donated goods can be stored.
- How responders can identify SVs that have been SQEPed and are part of some official response.
- What relationship will responders and SVs have with OVs.
- How can EMs utilised the resources offered by businesses to help SVs be more effective.

The plans may take into account:

- The existing skills that SVs have which could be useful to responders and how these will be verified.
- If SVs can be involved in training prior to flood events to improve their effectiveness, and if potential SVs would be willing to do this.
- If there are existing networks of people in high risk areas that can be engaged in advanced and if they have an existing management structure that can be used to engage with SVs (for example Parish Councils).
- That plans to be used by SVs should be simple and action orientated.
- SVs may also benefit from examples of other SV groups.
- Providing t-shirts or high-visibility jackets to identify SVs can help to improve a sense of shared identity and therefore goal among SVs.
- The use of ID cards to identify SVs that have undergone official training.
- If OVs who are trained with specialist skills may be more appropriate than SVs for some for tasks.
- The viability of MoUs with voluntary organisations to manage SVs.

Perceived inaction was one of the greatest sources of dissatisfaction reported by SVs when discussing Local Authorities and EMs. A pre-planned structure will reduce the lead time between SVs presenting and EMs deploying them meaningfully. Furthermore, this is a requirement from the “Revision to Emergency Preparedness Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme. Chapter 14:

The Role of the Voluntary Sector. October 2011" which states that "Responders should work with voluntary agencies to formalise a process and procedure for the use of spontaneous volunteers" (Page 13).

Strategy 9: The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish a communications plan relating to SVs: This should provide guidance on how, what and when to communicate with SVs before, during and after a flood. In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- The channels on which to communicate with SVs – this should include a social media strategy e.g.
    - Develop own local Facebook page and Twitter branded around the event to send and receive messages to the local community and SVs
    - Engage early with members of the community who set up social media channels to ensure correct information is being communicated to users.
- The point in a flood event to begin communicating with SVs.
- How EMs facilitate communication between SVs.
- How EMs receive information from SVs.
- If EMs should contact previous SV groups.
- If SVs are publicly encouraged or discouraged from presenting.
- Where and when SVs should present.
- What tasks EMs will ask SVs to carry out.
- What resources SVs will be asked to bring themselves (therefore what resources will be provided by responders).
- Where SVs can get additional information about volunteering.
- If EMs need to explain any issues relating to liability.
- The style of communication and leadership SVs should expect.
- Explaining that SVs should engage with EMs to reduce duplication of effort.
- How SVs can communicate with each other, to support each other and share knowledge.

Strategy 10: The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish what on-going training is required for SVs to maximise their effective involvement in flood events and what training about involving SVs should be given to EMs and OVs: SVs may have training needs to ensure it is safe for them to be managed by EMs. In addition, EMs may not be familiar with tasking SVs so EMs should also be trained on this. The training needs for SVs that should be considered are:

- The dangers and contamination in flood water and how to minimise the risks associated with it and the wider environment.

- How to complete simple tasks e.g.
    - Lifting heavy objects to avoid injuries.
    - How to build a sandbag wall.
    - How to properly use any equipment provided by responders.

Flood wardens can be trained prior to incident to improve effectiveness, however if this training is not kept up the learning may fade. In addition responders should be trained on:

- How EMs and OVs can utilize SVs in achieving their organisation's objectives.
- How EMs can set a good example for SVs about how to act in a potentially hazardous environment (by not having their own staff underprepared for the conditions).

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
vii) How should potential volunteers be prepared for future flood events?	40) Converting SVs into regular volunteers	• Plans should consider pre-engagement with OV groups • All offers of assistance should be recorded. SVs may be involved later in the recovery • SVs should be invited/ encouraged to join resilience networks or OV groups after the emergency	SVs were converted through several routes these included: • Converting SVs to voluntary organisations • Converting SVs into the EMs own organisation • Converting SV groups into an OV group	Build resilience for future floods through SVs (Strategy 11)
	41) Maintaining the current levels of higher resilience	• SVs demonstrate latent social capital • SV work provides learning	• SVs thought continuing to volunteer as an OV group increased the resilience in	Build resilience for future floods through SVs (Strategy 11)

		opportunities which may increase knowledge of local risks, the motivation to self-manage this risk and the skills to reduce risk and quicken recovery	the area for future flood events	

Strategy 11: The organisation that coordinates SVs should build resilience for future flood events by converting SVs into organised volunteering roles: EMs should maintain and build upon current resilience by converting SVs into organised volunteers. In a plan for managing SVs, EMs should consider:

- How they want SVs to support longer-term recovery, and what official assistance they may need.
- If SV should be directed to volunteer to existing OV group.
- If SVs should be asked to participate in a group run and managed by responders.
- If SVs should be asked to set up and run flood protection groups unaffiliated to existing OVs or responders.

Research priority c) Whether a national policy or guidance document on spontaneous volunteering would be useful

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
viii) Is a national policy on spontaneous volunteering desired by the emergency response	42) A national policy or guidance on spontaneous volunteers	• Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada all had emergency management plans that considered the involvement of SVs	• The majority of respondents favoured guidance • A few preferred a national policy • A minority didn't want guidance or a policy	Develop guidance for how to manage SVs (Strategy 12)
	43) What guidance	Any guidance should	• There are many dimensions	Develop guidance for

community?	should include	include: •Underlying principles recognising the rights of individuals and communities to become involved in the response and recovery to emergencies •Clarification on insurance/ liability •The scalability of any guidance to the stage of the emergency, including how any guidance interacts with existing EM and OV plans •Consider the resources required to manage SVs •A communications strategy •How the guidance is activated/ deactivated •The non-involvement of SVs •A review process to understand the effectiveness of the plan	that this guidance should include	how to manage SVs (Strategy 13)
	44) Legal liabilities for EMs and SVs	•SVs need to be tasked by EMs/OVs to qualify for insurance and liability	A national position is required on: • Insurance	Develop guidance for how to manage SVs (Strategy 13) –

		cover. The acts of 'Good Samaritans' are not covered	• Liability • Health and Safety responsibilities • Protection for EMs	including: legal liabilities
	45) Don't forget organised volunteers	•Consider existing response structures inc OVs •SV plans should pre-engage with local OV groups	• Organised, trained voluntary groups are mindful about the potential of being marginalised	Develop a structure within which SVs can work (Strategy 8) – including: a template of good practice for an MoU between LRFs and the voluntary sector

Strategy 12: Establish a working group to develop non-statutory guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood event: The majority of respondents thought guidance was more appropriate than a national policy on SVs. A working group, with the support of CCS, Defra and DCLG, could progress the development of the guidance. Guidance should be adaptable to a local context by the LRF or partners. Guidance could include the points identified in Strategy 13.

Strategy 13: Develop national non-statutory guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood event: Guidance could include:

- General principles on the recruitment and management of SVs and what that means for EMs (Strategy 3).
- Case studies showing positive and negative experiences in SVs volunteering during a flood event (Chapter 5).
- Whether SVs activities will be funded (e.g. fuel costs for delivering donated goods) if so who will pay for it (Strategy 14).
- The strategy to communicate with the public (Strategy 9).
- The strategy to communicate with SVs (Strategy 9).
- Who will manage and coordinate SVs when they present can EMs ensure they have the capacity to do this (Strategy 8).
- How will responders ensure SVs are effective when they present (Strategy 8).
- The types of tasks EMs are happy for SVs to carry out (Strategy 5).
- How responders will maintain and build the resilience built up by SVs as part of future capacity (Strategy 4).
- What vetting and security checks will be required for SVs will carry out and how this can be achieved practically during an emergency event (Strategy 5).

- What credentialing and SQEP'ing will be required for SVs and how this will be achieved practically during an emergency event (Strategy 5).
- What risk assessment will need to be carried out by whom before SVs are cleared to work in an area (Strategy 5).
- What are the benefits to SVs converging to responders (Strategy 8).
- Under what circumstances will offers of help be declined from SVs and how will this message be presented and communicated (Strategy 5).
- If EMs should consider including OVs into a response framework to support SVs and responders (Strategy 11).

Research Question	***Theme***	***What was expected (From the literature, policy review and Stage 1 interviews)***	***What was found (In the case studies and Stage 2 interviews)***	***Strategies***
ix) On what questions could emergency responders benefit from having additional information regarding spontaneous volunteers?	46) Who has responsibility for SVs?	LA works with partners to: "co-ordinate the activities of the various voluntary sector agencies involved, and spontaneous volunteers;"	• Need to clarify which organisation should have responsibility for SVs during the emergency cycle	Task an organisation to coordinate SVs on behalf of the LRF partnership (Strategy 2)
	47) Are SVs insured?		• Need to clarify whether SVs are insured • Need to make LRFs aware of the insurance position with respect to SVs and community resilience	Resolve key questions on SV involvement (Strategy 14) including: the position on insurance
	48) What health and safety measures need to be considered before tasking SVs?		• Need a process for ensuring the health and safety of SVs when they are involved in response and recovery	Resolve key questions on SV involvement (Strategy 14) including: what precautions should be taken when involving SVs
	49) Who is liable if		• Who has liability for SVs if	Resolve key questions

	something goes wrong?		something goes wrong while under direction by an EM • Need to clarify which organisation has responsibility for the costs and management of SVs	on SV involvement (Strategy 14) including: the position on liability
	50) Could responsibility for spontaneous volunteers be included in MoUs with the voluntary sector in relation to response and recovery?		• Need to review arrangements with the voluntary sector to identify their potential for managing SVs via an MoU.	Resolve key questions on SV involvement (Strategy 14) including: a template of good practice for managing SV by the voluntary sector

Strategy 14 : Clarify the key issues where EMs have uncertainty: EMs were still unsure over a range of key issues that affected if and how they would involve SVs, clarification on these issues would make potentially unknown risks known so that EMs can make informed decisions about involving SVs in response and recovery efforts. These issues were:

- Are SVs insured, and who in the LRF insures them?
- Which organisation has responsibility for SVs during an emergency cycle?
- What health and safety precautions should be taken to involve SVs in response and recovery?
- Who assumes liability if anything goes wrong while a SV is under direction of an EM?
- Who should cover expenses incurred by SVs during their volunteering?
- What should be included in any MoU with voluntary sector if they are to manage SVs on behalf of the LRF?

The answers to these questions may already be available, but our interviewees seemed unaware of those. For example, to answer the second question above, the Emergency Response and Recovery Non-statutory Guidance (Oct 2013) states that the LA will work with partners to: “co-ordinate the activities of the various voluntary sector agencies involved, and spontaneous volunteers;” (Page 34).

Summary

This section has developed 14 strategies based what was found from the data collected across all interviews, the case studies and the reviews of literature and policy. These 14 strategies represent the key issues for EMs, officials and OVs to consider when developing clear strategies for managing and engaging with SVs during a flood event. The strategies are developed further in Section 8.

Section 8. Conclusions

Key points:

- This section summarises how the key findings from the project can enhance the working practices between LRFs and spontaneous volunteers.
- The three research priorities from Section 2 are linked back to the research findings showing why these three priorities are important to the project's interviewees.
- The fourteen strategies are linked backed to the three research priorities.
- A logical order of implementing the strategies is identified according to short, medium and long term.

This report summarises the findings from data gathered from 62 participants, 3 case studies and a comprehensive literature and policy review. This section summarises how LRFs can enhance working practices with spontaneous volunteers by addressing the three research priorities (a, b & c) from Section 2. The analysis focussed on these three research priorities which divide into a total of 9 research questions. This discussion section refocuses on the 3 research priorities, why they are important and how the fourteen strategies address them. Finally, this section presents a possible order in which to complete the strategies.

a. The challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers in an operational response to a flood event.

Interviewees identified many challenges around involving spontaneous volunteers within the response to a flood event. Emergency managers were concerned with the risks they associated with integrating unknown spontaneous volunteers into the response or recovery. However some EMs who experienced spontaneous volunteering during the winter 2013/2014 floods thought that many of these issues can be mitigated.

To minimise these risks and challenges the project found that emergency managers and voluntary organisations should build awareness around the motivations for volunteers that converge as this will help emergency managers to understand why spontaneous volunteers want to help. Understanding these emotional responses may help responders to ensure spontaneous volunteers are doing tasks which achieve their own aims and therefore they will be more effective.

LRFs should decide which organisation or partner has responsibility for spontaneous volunteers during the response and recovery phases of an emergency. This

organisation should then develop the capability and capacity to manage spontaneous volunteers during a flood event, perhaps starting by leading the partnership in considering the strategies that are outlined in this report.

The principles under which spontaneous volunteers are recruited should be defined and this should include the types of tasks that volunteers will be asked to carry out, what attributes must be demonstrated by spontaneous volunteers before they will be accepted, and how offers of help may be declined by responders. In understanding when offers of help could be declined, emergency managers should understand what are acceptable levels of risk to expose spontaneous volunteers to, how to measure this and how it can be reduced. This includes how to standardise risk assessments, what equipment and PPE can be provided by responders and what volunteers should provide, as well as how to understand if a particular spontaneous volunteer is appropriate to carry out a specific task.

The organisation should also consider how to monitor the tasks carried out by spontaneous volunteers, identifying ways to minimise lone working and keep records of where volunteers are working.

Finally, there are challenges when responders withdraw from a flood affected area (after the official response and recovery is over) but spontaneous volunteers continue to provide support to the on-going need from those affected by the flood. Therefore consideration should be given to how to engage spontaneous volunteers in the longer term recovery from a flood event. This should consider the role of the community in its own long term recovery and what can be done by responders to help the community to help itself.

b. The interplay between spontaneous volunteers, official emergency responders and organised voluntary groups.

The project identified four different types of relationships between responders and spontaneous volunteers. Spontaneous volunteers could work: side-by-side with responders, having shared goals, shared information and mutual trust; be integrated with responders, where they report into the responder's management structure and achieve the emergency managers' goals; be independent from responders, working to their own goals with their own management structure with little engagement with responders; or provide resources to responders, supporting the official response by providing either specialist skills or local knowledge to the official response.

Understanding these different types of relationships will allow emergency managers to consider the relationship type they would prefer to have with spontaneous volunteers by considering how each relationship type will affect how they work with spontaneous volunteers. Each type of relationship will have its benefits for the responders and spontaneous volunteers so these should be carefully considered.

The organisation responsible for spontaneous volunteers should develop a framework in which spontaneous volunteers will be managed. This should consider what spontaneous volunteers may be asked to do, who will be their point of contact, what process spontaneous volunteers should go through when they present and the types of support that will be available to volunteers when they are volunteering. The plans should also consider what existing networks responders can engage with (such as Parish Councils), the ways in which spontaneous volunteers could be identified and the relationship spontaneous volunteers and responders will have with organised volunteers. The framework should minimise the time between volunteers converging and being tasked to minimise the perception of inaction from officials.

The organisation responsible for spontaneous volunteers should also develop a communications plan. This should consider the channels through which responders will communicate with spontaneous volunteers. The research found that spontaneous volunteers were most likely to communicate with each other through social media such as Facebook and Twitter as well as by word-of-mouth. Social media therefore seems to be very effective at reaching many people with a consistent message. Responders could consider their response to this by either setting up their own social media presence to communicate with volunteers, or engaging early with the key linchpin individuals who have set up these groups in the past to ensure that the information shared is correct. Consideration should also be given to how information can be sent from spontaneous volunteers to responders. If spontaneous volunteer involvement is to be encouraged then a communications plan should clearly state where and when volunteers should present, what tasks they may be expected to carry out and what spontaneous volunteers should bring with them as well as with what will be provided by emergency managers.

The organisation that coordinates spontaneous volunteers should consider what, if any, training should be provided to spontaneous volunteers including what training is required for emergency managers around spontaneous volunteering. This training should consider the requirements for SVs on the job, to help them be more effective and also consider what training should be offered to volunteers where there is no immediate threat of flooding to prepare them for a future flood event. Training requirements for emergency managers should be reviewed to ensure there is information on spontaneous volunteering as many emergency managers reported being underprepared for such individuals when they presented.

Finally, the organisation that coordinates spontaneous volunteers should consider how they might build resilience for future flood events by converting spontaneous volunteers into organised volunteer groups. Here it should consider whether spontaneous volunteers could be encouraged to join existing organised voluntary groups, if they could form a group under the direct management of the emergency

managers, or if spontaneous volunteers could be encouraged to set up their own groups.

c. **Whether a national policy or guidance document on spontaneous volunteering would be useful.**

Central to this project was the need to understand whether a UK Government Policy on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers during a flood event was required. The research showed that attitudes regarding the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood response varied greatly. As such the capability to manage and involve spontaneous volunteers varied across different LRFs. This situation is further complicated as flood events do not respect local authority boundaries, with rivers often marking boundaries. Therefore it may not be possible to provide consistent messaging to SVs depending on which side of a river they are volunteering.

Overall, the response community thought there were many key issues that needed clarification from central government however, the overwhelming preference from the response community was that guidance on this matter would be more appropriate than a policy and a working group could begin work on this. Guidance was seen to be the preferred way to resolve these issues as it was perceived to be more adaptable to local contexts and less restrictive. Guidance should consider the issues that arise from involving spontaneous volunteers within an operational response and the interplay between spontaneous volunteers, responders and organised volunteers. It should also consider whether the continued use of the term ‘convergent’ is appropriate as ‘spontaneous’ seems a more useful and intuitive term in the UK civil protection context.

In addition to guidance there were key issues which emergency managers felt needed to be addressed to give them the information they require to make decisions about the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood event. These issues relate to, whether spontaneous volunteers are insured, and if so who insures them? Which organisation(s) has responsibility for SVs during an emergency? What health and safety precautions should be taken to involve spontaneous volunteers in response and recovery efforts? Who assumes liability if anything goes wrong while a spontaneous volunteer is under direction of an emergency manager? Who should cover the expenses incurred by spontaneous volunteers during their volunteering? And, what should be included in any memorandum of understanding with the voluntary sector if they are to manage spontaneous volunteers on behalf of responders?

Progressing the strategies

When presenting the strategies no guidance has been given over which order they should be started or completed however, there is a fairly clear order of precedence.

This is shown below, by categorising the strategies into those that could be considered in the short term (perhaps within 6 months), medium term (perhaps between 6 months and 1 year) and long term (perhaps beyond 1 year).

Short term:

- Strategy **12:** Establish a working group under Defra/CCS/DCLG to establish non-statutory guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood event.
- Strategy **2:** LRF partners should task an organisation with responsibility for managing and coordinating SVs on its behalf during a flood event
- Strategy **14:** Clarify the key issues where EMs have uncertainty.

Medium term:

- Strategy **3:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the principles for recruiting SVs.
- Strategy **7:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the type of relationship that official emergency responders should have with SVs and how this will affect how they work together.
- Strategy **5:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should define what is an acceptable level of risk to expose SVs to, how to measure that risk and what steps can be taken to reduce that risk.
- Strategy **6:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should define the principles for monitoring the tasks done by SVs.
- Strategy **8:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish a framework under which they will manage and task SVs.
- Strategy **9:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish a communications plan relating to SVs.
- Strategy **10:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should establish what on-going training is required for SVs to maximise their effective involvement in flood events and what training about involving SVs should be given to EMs and OVs.
- Strategy **4:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should put plans in place for involving SVs in the longer term recovery.
- Strategy **11:** The organisation that coordinates SVs should build resilience for future flood events by converting SVs into organised volunteering roles.

Long term:

- Strategy **13:** Develop national non-statutory guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a flood event.

- Strategy **1:** Emergency Managers and Voluntary Organisations should build their awareness of what motivates volunteers generally and spontaneous volunteers in particular.

This order of precedence may ensure that strategies are started and completed in an order that maximises the benefit to the response community and spontaneous volunteers. Issues causing the most uncertainty are considered first along with designating clear ownership for spontaneous volunteers within the LRF. These strategies can be built upon to understand the principles under which spontaneous volunteers are recruited, the relationship between responders and spontaneous volunteers, the types of roles spontaneous volunteers will be asked to perform (and their risks). Consideration may then be given to how spontaneous volunteers will be monitored, managed, communicated with. Also, the training requirements for spontaneous volunteers may be considered along with how spontaneous volunteers can be included within a longer term recovery. Finally, these issues and principles may be used to develop guidance which is then disseminated to emergency managers and voluntary organisations.

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Appendix A

Stage 1 interview questions

"As a bit of background, emergency planners and Defra are interested to know how volunteers can be integrated into the emergency response to flooding. We've been asked to conduct a research project on this and so I'd like to talk with you about the sorts issues the research should consider.

Specifically, I am interested in *spontaneous* volunteers and their involvement in the official response. By *spontaneous* volunteer I mean someone who turns up on the day to help in the response to a flood. They have not pre-planned nor belong to a recognized charity, but they turn up on the day to help officials to do tasks. An example would be an office worker who turns up to offer help and a Policeman asks them to coordinate traffic around a flooded road.

I'd like to chat with you about the few questions I sent to you in the email. Are you ok for the next 20 mins to chat about those. … Thank you.

Do you mind if I record this call. This is just to my colleagues can also listen to the calls. We're not going to share these with anyone outside the research team. …Great. Ok, so, I'm switching on the recorder and (for the recording) I just want to confirm that you are happy to be recorded.

Great, so my first question is:

1. Have you worked with *spontaneous* volunteers who just turn up on the day to help?
2. What issues might there be in managing the *spontaneous* volunteers who turn up on the day to help?
3. What would you be looking for when deciding if someone is suitable to be a *spontaneous* volunteer?
4. Do you know of a policy or plan on the involvement of *spontaneous* volunteers?
5. Would a government policy on the involvement of *spontaneous* volunteers for flooding be useful?
6. What type of things should that policy consider?
7. Who else should we talk to about this?
    a. We are looking for examples of people who have worked with or have been *spontaneous* volunteers.

Excellent, thank you once again for participating I have found the interview very helpful. If you have any further questions about the research then please email me on the address I have been using to speak with you."

[Note: we have changed the term from 'convergent' to 'spontaneous' for consistency in the report and for the six reasons provided in Section 1]

Appendix B

Stage 2 interview questions for emergency managers, officials and voluntary coordinators

"As a bit of background, emergency planners and Defra are interested to know how volunteers can be integrated into the emergency response to flooding. We've been asked to conduct a research project on this and so I'd like to talk with you about the sorts issues the research should consider.

Specifically, I am interested in *spontaneous* volunteers and their involvement in the emergency response. Just to clarify by *spontaneous* volunteer I mean someone who turns up on the day to help in the response to a flood. They have not pre-planned nor have been recruited or sent in by a charity, community organization or a governmental organization. However they turn up on the day to help emergency responders deal with the flood. An example would be an office worker who turns up to offer help and a Police Officer asks them to co-ordinate traffic around a flooded road.

I'd like to chat with you about the few questions I sent to you in the email. Are you ok for the next 30 minutes to talk about them? …Thank you.

Do you mind if I record this call? This is just so my colleagues can also listen to the calls and so I can double check my notes after the call. The recording won't be shared with anyone outside the research team. To confirm findings will be fed back in themes to protect confidentiality and maintain anonymity among participants. … Great. Ok, so, I'm switching on the recorder and (for the recording) <Date, time > Stage 2 interview with <name>. <name> I just want to confirm that you are happy to be recorded. …Great, so…:

<u>Questions to voluntary organisations</u>

1. What did your organisation do during the most recent floods?
2. During the most recent floods, did any new *spontaneous* volunteers turn up at your organisation to help?
    a. Were there issues in involving these *spontaneous* volunteers?
3. Does your organisation have a policy for the involvement of *spontaneous* volunteers during a flood event?
    a. What does this cover?
4. What did your organisation do with *spontaneous* volunteers that came to you during the most recent floods?
    a. Types of roles
    b. Use / turn away
    c. SQEP
    d. Was there any documentation capturing an audit trail?
5. How did you know if the *spontaneous* volunteers were doing the things you wanted them to?
    a. Monitoring
6. How did you/they decide what needed to be done and in what order?
    a. What work needed to be done, where did this info come from?
7. Is there anything that your organisation could have done to help *spontaneous* volunteers be more effective?
8. Have you tried to convert *spontaneous* volunteers into regular volunteers?
9. Can you describe how emergency responders and voluntary organisations worked together?
10. Is there anything that should be done differently regarding emergency responders working with volunteers during a flood?
11. Would national level policy or guidance on managing *spontaneous* volunteers be helpful for you?

12. What would you expect to find in this policy or guidance for it to be useful?
13. Who else should we talk to about this?
    a. We are looking for examples of people who have worked with or have been *spontaneous* volunteers.
14. Is there anything else about volunteers in the recent floods that you would like to tell me about?

Excellent, thank you once again for participating I have found the interview very helpful. If you have any further questions about the research then please email me on the address I have been using to speak with you."

[Note: we have changed the term from 'convergent' to 'spontaneous' for consistency in the report and for the six reasons provided in Section 1]

Appendix C

Stage 2 interview questions for *spontaneous* volunteers

"As a bit of background, emergency planners and Defra are interested to know how volunteers can be integrated into the emergency response to flooding. We've been asked to conduct a research project on this and so I'd like to talk with you about the sorts issues the research should consider.

Specifically, I am interested in *spontaneous* volunteers and how they worked with emergency responders. Just to clarify by *spontaneous* volunteer I mean someone who turns up on the day to help in the response to a flood. They have not pre-planned nor have been recruited or sent in by a charity, community organization or a governmental organization. However they turn up on the day to help emergency responder deal with the flood. An example would be an office worker who turns up to offer help and a Police Officer asks them to co-ordinate traffic around a flooded road.

I'd like to chat with you about the few questions I sent to you in the email. Are you ok for the next 30 minutes to talk about them? To confirm findings will be fed back in themes to protect confidentiality and maintain anonymity among participants. … Thank you.

Do you mind if I record this call? The recording won't be shared with anyone outside the research team. … Great. Ok, so, I'm switching on the recorder and (for the recording) <Date, time > *spontaneous* volunteers Stage 2 interview with <name>. <name> I just want to confirm that you are happy to be recorded. …Great, so…:

1. How were you affected during the floods?
2. Why did you want to get involved?
3. What voluntary tasks did you do?
4. What was your aim and how did you know you were achieving it?
5. Did anyone coordinate the volunteers?
    a. Who were they?
    b. What did they do?
6. How did you/they decide what needed to be done and in what order?
    a. Communication from different people.
    b. What how did you know what else needed to be done?
7. Did emergency responders and volunteers worked together? How?
8. What could emergency responders do to make *spontaneous* volunteering more effective?
9. What should be done differently to make *spontaneous* volunteering more effective during a flood?
    a. Reflecting on your own experiences
    b. Communication;
    c. Were they part of the same system or different ones
10. How should we prepare volunteers for future floods?
11. Has your experience encouraged you to volunteer again in anyway?
12. Who else should we talk to about this?
    a. We are looking for examples of people who have worked with or have been *spontaneous* volunteers.
13. Is there anything else about volunteers in the recent floods that you would like to tell me about?

Excellent, thank you once again for participating I have found the interview very helpful. If you have any further questions about the research then please email me on the address I have been using to speak with you."

[Note: we have changed the term from 'convergent' to 'spontaneous' for consistency in the report and for the six reasons provided in Section 1]

Appendix D

Policy Review: Spontaneous Volunteers in Emergencies

1. Overview

This policy review document provides an overview of the spontaneous volunteer management frameworks and guidance documents implemented by national governments and non-governmental organisations such as the Red Cross. The purpose of this review is to identify existing spontaneous volunteer management frameworks, provide an overview of their content therefore helping to identify potential best practices to inform any Defra policy.

These guidance documents and frameworks cover the involvement of volunteers in emergencies more generally, and do not exclusively cover flooding. Despite the challenges associated with involving volunteers in emergency response the UN's State of the Worlds Volunteerism report (2012: 7[8]) states that individuals at the local level are, "best placed to identify their immediate emergency response needs and contribute to local decision-making… They can also provide valuable insights into community needs, bringing trust and a human touch to affected families… The combination of local people with those who have the necessary skills can be particularly effective when mobilized rapidly".

As outlined in the Emergency Response and Recovery Non-statutory Guidance (October 2013) accompanying the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) document, responsibility for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers rests with Local Authorities and partners. Although this guidance requires a statutory service to coordinate the activities of various voluntary sector agencies, including spontaneous volunteers, it does not explain how this should be achieved. Recognising that there is currently no UK policy concerning the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in emergencies, a desk-based review of available policy document was conducted. Sections 1 to 7 of this report outline some of the common features of these guidance documents. In section 7 specific strategies from the various frameworks and guidance documents concerning the involvement of volunteers at the three stages of the emergency are outlined. The findings of this review are discussed in section 8.

Table A1.1 identifies the various frameworks and guidance documents reviewed and provides a brief description of each. The footnotes beneath Table A1.1 identify the framework/ guidance authors as well as a link to each of the documents.

[8] United Nations Volunteers and Disasters An extract from the 2011 State of the World's Volunteerism Report (2012): http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/docdb/pdf/2013/resources/Booklet_SWVR_Volunteerism_and_Disasters.pdf

Table A1.1: Framework and guidance documents reviewed

Nation	Source	Date	Title	Description of framework/guidance
Australia	Department for Social Service	2010	Spontaneous Volunteer Management Resource Kit (2010)[9]	• Provides a recommended structure for spontaneous volunteer management (national-local) • Generic implementation plan, draft communications strategy, a research report outlining motivations/expectations of spontaneous volunteers • CD containing management tool and additional resources.
New Zealand	Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (CDEM)	2006	Spontaneous Volunteer Management: A Guide or CDEM Practitioners [10]	• Provides guidance on the involvement of Spontaneous volunteers. • Annexes provide guidance on potential job descriptions e.g., volunteer coordinator and desk/active tasks for spontaneous volunteers, key communication messages, draft registration forms, interview schedules, task briefing/debriefing sheets and health and safety materials.
		2013	Volunteer Coordination in CDEM Director's Guide for Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (2013)[11]	• Provides guidance on the management of both CDEM-trained volunteers and spontaneous volunteers. • The appendices in this document are similar to those of the 2006 guidance.

[9] Australia, Department of Social Services (2010): http://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/07_2012/spontaneous.pdf
[10] New Zealand, Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency Management (2006): http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/Files/SpontaneousVolBPG306/$file/SpontaneousVolBPG306.pdf
[11] New Zealand, Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency Management (2013): http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/srch/D02766E89E088E36CC257C2E00088C9E?OpenDocument

United States	FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)	2003	Preventing a Disaster within the Disaster: The Effective Use and Management of Unaffiliated Volunteers (2003)[12]	• Provides initial recommendations, challenges and opportunities for working with volunteers who may not be suitably qualified or experienced (SQEP).
		2005	Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster (2005)[13]	• Provides management practices designed to help emergency planners prepare for and involve spontaneous volunteers who are not members of any specific organisation involved in the response.
	Medical Reserve Corps	No date	Guide to Managing Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers[14]	• This short guidance document provides broad practical management advice and includes links to additional resources.
Canada	Collaborative project funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada	2008	Maintaining the Passion: Sustaining the Emergency Response Episodic Volunteer	• Focuses on health emergencies • Considers the involvement of episodic volunteers including unaffiliated spontaneous volunteers in health emergencies • Identified best practice principles for recruiting, screening and retaining volunteers.
	Emergency Management BC (British Columbia)	2013	Search and Rescue Safety Program Guide	• Provides guidance for trained volunteer teams conducting search and rescue activities. • Includes information on how Search and Rescue volunteers engage with

[12] United States, Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network (2002): http://www.cert-la.com/education/disasterbook.pdf
[13] United States, Points of Light Foundation, NVOAD and UPS Foundation (2005): http://www.fema.gov/pdf/donations/ManagingSpontaneousVolunteers.pdf
[14] United States, Medical Reserve Corps (no date): https://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/file/Promising_Practices_Toolkit/Unit_Administration_Operations/Volunteer_Management/MRC-Guide-UnaffilitatedVolunteers.pdf

				spontaneous volunteers.

Table A1.1: Framework and guidance documents reviewed (continued)

Nation	Source	Date	Title	Description of framework/guidance
United Kingdom	**British Red Cross**	**No date**	**Guide for managing convergent volunteers**[15]	• **Provides general guidance for the management and coordination of convergent volunteers within the British Red Cross.** • **Includes additional materials such as an induction checklist, process overview and potential role descriptions for convergent volunteers.**
	Community Resilience North Somerset, North Somerset Council	No data	Community Resilience North Somerset Volunteer Policy[16]	• In addition to a standard volunteer policy this document includes an annex containing guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers. • Includes confirmation of the liability and insurance status of spontaneous volunteers as well as post event guidance.
Sweden	Swedish Red Cross	No date	Guidelines for the reception of spontaneous volunteers in connection with	• Provides an overview of the management process of spontaneous volunteers from pre-disaster to post-disaster. • Appendices include

[15] British Red Cross (no date): Guidance for managing convergent volunteers.
[16] Community Resilience North Somerset (no date): Policy only available online to members of the network.

	emergencies and disasters[17]	insurance information, registration form and volunteer agreement form, work schedules, exit interview and letter of appreciation.

2. Guidance and methodology

Section 2 of this policy review considers the sources of guidance used to inform each framework including an appraisal of the methodology used to develop its components such as consultations with various emergency planners or volunteers and whether or not the document was informed by any primary or secondary research.

2.1 Spontaneous Volunteer Management Framework, Australia

This framework is based upon earlier work conducted by the Australian Red Cross on behalf of the Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum in 2008. Guidance for this project was provided by a number of governmental and non-governmental departments both with a specific interest in emergency management and response (e.g., Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authority Council; Australian Council for State Emergency Service; Department for Community Safety, Queensland; St John Ambulance Australia) and those with alternative missions (e.g., Department for Families and Communities and various bodies representing volunteers and their organizations across Australia (Peak bodies)).

Consultations, interviews and discussions were held with state/territory government, peak bodies (organisations who represent volunteers/associations), organisations with prior experience of managing spontaneous volunteers in a response, organisations who *supply* volunteers and jurisdictions responsible for emergency management. Primary research was also conducted to assess the motivations and prior experiences of spontaneous volunteers[18] as well as desk-based reviews on emergent organisations and international best practice. At all stages of the consultation process participants were asked for their thoughts on the definition of a spontaneous volunteer, the requirements of the framework, the policies and procedures that would need to be in place for any framework and the features required for effective volunteer management tools.

2.2 Civil Defence and Emergency Management Volunteer Coordination in CDEM, New Zealand

Two documents outlining the management of spontaneous volunteers were found on New Zealand's Civil Defence website: Spontaneous Volunteer Management: A Guide for CDEM Practitioners (2006) and Volunteer Coordination in CDEM (2013).

The earlier guidance held of the Civil Defence and Emergency Management (2006) website pertains specifically to spontaneous volunteers. Emergency managers are specifically cited in the acknowledgements however there is no discussion of the

[17] Swedish Red Cross (no date): http://www.informedprepared.eu/pages/ResourceLibrary/db_GetResource.document?rid=266&uid=152

[18] Cottrel (2012): http://www.redcross.org.au/files/ES0-Research_report.pdf

consultation process or methodology used to devise the plan. The latter guidance (2013) outlines the management of spontaneous volunteers and volunteers who have undertaken official Civil Defence and Emergency Management Training (known as CDEM volunteers). The document is cited as a collaborative effort between personnel from regional and local CDEM organisations, volunteer organisations and the Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency Management however no overall methodology is provided. The latter document makes no reference to the earlier guidance and it is unclear whether this latter document outlining strategies for both CDEM and spontaneous volunteers supersedes the earlier advice pertaining solely to the management of spontaneous volunteers.

2.3 Unaffiliated Volunteer Management, United States

The three documents outlining the involvement of spontaneous volunteers were found on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Corporation for National & Community Service websites.

The creation of the 'Preventing a Disaster within the Disaster: The Effective Use and Management of Unaffiliated Volunteers' (2002) document stemmed from a national leadership forum on emergency volunteerism. Held in 2002 the forum was convened by the UPS and Points of Light Foundations, the Volunteer Center National Network and FEMA. This document provides general recommendations for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers at each stage of an emergency as well as specific recommendations for organisations such as National Volunteer Organisations Active in Disasters (NVOAD), FEMA, State and local emergency managers, voluntary agencies, the private sector, other Federal Agencies and the media.

The Volunteer Management Committee was established by NVOAD in 2003 to continue the work above. The committee comprised of representatives who had gained 'hands-on' experience in emergency management and volunteer management. Their work led to the development of the Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster (2005) document, which is intended to serve as the basis for a national strategy for spontaneous volunteer management. No further information on the sources of guidance or methodologies used to develop either of the frameworks is provided.

2.4 Maintaining the Passion Sustaining the Emergency Response Episodic Volunteer, Canada

This guidance is a collaborative venture between a number of organisations with funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada. There is no discussion of the methodology within the guidance document.

The following sections of this policy review provide a thematic analysis of the key management issues associated with the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in the official response to emergency situations. Section three considers the divergent use of terminology referring to spontaneous volunteers across the frameworks. This is followed by an examination of other potential considerations such as civil liability and insurance, framework principles and the scalability of any plan. Sections 7 to 9 consider the key guidance concerning the three stages of the emergency whilst the final section provides a summary and conclusion.

3.0 Terminology and definitions

Whilst reviewing the various frameworks and guidance documents it became clear that the terminology used to refer to spontaneous volunteers was inconsistent. The terms *spontaneous volunteer*, *unaffiliated volunteers*, *unaffiliated spontaneous volunteer* and *convergent volunteer* were used across these frameworks.

The spontaneous volunteer management toolkit developed in Australia distinguishes between potential spontaneous volunteers and spontaneous volunteers. All individuals making offers of assistance are considered potential spontaneous volunteers regardless of their prior knowledge or training. Individuals are only considered spontaneous volunteers once they have been screened, received any necessary background checks and undertaken the necessary training for their role. Such individuals may come from inside the affected area and be motivated by a sense of community ownership or from outside the affected area. This was the only framework of guidance document which distinguished between potential spontaneous volunteers and spontaneous volunteers.

The lack of affiliation with an existing organisation was a common theme linking the remaining framework and guidance documents. For instance Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster (2005) indicates that unaffiliated volunteers are not part of any recognised organisation, may or may not have suitable training and have not been officially invited to become part of the response. The Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (2006) takes a similar line in their earlier spontaneous volunteer management guidance but add to this that spontaneous volunteers are neither responsible nor accountable to an organisation, of an unknown quantity and recognises that such individuals may have volunteer previously. Their latter guidance appears to suggest a definition that is inclusive of both spontaneous volunteers and emergent groups suggesting that spontaneous volunteers are “community members who offer their services on the spur of the moment, as individuals or as groups, in response to an emergency event” (CDEM, 2013: 7).

The guidance concerning the involvement of volunteers in public health emergencies in Canada considers three forms of episodic volunteering: unaffiliated, interim and affiliated. Affiliated volunteers are those who provide regular on-going help within a formal organisation whereas interim volunteers provide concentrated service for a limited period of time perhaps for certain yearly events. The guidance refers to spontaneous volunteers as those who are unaffiliated and motivated by a sudden desire to help others in trouble. The guidance recognises that such individuals bring with them a variety of skills, may be from within or outside the effected area and come with the intention of helping for a short period of time (p.3).

Only the British Red Cross guidance document used the terms convergent volunteers, “Convergent volunteers, also known as spontaneous volunteers, are members of the public who wish to offer help on a voluntary basis in connection with a specific emergency. Convergent volunteers are people with no prior affiliation with the organisation” (British Red Cross: 4). The British Red Cross guidance document acknowledges that whilst the perception of convergent volunteers is that they are unskilled this is not always the case. Importantly the guidance recognised that, “Convergent volunteers differ from existing volunteers, and special consideration needs to be given when planning to use them, and in managing any associated risks” (British Red Cross: 5).

4. Insurance and liability issues

This section of the review outlines the various ways in which the governmental and non-governmental frameworks have considered issues such as civil liability and volunteer insurance. As such issues vary by context civil liability and insurance matters are discussed by each framework/ guidance document.

In general the guidance documents highlight the need for any volunteer coordinating agency to ensure that their insurance policies and liability insurance covers the involvement of volunteers. It was also recognised that the coordinating agency should also ensure that any organisations making requests for spontaneous volunteers also had the appropriate insurance and liability cover. For instance all Red Cross volunteers are covered are provided with cover regardless of whether they are a long-term or spontaneous volunteer.

Organisations that had their own specially trained volunteers also provided insurance and liability cover. For instance the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management guidance (New Zealand) states that spontaneous volunteers are protected by the same level of insurance and liability cover as CDEM-trained volunteers when tasked by a CDEM organisation. This cover provides compensation for damaged personal property (if not covered by an existing policy) as well as liability insurance for actions carried out in good faith. Spontaneous volunteers conducting regular or on-going work with the knowledge and consent of CDEM organisations are also subject to Health and Safety legislation provided.

Good Samaritans who provide immediate relief in a situation or those who self-activate and who operate under their own direction are typically not covered by and insurance or liability cover. Only once spontaneous volunteers are tasked (e.g., after screening, training) are they provided with cover.

Emergent groups, who are unlikely to have any cover because of their ephemeral nature could seek to affiliate with established groups to gain cover or individuals could seek to arrange their own cover. For instance the spontaneous volunteer management tool kit developed in Australia highlights the e-learning programme developed by Volunteering Australia (Be an effective volunteer[19]). This course covers various issues such as occupational health and safety and upon completion volunteers can purchase personal accident insurance cover through a national insurance scheme to cover their involvement in emergency scenarios.

5. Principles

A number of the frameworks and guidance documents identified guiding principles upon which their plans were based. The principles generally recognised the importance volunteering and of the right of individuals and communities to become involved in the response and recovery to emergencies.

The spontaneous volunteer management tool kit (Australia) was developed on the basis on 10 principles (p.27). The tool kit recognised that spontaneous volunteering can aid community recovery and that everyone should have the right to offer his or her assistance.

[19] Volunteering Australia e-learning URL: http://www.localcommunityinsurance.com.au/

It was also acknowledged authorities may chose not to involve spontaneous volunteers and that the tool kit should also support this scenario. For instance existing resources may be sufficient and therefore there should also be support to ensure that authorities are not overwhelmed by offers of assistance from the public. Pre-determined communication messages should commence as soon as possible after the emergency and be embedded within the official response. Despite the nature of emergencies the Australian tool kit indicates that normal volunteer management processes should be applied. These should be embedded within existing emergency management frameworks. Finally, the tool kit acknowledged that offers of assistance and need may not coincide, spontaneous volunteers may not be available or may be required later in the recovery stage.

The guidance concerning volunteer involvement in CDEM organisations (New Zealand) contains both community and organisational focussed principles. Community-focussed principles indicate that individuals who recognise the need and have the right resources to do so may wish to help their local community by volunteering and that these individuals should be actively engaged to help to improve individual and community well-being. Volunteering is considered a legitimate means of community participation and individuals should be recognised for the work they do for their communities. Concerning organisational focussed principles the guidance suggests that CDEM organisations be flexible and cooperative in their management of volunteers and recognise that volunteers can build capacity within CDEM organisations beyond that which can be accomplish by paid staff alone. Volunteer involvement should be focussed on meeting the needs of the CDEM organisation and should be a collaborative exercise between staff and volunteers for an intended and measureable result.

The ‘Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster’ guidance (p.4) also recognised the importance of volunteering in community life, the use of consistent terminology to distinguish between affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers and highlighted the need to encourage individuals to pre-register (e.g. to affiliate). A Volunteer Coordination Team (VCT) should be the mechanism through which spontaneous volunteers are involved in each of the emergency stages. The principles of the plan state that responsibility for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers rests with local government and non-profit agencies with support from the Sate if required. Volunteers should accept the obligation to do not harm but equally any involvement should be a positive step in the healing process of both the individual and the community. Emergency planners should also look to build on existing capital such as organisations and individuals active in the community and provide clear and consistent communication to educate and engage the public as well as manage expectations.

6. Scalability of any framework or guidance

It was generally recognised that any spontaneous volunteer framework or guidance document should be scalable to the situation faced such as the level of emergency. This had implications upon the infrastructure that would be required from the perspective of any coordinating agency but also with respect to whether spontaneous volunteers would be required.

1) ***Overall plan should be scalable to emergency:*** Any framework should be scalable for the size of the emergency faced. For instance the guidance for CDEM-trained and spontaneous volunteers from New Zealand highlights that in smaller incidents perhaps only a volunteer coordinator will be activated whilst during larger scale events a specific spontaneous volunteer coordinator may need to be activated along with a volunteer

liaison officer and volunteer supervisors. The spontaneous volunteer guidance document (Australia) also suggests that infrastructure arrangements may also need to be tailored to the size of the incident with larger incidents perhaps requiring a dedicated phone line or website for potential spontaneous volunteers to use to register their offer of assistance.

2) ***Level of emergency and the involvement of spontaneous volunteers:*** The scalability of the framework also has implications for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers. For instance there is a need to consider at what level of emergency the framework would activate at, who should activate the plan, whether spontaneous volunteers are needed in the official response and if not how is this managed.
3) ***Deactivation and review processes:*** Consideration should also be given to the stage at which the deactivation of the plan occurs, who deactivates the plan and what review procedures are put in place afterwards to ensure the plans suitability.

7. Stages of the emergency

In general the plans identified areas of activity for each of the four stages of a emergency: mitigation/preparedness, response and recovery. Section 7 of this report outlines the key strategies identified from the various frameworks and guidance documents at each stage of the emergency.

7.1 Mitigation and preparedness

The mitigation/preparedness stage provided the greatest number of strategies from each of the frameworks. These broadly consisted of actions to create the structure needed to support a spontaneous volunteer framework (structure), scoping the potential involvement of spontaneous volunteers in a response including the development of specific roles (involvement), the development of the resources required to involve and manage spontaneous volunteers (resources) and a communications strategy reflecting each stage of the emergency (communications). The keys points within each of these areas are listed below.

7.1.1 Structure

There are five dimensions related to the structural requirements of a spontaneous volunteer management framework:

1) ***Compatibility with existing response structures:*** The guidance documents suggest that any plan/framework should consider existing emergency management protocols and ensure that any plan/framework is coterminous with these plans.
2) ***Consider the paid resources required to manage the volunteer response:*** There is a need to consider the organisations/structures existing capacity to manage volunteers. Consequently many of the guides suggest the formation of a volunteer coordination team (VCT) to carry out planning tasks and coordinate and manage the volunteer response during an emergency. VCTs could include representatives from lead organisations managing spontaneous volunteers as well as other key stakeholders including emergency planners. In addition to volunteer coordinators the Australian spontaneous volunteer tool kit identifies that it may be necessary to train emergency manager team leaders in effective volunteer management. It is suggested that existing training packages may need to be modified to include spontaneous volunteer management however stand-alone module may also need to be developed to be delivered to spontaneous volunteers.

3) ***Develop relationships with the local community****:* A number of the plans highlighted the importance of building relationships with the local community and voluntary sector and to establish an operational agreement with emergency planners regarding volunteer coordination during an emergency (CDEM, 2013). Unaffiliated spontaneous volunteer coordination centres may also emerge during an emergency. VCTs should consider how to engage with these centres and individuals such as whether it is appropriate to engage/task them into the official response or provide information but not take responsibility for them
4) ***Conduct a hazard analysis:*** Key tasks identified by the plans include hazard analysis, the identification of priority needs in the locale and the development of relationships with existing community organisations as these may be likely sources of spontaneous volunteering. These groups could serve as effective conduits through which to disseminate information regarding spontaneous volunteering both prior to and during a response. Mutual aid agreements concerning spontaneous volunteer management may also need to be considered and plans developed.
5) ***Develop review procedures:*** US guidance suggests that training exercises may also be conducted to ensure procedures are fit-for purpose.

7.1.2 Involvement

Screening and referring the appropriate spontaneous volunteer to the right agency was considered an important part of the referral process. Recognising the situational constrains and time limitations within which VCTs will have to screen, train and brief volunteers the guidance document spontaneous CDEM volunteers (NEW Zealand) and the British Red Cross suggests that spontaneous volunteers be placed in roles of low responsibility such as those that do not require CRB checks or involve working with the public. The guidance documents suggest however that volunteers who are able to provide relevant proof of relevant skills, qualifications or experience could also be considered for roles with higher levels of responsibility. There are four dimensions to the involvement of volunteers in the response:

1) Skills gap: The guidance documents and frameworks suggest identifying capacity and skill gaps (volunteer needs assessment) prior to an emergency.
2) Identify potential volunteer roles: The identification of potential volunteer roles is considered within the frameworks and draft examples are provided. Highlighting the dynamic nature of emergencies and the limited time within which organisations have to screen, induct and train spontaneous volunteers the guidance from for the management of spontaneous volunteers in CDEM (New Zealand) suggests developing role descriptions that have low levels of responsibilities an in their earlier guidance suggest that, “Ideally, spontaneous volunteers are used to carry out unskilled tasks under supervision” (CDEM, 2006: 5). Similar advice is provided in Maintaining the Passion (2008) in that task should require the minimum level of screening. More responsible roles could be assigned to volunteers who have conducted prior training, community members whose backgrounds have been previously established or spontaneous volunteers who are able to provide proof of a qualification/accreditation. Both the Australian and New Zealand guidance documents indicate that risk identification/assessment should be conducted for each potential role.
3) Volunteer needs assessment: The guidance from New Zealand suggests conducting a volunteer needs assessment to consider: the types of roles that might be needed, who would be suitable for those roles and whether volunteers would be suitable, how the overall volunteer involvement programme should be structured, what training is required and whether there is any relevant legislation (Health and Safety, insurance,

liability) regarding the tasking of these volunteers. With regards to insurance, Community resilience North Somerset's spontaneous volunteer guidance states that so long as volunteers have signed a 'volunteer agreement' form and follow the instructions of their nominated 'chaperone' that they are covered under the same liability and insurance cover as accredited regular volunteers.

4) ***Not all volunteers can be accepted:*** It was acknowledge that not all offers of assistance can be accepted or that the official response may not be able to incorporate volunteers into their activities. The guidance documents suggest recording the details of all offers of assistance in case these future volunteer assistance is required. Those unwilling to work under the direction of official organisations should be informed that they will be individually liable for any future action if they provide help independently (North Somerset Council).

7.1.3 Resources

The various guidance documents each outlined a number of key resources to prepare in advance of any emergency situation such as the planning of volunteer reception centre locations, the development of key materials for volunteer registration:

1) ***Volunteer Reception Centres (VRCs):*** The guidance documents suggest establishing volunteer reception centres (VRCs) as locations to register, screen, brief, train and task spontaneous volunteers. These centres should be assessable in relation to the emergency but also within a safe area. A number of the plans provide potential layout plans for physical centres.
2) ***Identify minimum standards:*** The consultation work informing the Australian spontaneous volunteer management tool kit indicated that core or minimum standards for spontaneous volunteer recruitment, induction, training and management be developed. This should also cover issues such as the supervision of volunteering during emergencies as well as tools to assess the volunteer experience and the developing of 'Just In Time' training procedures which recognise the limited amount of time within which volunteer coordinators will have to screen, train and brief spontaneous volunteers.
3) ***Develop key documentation in advance of emergency:*** Key documentation such as volunteer instructions, registration forms/release of liability forms, interview forms for potential spontaneous volunteers, safety orientation checklists, role descriptions, sign-in/sign-out records for various spontaneous volunteer work sites as well as the VRC centre should be developed in advance of any emergency. These forms should be comprehensive yet flexible and streamlined for the situation.
4) ***Credentialing:*** A system of credentialing may need to be developed. Consideration should be given for the need to provide volunteers with ID cards or passes. This should be valid for a certain period of time (clearly visible) and used to enable spontaneous volunteer to gain access to specific sites.
5) ***Collation of key materials in advance of an emergency to support VRC:*** The development of volunteer 'Go kits' or 'tool kits' containing resources related to registration, screening, training and deployment of spontaneous volunteer is therefore recommended by all of the guidance documents.
6) ***Develop tools to document the monetary value of volunteer involvement:*** A number of the frameworks suggested the development of tools to document the monetary value of volunteer labour and tools to evaluate the volunteer experience.

7.1.4 Communications

A pre-determined communications strategy including clear pathways for potential spontaneous volunteers to become in the response (if required) was an important aspect of the planning stage when considering the involvement of spontaneous volunteers.

1) ***Develop a pre-determined communications strategy:*** The guidance documents highlighted the importance of a pre-determined communications strategy at all stages of the emergency cycle. Key messages could include whether spontaneous volunteers are needed, what skills and equipment are needed and where individuals can go to offer their service (CDEM, 2006: 9).
2) ***Encourage pre-emergency registration:*** More generally the guidance documents suggests a media campaign to encourage pre-registration of potential spontaneous volunteers. A continuous online presence is suggested as one potential means through which to encourage pre-registration[20]. For instance easy to access online information, the dissemination of volunteer achievements and key information as well as regular messages through social networking sites helps to create and maintain an online presence.
3) ***Messages to reflect the stage of the emergency:*** The use of pre-agreed communications was widely recognised as an important way to channel information to the public. These communication packages can also be used to inform the local community whether spontaneous volunteers are currently needed or not. If spontaneous volunteers are not required for the official response information could be provided as to where individuals who do wish to help can (e.g., Red Cross) Any pre-agreed communications strategy should reflect the changing nature of an emergency from the early stages where little is known, through the initial and on-going response to the stand-down stage.

7.2 Response

Generally the response phase of the frameworks and guidance documents was formulaic based upon the activation of the plan however it was noted that VCTs should be in close communication with the official responders to gauge the existing volunteer response and coordinate organised response of spontaneous volunteers in the most effective manner.

1) ***Activate convergent/spontaneous volunteer management plan***: The response required during an emergency was formulaic and based on a clear set of procedures as outlined in any plan. A decision will need to be made as to whether spontaneous volunteer are required and whether these individuals should be tasked by the official response. The guidance from New Zealand suggests that if tasked spontaneous volunteers are not required by the official response that individuals may offer help under their own effort.
2) ***Activate communications strategy:*** A pre-scripted communications strategy can be used to communicate the needs of the official response.
3) ***On-going communication:*** During the response regular updates through social media and public meetings/briefings should be provided to inform the public about volunteer involvement, safety issues including areas of particular damage, how communities can help themselves, to thank individuals (including volunteers) for their assistance.
4) ***Ascertain existing unaffiliated volunteer response:*** Only New Zealand's guidance recognised a need to ascertain any existing volunteer response. This guidance

[20] Emergency Volunteering, Queensland: http://www.emergencyvolunteering.com.au/index.html

indicated that potential volunteer tasks be identified and that support and supervision measures are put in place for these tasks. This guidance recognises that individual spontaneous volunteers and groups may emerge during the on-going response. Therefore the VCTs need to identify these individuals/groups and share key information, help coordinate efforts and provide feedback or share advice if needed. Furthermore unofficial volunteer centres that may emerge during the response and may be importance means through which to disseminate information (CDEM, 2013).

5) ***Registration, screening, induction and training:*** New Zealand's guidance highlights the limited time with which coordinators will have to gauge spontaneous volunteers skills, strengths and weaknesses and that spontaneous volunteers are likely to require a comprehensive briefing for their role. Pre-designed registration forms and screening interviews could be implemented in VRCs however it was unclear how such procedures could be applied to individuals who have not converged to such a centre. Spontaneous volunteers tasks should require minimal levels of training and training packages should be able to be delivered on a fast-track for emergency response. Other useful information to consider at the screening stage includes the identification of individual strengths and limitations (physical/psychological) and the consideration of any identifiable or certified skills. Certain occupations (e.g., teachers) may require their staff to have been pre-screened (e.g., CRB checks). Volunteering Canada has developed a screening handbook[21] containing 10 best practice steps, 8 of which are listed by the Maintaining the Passion (2008) guidance as relevant for unaffiliated volunteers. These steps include: an assessment of the potential risks, use of a standardised application form, consistent screening interviews for each position/assignment including accurate and objective written records, references checks, police records check (where appropriate), orientation and training, supervision and evaluation, follow-up procedures. The guidance also suggests that organisations accepting pre-screened volunteers should also conduct their own screening process as well as ensuring that the initial screening as conducted under best practice principles. Volunteers who are accepted are assigned a 'buddy' for the duration of their activity, and will be contacted at a later date inviting them to formally join the resilience network.
6) ***Brief volunteers:*** Information provided at the briefing stage could include codes of conduct and obligations (Red Cross volunteers are required to complete a confidential declaration and equal opportunities monitoring form). Orientation it seen as a useful way in which to inform spontaneous volunteers of the organisations mission however these should be concise. Careful consideration needs to be given as to the roles volunteers can be placed into. For instance spontaneous volunteers should be in low-risk roles in which they have supervision. They should not have access to sensitive or confidential information
7) ***On-going management of spontaneous volunteers:*** Earlier guidance from New Zealand (2006) suggests a range of techniques for managing spontaneous volunteers such as setting achievable goals, arranging regular supervision and check-ins, managing any conflict as it arises.
8) ***Provide on-going feedback to volunteers:*** This guidance also highlights the need to relay the importance of the work to volunteers, praise good work and potentially hand further responsibilities to volunteers that demonstrate ability.

[21] Volunteering Canada: Volunteer Screening Handbook (2012) (http://volunteer.ca/content/2012-screening-handbook)

9) ***Daily/shift debriefing:*** Debriefing after shifts is also an important aspect of managing spontaneous volunteers. This can also be used to ascertain any physical injuries or any detrimental psychological effects.
10) ***Performance evaluation:*** New Zealand's guidance document also considers the need to monitor and evaluate the performance of tasked spontaneous volunteers. The guidance suggests a heightened level of sensitivity when providing feedback to tasked spontaneous volunteers.
11) ***Maintain records:*** US guidance suggests that VCTs/VRCs should maintain a database of all volunteers, particularly those with specialist skills as this can be useful when entering the recovery stage. Furthermore VCTs should promote close coordination with long-term recovery groups as well as identifying new and on-going activities in the area.

7.2.1 Managing the 'non-involvement' of spontaneous volunteers

It was recognised that volunteers may not always be required or that the offers of help may not coincide with the need for additional support.

1) ***Record basic information of all offers:*** British Red Cross guidance suggests organisations record basic information of all potential volunteers (contact details, emergency contact information, relevant skills and experience and anything that might affect their ability to volunteer). Generally the guidance documents suggest taking the details of all offers of help, even if spontaneous volunteers are not required as this may change. If the official response does not require additional assistance potential spontaneous volunteers could be directed to organisations that are accepting offers. The British Red Cross guidance suggests that volunteers should be given realistic expectations of the tasks they can undertake and when they will be able to start.
2) ***Effective sign posting:*** Consideration of how to deal with unsuitable volunteers is provided by both the British and Swedish Red Cross guidance documents. Some offers may be redirected towards more suitable institutions whilst other individuals may be more effective in the response at a later date. Some volunteers may be unsuitable for any volunteer involvement and these individuals should not be re-directed to other organisations..
3) ***Declining unsuitable offers:*** The Swedish Red Cross guidance advises again signposting these individuals to other organisations and warns again promising to contact them in the future if the situation changes. It is clear from these guidance documents that volunteer expectations should be carefully managed.

7.3 Recovery

At the recover stage of the emergency the frameworks and guidance documents recognised the importance of debriefing volunteers to access and physical or psychological side-effects of their involvement as well as thanking spontaneous volunteers for their involvement and ensuring that review procedures are in place to ensure the efficacy of the spontaneous volunteer management process:

1) ***Debriefing:*** VCT de-brief and volunteer de-briefs were considered good practice. End of activation de-briefs should consider physical/psychological harm, volunteer performance, and future opportunities. The monetary value of the volunteer involvement was also suggested in a number of frameworks.
2) ***Acknowledge volunteer involvement and retaining volunteers:*** There was recognition that volunteers needed to be thanked for their involvement and some

frameworks suggested scheduling reunion event of tea and coffee catch ups shortly after the event. The guidance documents recognised potential for follow-up communication to foster longer-term commitment from volunteers.

3) ***Review procedures:*** The frameworks also recognised the need to review the policies and procedures for their efficacy and make any required changes.
4) ***Support long-term recovery:*** VCTs may continue to offer support during the on-going recovery stage by leveraging volunteers from the response to the recovery phase. This could also include mitigation and preparedness activities. Role for groups as well as individuals should also be considered.

8. Summary

Most of the frameworks used the term spontaneous and sometimes unaffiliated volunteer. The British Red Cross document was the only guidance that used the term convergent volunteer. Spontaneous volunteers were treated as one group regardless of whether they were active in the area (unaffiliated/unofficial) or whether they had converged to a specific location to provide an offer of assistance to the official response.

Liability issues were considered within the documents. This issue is perhaps more complicated for governmental organisations coordinating an official response compared to agencies such as the Red Cross who accept volunteers. The added dynamic of being aware of unaffiliated spontaneous/convergent activity was mentioned and it was suggested that individuals should be given the opportunity to engaged (Australia) whilst in New Zealand the VCT should attempt to engage with these groups to provide relevant information and discuss with the leader/group whether they would like to affiliate with the response. Those who affiliated are then considered *tasked* spontaneous volunteers who qualify for the same insurance/liability cover as CDEM volunteers. The guides recognise that if any coordinating agency deploys individuals to other organisation that their insurance/liability cover must be assessed first.

The Australian framework was the only document to have reported conducting primary research however it was evidence from these documents that consultations were largely restricted to emergency planners. The Australian framework was also the only document to have evidence the consultation of spontaneous volunteers having conducted both a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews.

In particular the Australian tool kit made reference to the need for any plan to be scalable. Consequently different events (varying on severity/scale) would require a different level of response. Small scale reposes are less likely to require a dedicated phone line for spontaneous volunteers and different elements of the volunteer coordination framework may be activated for instance there may only be need for a volunteer coordinator in smaller incidents but a VCT including supervisors and an overall manager in larger events.

The guides all present a number of practical strategies for each stage of the emergency such as the formation of a VCT and VRC, the various pre-prepared resources (‘Go Kits’) required and pre-planed communications strategies etc. The frameworks highlight the need for on-going supervision, conflict management and flexibility in reassigning volunteers. Capturing the value of the spontaneous volunteer involvement was also mentioned by a number of the guidance documents.

The guidance documents each highlight the important implications of spontaneous volunteering, such as longer-term involvement in future activities. Support should be

provided post- emergency to volunteers but also to those who are involved in the extended recovery operation. The physical and psychological health of spontaneous volunteers involved in emergency response should be considered and resources prepared to access any impact.

It was clear from the guidance documents that planning for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers was key. Once in an emergency situation the response and recovery phases are heavily reliant upon the investments made at the mitigation and preparedness stages (resources, infrastructure, communications, fostering of local relationships with community groups).

None of the plans discussed the likely timescale required to activate emergency spontaneous/ convergent volunteer plans (e.g., mobilise VCT, set up VRC). Whilst plans should be scalable to the seriousness of the event little consideration is given to emergencies in which the affected communities are dispersed or remote and therefore may not be able to engage with the official response.

Appendix E

Glossary of key terms

Category 1 response organisation:

Organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies (the emergency services, local authorities, NHS bodies). Category 1 responders are subject to the full set of civil protection duties. For example, they will be required to: “assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning, put in place emergency plans, co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency, provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only).”

[From:www.gov.uk/preparation-and-planning-for-emergencies-responsibilities-of-responder-agencies-and-others]

Category 2 response organisation:

LRFs are supported by organisations, known as Category 2 responders, such as the Highways Agency and public utility companies. They have a responsibility to co-operate with Category 1 organisations and to share relevant information with the LRF.

[From: www.gov.uk/local-resilience-forums-contact-details]

EM: Emergency manager:

A manager from a Category 1 or 2 response organisation.

LRF: Local Resilience Forum:

Are multi-agency partnerships made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and others. These agencies are known as Category 1 Responders, as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act.

[From: www.gov.uk/local-resilience-forums-contact-details]

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding:

A document that expresses mutual accord on an issue between two or more parties. Memoranda of understanding are generally recognized as binding, even if no legal claim could be based on the rights and obligations laid down in them.

[From: www.businessdictionary.com]

OV: Organised volunteer:

An individual who is affiliated with an existing voluntary organisation and is trained to provide unpaid support to the response and/or recovery to an emergency.

Response community:

Organisations and individuals, including Category 1 and 2 responders and members of voluntary organisations whose provide assistance to the emergency response.

SV: Spontaneous volunteer:

An individual who is unaffiliated with existing official response organisations yet, without extensive preplanning, is motivated to provide unpaid support to the response and/or recovery to an emergency.

Appendix F

Area representatives' responsibilities – Bodenham Flood Protection Group

AREA REPRESENTATIVES' RESPONSIBILITIES

As an Area Representative you are asked to undertake the responsibilities listed below.

1. Take a general interest in your area to identify those residents:
   a. Whose properties are liable to suffer from flooding.
   b. Who may need help in taking flood precautions, whether from age or infirmity or because they spend a lot of time away from home.
   c. Make sure that you have telephone contact details for all residents in your area whose homes are at risk of flooding.

2. Inform residents in your area about the Bodenham Flood Protection Group and advise them of its potential value to them as a source of advice on flood precautions, flood insurance and sandbags.

3. Ensure that:
   a. Those residents in your area who need help in taking flood precautions are included in the 'Buddy System' with appropriate support.
   b. You keep the Secretary informed of changes to the details of the 'Buddy System' for your area.

4. Let the Secretary know when you are going to be away from home for more than a day or two, so that arrangements can be made to provide flood protection cover for your area during your absence.

5. Allow your telephone and/ or e-mail address to be included on:
   a. The lists of Area Representatives published by the BFPG in the Bodenham *Newsletter* and the Parish Council Website.
   b. The Flood Warning Telemetry System Alarm system so that you can receive alerts when the water levels in the Millcroft Brook are exceptionally high. (This only applies to Area Representatives in Bodenham Moor).

6. When a flood emergency appears to be imminent:
   a. Assess the situation and decide whether or not any residents in your area need to be warned to take flood precautions and, if so, which residents.
   b. If the situation warrants it, warn residents in your area by telephone or, if necessary, by visiting their houses.
   c. Check that the 'Buddy System' is working as planned and, if not, take action as appropriate.

   d. Keep the Chairman or Secretary informed of the situation in your area throughout the emergency on XXXXX-XXXXXX.