

BAWDSEY PARISH COUNCIL

Emergency Planning Report 13/03/2017

The Joint Bawdsey and Alderton Emergency Planning Team has met several times during the last year and we now feel we are at a pretty good level of preparedness.

We are now registered with the local authorities as having a plan which means we can be asked to activate it for an emergency at any time (as happened on the night of 12th/13th January for a flood warning – see below).

The Bawdsey Village Hall is now provided with gas heating and cooking facilities and emergency electric lighting so should be able to act as an efficient rest centre in case of emergencies including power cuts.

A village survey was held in December in order to update the list of volunteers willing to help in the case of an emergency.

We have identified the need for a large saucepan. Brian Johnson has details/cost estimates.

Due to the spread out nature of our area (stretching from Bawdsey Quay to Shingle Street), we also believe that provision of four walkie talkies is desirable to provide communications when there are power cuts and telephone communications are down. A quote for these is provided separately. They cost £152.00 each, plus £75.00 for an OFCOM 5 year license which would cover their use in our area. Total cost is therefore estimated at £683.00.

This is a significant expense, so I intend to write to Keith Fawkner-Simpson, Emergency Planning Officer at East Suffolk District Councils and also to Christine Block at SCDC to enquire whether any funds might be forthcoming for this purpose. However, if a proportion of the total was put forward by the parish council this might facilitate matters.

Table Top Exercise

On Wednesday 11th January we held a table top emergency exercise to test our response. The exercise started from home to make it as authentic as possible. Peter Sproxton of the Coastguards, provided us with an emergency scenario in a sealed envelope. All in all the exercise went well and we were satisfied with the results. One of the purposes of the exercise was to telephone the community helpers identified by the survey and see how many would actually be willing to help at short notice (they had been previously informed that the call would come but not the date). In the event 12 stated that they would be able to help immediately – an encouraging result!

Flood warning, Friday 13th January

By chance, two days later, we were asked to activate our emergency plan in preparation for a severe flood warning expected at midday and again at midnight. Our plan was activated by 10.00am and the village hall opened. The village hall remained open until 2.30 pm, when we closed it temporarily, opening again at 10.00pm for the midnight high tide. In the event no serious flooding occurred and no one was evacuated, but we did receive visits from the coastguards and police who were patrolling the area.

Jason Horncastle