



Recent Incidents: Castle Hotel Gas Leak, Pontardawe

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On 17 September 2010 a gas leak occurred at Castle Hotel, Pontardawe.

Responders to the incident included South Wales Police, a number of services from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the British Red Cross. A Rest Centre was opened and provided a place of temporary shelter

for 10 evacuees until early hours of the following morning.

An internal debrief was requested to discuss procedures, identify areas of best practice and to highlight areas / procedures that need further development.

The response to the incident was successful, there were no injuries or

fatalities, evacuated members of the public were offered a place of temporary shelter (rest centre) and, despite a few initial issues, communications worked well.

The debrief was successful as it identified areas of development to help improve the emergency response and partnership working during an incident.

Resilience Matters

For the Authorities of Neath Port Talbot & Swansea



Joint Resilience Newsletter

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Issue 2

“Threat to Community Resilience” Members Seminar, Towers Hotel, 1st November 2010

The Joint Resilience Unit (JRU) is responsible for ensuring, on behalf of Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Local Authorities, that the impact of major emergencies affecting their communities is greatly reduced, so increasing the safety of their residents and visitors.

The JRU team consists of 6 members of staff. The team is based in the Civic Centre, Swansea, but also have a shared space available at The Quays, Briton Ferry.

Welcome to the second issue of the **Resilience Matters** newsletter. As outlined in the first edition, it provides an opportunity for our key services and partners to showcase the good work being undertaken in building a more resilient community and protecting service provision.

One key event took place on the 1st November 2010 in the Towers Hotel, Jersey Marine.



WECTU Interactive Session

The Members Resilience Seminar was attended by Councillors from both Neath Port Talbot CBC and the City & County of Swansea, the Joint Resilience Unit and Resilience Co-ordinators. The theme for the event was ‘Terrorism: the threat to Community Resilience’ and with the support from Councillor Andrea Davies and Councillor Mary Jones, in their capacity as Chair and Vice Chair of the Joint Resilience Committee, it provided an opportunity for Members to be made more aware of the partnership work.

We were very fortunate to have two keynote speakers. Paul

Smith, Chief Executive of the City & County of Swansea, who introduced the event in his role as the Chair of the South Wales Local Resilience Forum and set out the purpose of the seminar. Chief Constable Peter Vaughan, South Wales Police, then spoke about the CONTEST Strategy in Wales and explained how this was being delivered across the region, highlighting its importance and the role Local Councillors have in supporting it.

There then followed an interactive session involving Members and Resilience Co-ordinators. This was facilitated by Police Officers from the Wales Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit (WECTU) and participants were asked to assume the role of a shop proprietor affected by an explosion in a busy shopping precinct. Questions were directed at groups to establish what steps they would take in the immediate aftermath to an explosion.

Two presentations were given by members of the Joint Resilience Unit on the City Evacuation Plan and Business Continuity at significant times during the interactive session to compliment key points during the role play.

The final presentation, Supt. Martin Jones, South Wales



USAR Team Rescue Dog ‘Cymro’

Police, spoke about the PREVENT element of the CONTEST Strategy and how this is being delivered in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

There was then an opportunity for everyone to go outside and visit the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team who very kindly brought along their vehicle and working rescue dogs.

During the mid morning break and after the end of the seminar, Councillors had the chance to meet representatives from the Environment Agency, Community Fire Safety and South Wales Police to discuss more local matters.

We were extremely grateful to the councillors and the external agencies who supported this event and hope to have further support in future seminars.

Turn to page 2 for a selection of feedback from Members.

JRU Calendar 2010/11

10th November 2010
Exercise LUDWIG - tabletop exercise to test the off-site COMAH plan for Vale Europe Ltd

15th November 2010
NPT CBC Resilience Coordinators Meeting

24th November 2010
Exercise BAY EXPLORER - Maritime & Coastguard Agency Exercise

26th January 2010
CCoS Resilience Coordinators Meeting

13th January 2010
NPT / CCS Resilience Partnership Flood Group Meeting

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Threat to Community Resilience - Members Seminar:

"An excellent insight into the work of the JRU"

Overall feedback from the event was positive and many Members requested the JRU run further Seminars that raise awareness of Resilience issues in future.

Here are a selection of comments from Councillors who attended the event:

"Raised awareness on terrorism and the need to extend this awareness to the Community"

"Excellent interactive session and informative presentations from all speakers"

"I will use the information from the seminar to promote the JRU and to get all councillors to understand their role in the event of an emergency"

"Terrorism affects us all and we need to be more proactive in our Communities"

If you would like further information on the CONTEST Strategy please visit:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorism

It's Business Continuity - But not as we know it!

By Ann Smith, Resilience Co-ordinator, Housing Directorate, CCoS

Hello, my name is Ann Smith and I am a Resilience Co-ordinator for Housing in City and County of Swansea.

I have been working closely with the JRU Team for several years, developing and testing the Housing Major Incident Plan, our six Business Continuity Plans (BCPs), and organising training and communications amongst the Housing Teams.

This summer we were asked by Ben Cromie (JRU), to take part in an exercise to test the effectiveness of the two BCPs for our critical services:

- Homelessness/Housing Options Service
- Voids Service

The exercise actually had two goals, one goal being to see if our BCPs were valid and fit for purpose, but a second goal was to try out a new way of testing the BCPs.

The aim was to spend a couple of hours with the key players identified in

the plan to see if it would give the guidance and support needed in the event of any "emergency" scenario identified.

For each exercise, we invited the key staff identified in the plan to take part in a "desk top" scenario which threw up several issues:

- Significant Staff shortage (due to pandemic illness or severe weather)
- Fuel Strike
- IT & communications failure
- Loss of building e.g. district housing office

The JRU had devised a huge desk top Monopoly Business Continuity Game, and managers rolled a dice to work their way around the board. As they landed on each square, it threw up different business continuity problems and issues. By consulting the BCP as we went along, we could then discuss if it was addressing each issue.

The game was a very effective way of



Business Continuity Monopoly Game

engaging the team and focusing on the goal of the event. It was an interesting and fun way to test out the plan (two words you would not normally associate with Business Continuity!).

At the end of the session, an action plan was drawn up to address any shortfalls identified. As a result of these exercises, the JRU have now developed ACTION or FLASH CARDS for our BCPs, which act as quick reference guides – a sort of shortened flow chart of what to do in an emergency which can be used by any Council Officer who needs to handle an unforeseen situation related to the service.

Ann Smith

Flood Awareness wellies leave their mark across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot

By Simone Eade, Flood Awareness Wales Officer, Environment Agency



Flood Awareness Event, Tesco Neath Abbey

Clockwise from left:

Paul Thomas - Joint Resilience Unit Manager, James Davies - NPTCBC Drainage, Lisa Davies - EA Flood Awareness Wales Officer, Andy Irving - EA Team Leader Flood Incident Management, Simone Eade - EA Flood Awareness Wales Officer, Sandra Perrett - Senior Resilience Officer, Joint Resilience Unit

Environment Agency Wales have been asking residents of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot to keep their eyes peeled for a giant pair of wellies making its way to the area.

The giant wellies have been appearing in various locations across the area as part of the organisation's 'Flood Awareness Wales' campaign, which forms the initial part of a wider flood awareness raising campaign.

The Flood Awareness Wales campaign will run for one year and has been financed by Welsh Assembly Government in response to

concerns that flood awareness was low across the principality.

Flood Awareness Wales Project Director Gareth O'Shea said "We're hoping that our giant wellies will catch people's attention and motivate them to check whether they are at risk. We want people to become aware that although flooding cannot be completely prevented there are things that they can do in advance to help reduce the devastating impact it can have on both people and communities."

At the various events across the area Flood Awareness Officers and Local Authority staff were on hand to

advise residents about the risk of flooding in their area, and to provide information and practical steps to take now to help protect their property for the future. They will also be listening to individual experiences to improve services provided to the public.

Simone Eade

For further flood prevention advice for homes and businesses visit:

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwales

Winter Grit Supplies in City & County of Swansea

Winter is fast approaching so make sure your service is prepared!

It is that time of year again when consideration should be given to preparing for the forthcoming winter season before the dark nights and cold frosty mornings are upon us. If your service needs to purchase rock salt to grit paths, steps, playgrounds and car parks, now is the time to act.

Corporate Building and Property Services and the

Highways Department based in Clydach are once again offering to deliver rock salt to services if required.

While there is no guarantee all orders can be fulfilled at this stage, the earlier orders are submitted, the more chance of them being fulfilled before the severe weather hits.

This is also an ideal opportunity to review winter arrangements to ensure you have suitable procedures in place, because should we



encounter similar conditions as last year, there may be a need to curtail all non-highways activities with regard to salt supplies.

If you need to order Rock Salt for your service, please e-mail:

City and County of Swansea: Mark.Fraser@swansea.gov.uk

" Always plan ahead -it wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark"

RICHARD CUSHING

" You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today"

ABRAHAM LINCOLN