Borough Major Emergency Plan Part 2

Emergency Community Care Plan

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**If this plan has been activated, turn to Section 2.1 (Activation), Page 18.**

# Protective Marking & Version Control

I. Version Control

This plan is regularly reviewed and updated as and when necessary; it will be reviewed annually.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Owner** | LBTH Civil Protection Unit |
| **Version** | Version 1.0 |
| **Date of issue** | May 2022 |
| **Reviewed by/Date** | Alex Hurrell |
| **Next Review Date** | May 2023 |

II. Protective Marking

This version of the Tower Hamlets Borough Major Emergency Plan has no restrictions. The annexes however may contain localised information which may include contact numbers so those may be marked Official Sensitive, therefore, links to internal documents are only accessible by Tower Hamlets employees and those who have been given access to Tower Hamlets systems.

III. Distribution List

This document can be made available to the general public.

Public links to the other documents in this suite of plans can be found on the Tower Hamlets Website here [Civil Protection Unit](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_safety__crime_preve/emergencies/civil_emergency_plan.aspx)

# Introduction

In order to comply with its legislative responsibilities under the Act, the Council has in place a five-part Borough Major Emergency Plan (BMEP). The BMEP consolidates some of the practical aspects and information that may be required to ensure that the Council can fulfil its responsibilities during a major civil emergency and in the subsequent recovery phase:

**Part 1** - [Civil Protection Procedure](https://www.thebridge.towerhamlets.gov.uk/service-areas/contingency/civil-protection-unit)

**Part 2** - Emergency Community Care Plan (this Plan)

**Part 3** - [Business Continuity](https://www.thebridge.towerhamlets.gov.uk/service-areas/contingency/business-continuity)

**Part 4** - ICT Disaster Recovery (owned and managed by ICT)

**Part 5** - [Recovery Plan](https://www.thebridge.towerhamlets.gov.uk/service-areas/contingency/civil-protection-unit)

The Plan, and all documentation & information contained therein are produced for the purpose of dealing with civil protection emergencies that may occur within the Borough, neighbouring boroughs, Metropolitan London, and surrounding counties and/or business continuity events that affect the Council’s services.

A local risk register has been compiled for local risks as identified from the [London Risk Register](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_risk_register_version_11.pdf) by officers from the CPU. The risks identified cover foreseeable civil protection events and cover short term impact from initial effects, over three days and up to seven days duration. Subsequently, these assessments cover the acute effects of a civil protection event, rather than long-term business continuity specific events, which are assessed as part of stand-alone business continuity impact risk assessments.

## Purpose of the plan

This plan covers the processes involved in the setting up and running of Emergency Centres to meet the humanitarian needs of people affected by an emergency.

Every emergency is different, and it is important to maintain flexibility to ensure the most appropriate and effective response. The following processes are designed to provide the key components to support a scalable humanitarian assistance response.

The respect for the needs of those affected in an emergency and the diversity of our communities should always remain at the centre of these processes.

This document provides guidance to the setting up, staffing and management of the following four emergency centres. These are:

* Rest Centre (RC)
* Survivor Reception Centre (SuRC)
* Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC)
* Humanitarian (Community) Assistance Centre (HAC/ CAC)

## Aim

To enable the Council to provide a guide to the establishment and management of emergency centre(s) to support those affected by an emergency.

## Objectives

To enable users of this document to:

* Understand the different types of emergency centre.
* Know the triggers and methods for the activation of this plan.
* Understand how to establish, run, and close an emergency centre.
* Be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of local authority departments and supporting partners in the management of an emergency centre.
* Have access to supporting aide-memoires to manage an emergency centre.
* Be able to meet the needs of attendees.

## Ownership of the Emergency Community Care Plan

The ownership of the Emergency Community Care Plan (ECCP) is within the Civil Protection Unit (CPU), under the lead of the Civil Contingences Officer with the portfolio for Humanitarian Assistance; whose prime responsibility will be to oversee the ECCP administration, initiation, management, response procedures and recovery elements. In particular:

* Select all levels of staff with the required skills for all the response, procedural and management elements of the ECCP
* Arrange for staff training, using the Civil Protection Unit and specialist companies. Specialist training will include civil protection awareness, evacuation centre procedure and conversion, befriending, counselling, and trauma procedures
* Prepare and publish ECCP staff contact list. The list will include staff names, job title, home location, and work, home, and mobile telephone numbers. Copies of this current list will be held by the CPU
* Arrange and delegate staff to attend seminars, workshops and exercises arranged by, or through, the CPU and external organisations.

## Emergency Evacuation

In some emergencies there may be a need to evacuate occupiers and other members of the public from a cordon area for their own safety. These evacuees may need temporary accommodation and feeding. If a small number of residents are displaced, it would be preferable for them to be temporarily accommodated in local hotels. See [BMEP Part 2 Appendix 1](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/Resilience/ERqhx8_UJXJGkSA0UVkDrAIBbnnbAn5ik6816JxlKnDPcA?e=CJsdwO) for hotel arrangements within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Step by step guides to booking with Premier Inn and Travelodge are saved [here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/Resilience/Evi6s9uyb6lEt2mkeNaxOzYBIyV8bSn0pCRphrVNzwdyBA?e=CC4WFw).

Under certain circumstances (dependent on the number of persons affected & duration of incident) it may be necessary to use Emergency Centre(s) arrangements to support those affected by an emergency, as outlined within this plan.

## Types of centre

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Centre type** | **Trigger for activation** | **Timescale** | **Lead** |
| **Survivor Reception Centre** **(SuRC)** | Normally following a major incident, where survivors, who do not require hospital treatment, need a place where they can be met by police and other services to obtain initial information and support in the immediate aftermath of the incident and give details to police investigating officers. | Immediate – Short term | The police will establish and lead this type of centre to conduct their investigations. The local authority provides support for attendees. |
| **Rest Centre (RC)** | People are displaced because of an emergency who do not have alternative accommodation options. | Immediate –  short term | Local authority with support from police, voluntary sector, and health service. |
| **Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC)** | Set up following a major incident, where family and friends of those affected by the incident need safe place from which to seek information on the whereabouts of their friends and/or relatives, who are believed to be missing or otherwise not contactable following a major incident, and to receive up-to-date and accurate information on the response to the incident. | Immediate – medium term | Police with support from local authority, voluntary sector, and health service. |
| **Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) / Community Assistance Centre (CAC)** | A major incident which is likely to create a high number of people who require specialist support, including bereavement, trauma, financial and insurance, where a physical location acting as a focal point for offering services would add value.  The fundamental difference between the two centre types is typically the size of centre being delivered. For example, a CACmay be considered over a HAC if the impact (area/ number of people) is smaller and the need for a large range of services to be physically available is limited. | Medium –  long term / Short –  long term | Local authority with support from other agencies:   * Voluntary sector * NHS and health * Faith sector * Police * Insurance companies * Dept. for work & pensions * Registered social landlords * Community leaders * Relevant government departments * Transport partners |

## Staffing ratios

It is difficult to provide clear guidance on suitable staffing to attendee ratios as each centre type has different ‘service delivery’ needs and each incident will present different needs of those attending the centre which could justify more or less intensive staffing.

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors, but the NSPCC recommends:

* Having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people.
* Adults who haven't had the necessary vetting checks shouldn't be left alone with children or support with intimate personal care, including going to the toilet and washing.

Council Silver and the Emergency Centre Manager should take a pragmatic approach to staffing based upon needs expected, presented, and staffing availability (including mutual aid).

## Operating multiple emergency centres

In large incidents, there may be a need to have more than one emergency centre in operation at a time. For example, a Survivor Reception Centre may be set up for those immediately affected by a terrorist incident for immediate shelter and to have witness statements taken, but a Rest Centre may also be set up for those in the wider cordon who have been evacuated from their home, school, business, etc.

It is important to keep in mind that different groups of affected people (survivors, witnesses, bereaved, displaced) should not always be co-located due to emotional sensitivities and trauma experienced by the different attendees. It is also likely that each attendee group will have different needs at varying times throughout the response and recovery phases.

Council Silver has initial responsibility for assessing the needs of those affected (within the tactical plan) and, in the early stages of an incident, may need to consider:

* Appointing a Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO)
* Activating a multi-agency Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG)
* Appointing a Senior Humanitarian Assistance Officer
* Mutual aid request to resource (people and assets) multiple centres
* Location, availability, and suitability of centres
* Clear communication to the public (& staff) of the different centres, their purpose, services available, location and accessibility/ transport links

## Matrix of support required

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of people in centre** | **No. of Volunteers required** | **Overnight accommodation required?** | **Alterative accommodation to be sought where possible** | **Mutual aid required?** |
| 1 – 40 | Minimum 4 | Yes | B&B / Hotel accommodation to be sought | No |
| 41 – 100 | Minimum 6 | Yes | Camp beds/pillows to be sought from store | No |
| 101 – 200 | Minimum 8 | Yes | Camp beds/pillows to be sought from store | No |
| 201-300 | Minimum 8 | Yes – Second rest centre to be opened | Camp beds/pillows to be sought from store | No |

If there are over 200 evacuees a second rest centre should be considered, this may be needed earlier depending on the size of the rest centre that has been established.

## ‘At Risk’ Register

The collation of information, updating, publication and availability of this register, will remain the responsibility of the HA&C Directorate. Due to the details within the register being of a confidential nature, it is not included within this document.

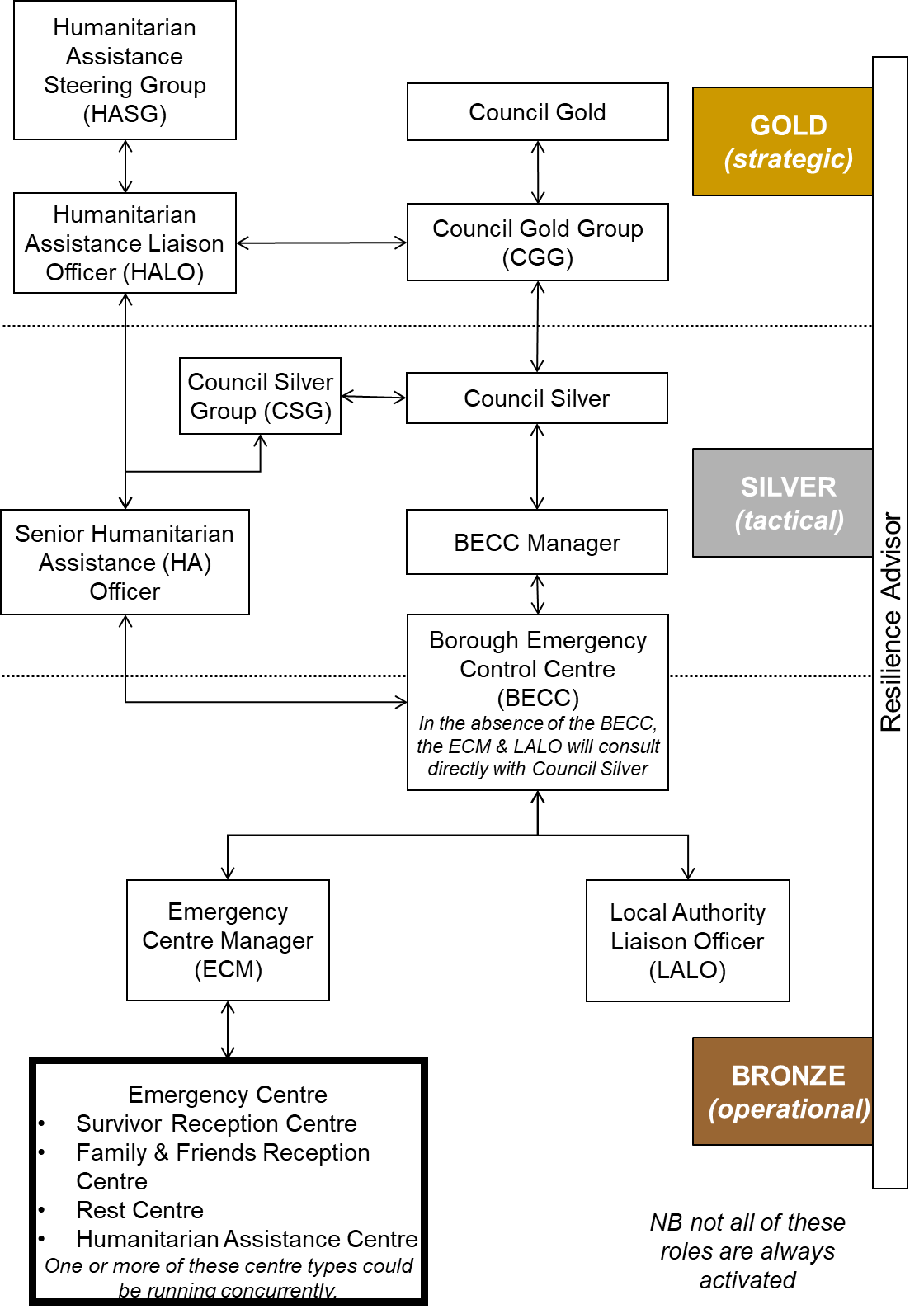
Details of vulnerable clients are accessed via Mosaic during an emergency as required.

As part of the emergency planning cascades, Senior Humanitarian Assistance Officers can be called to produce data on vulnerable people. (See Section [1.11](#_Roles_and_responsibilities) Roles and Responsibilities).

## Roles and responsibilities

Where does an emergency centre fit in the local authority response?

The below diagram illustrates the London local authority response structure communications flow. N.B: this is not specifically representative of line management responsibilities.



Summary of emergency centre roles

| **Emergency centre role** | **Role summary** |
| --- | --- |
| **Emergency Centre Manager (ECM)**  *Might be referred to as:*   * *Rest Centre Manager* * *SuRC Manager (not to be confused with the police centre manager)* * *FFRC Manager* * *HAC Manager (not to be confused with Senior HA Officer)* | To ensure the emergency centre remains fit for purpose (resources, IT, and facilities) during its operation, responsibilities include:   * Communicate (to the team and the public) * Oversee the running of the centre, including health and safety * Being the point of contact with the BECC and responding agencies * Ensure registration, welfare and support services are being delivered * Supervise and support staff and voluntary workers * Responsible for the emergency centre log * Securing storage of paperwork * Ensure the building is returned in a clean and secure condition * Closure of the emergency centre   The scale, and duration of opening, of a centre might require a deputy ECM to share the workload of the role. |
| **Emergency Centre Officer (ECO)** | Operate under the direction of the ECM and support the overall running of the centre. These specifically trained council staff will have a range of skills that can be adapted to emergency centre operations and officers will be flexible in the tasks that they are given.  Responsibilities include:   * Reception & registration * Information & communication * Identifying needs of attendees and the centre * Refreshments * Identify any issues or concerns and raise to Emergency Centre Manager * Individual support * Practical tasks * Administrative tasks |

Local authority roles that support emergency centres

| **Local authority emergency response role** | **Role summary** | **How the role supports an emergency centre** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC)** | The hub of local authority coordination, situational awareness, information, and information management. | Some examples the BECC can support emergency centres with:   * food * equipment * staffing (rotas) * communications * accommodation * transport * mutual aid   The ECM is allocated to a BECC Officer who will be the ECM’s primary point of contact in the BECC. |
| **Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)** | The Council’s representative at the scene of the incident and will provide the communications link between the emergency services at the scene and the Council. | The LALO indirectly supports the emergency centre by providing scene updates to the BECC, which is relayed to the emergency centre.  They are also likely to play a role in supporting attendees with transport to the centre. |
| **Council Silver or Civil Protection Co-Ordinator (CPC)** | The tactical manager of the local authority response to the incident, who determines the best way to achieve the strategic priorities as determined by Council Gold.  (In smaller incidents, this may be a person with delegated authority, e.g., emergency planning manager, Civil Protection Co-ordinator). | Authorises the activation/ support of/ to an emergency centre and will make decisions regarding resourcing (staff and assets), operating times as well as short to medium term tactical arrangements. |
| **Senior Humanitarian Assistance Officer (SHAO)** | Responsible for ensuring that the Humanitarian Assistance services offered by the council continue to meet the needs of residents in their home, and/or those attending an Emergency Centre during and following an incident.  HALO (see next) representative (potentially at the HAC) and is responsible for ensuring that the HA services offered continue to meet the needs of a centre’s attendees. This is achieved by close liaison with the HALO, BECC and providers of HA services (e.g., council social care departments, the NHS, and voluntary organisations).  Can be remote or at the Emergency Centre itself. | Enables the ECM to focus on running the facility, including IT and other resources, while the Senior HA Officer can focus on the wider provision of appropriate HA services to the attendees. Some examples the SHAO can support with:   * Run VP Checks * Engage with key social workers of any VP’s identified * Set up a Rest Centre and arrange for it to be staffed * Manage the provision of refreshments at the Rest Centre * Book hotel rooms for those who require alternative accommodation |
| **Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO)** | If activated, sets the humanitarian assistance strategy and, as such, has oversight of all emergency centres and the support they offer to those affected by the incident. | Not directly responsible for the management and operation of an emergency centre, which is a combined effort of the ECM, Deputy ECM (if appointed), ECOs, partner agencies and the BECC. |
| **Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG)** | If activated, a multi-agency group led by the local authority that brings together partners such as health, police, and voluntary and faith sectors to focus on the delivery of HA in response to an incident. | Determines the direction of the humanitarian assistance response and ensures the coordination of the activities of the responders involved from the short to long term. |
| **Resilience Advisor** / emergency planning team | The resilience advisor provides advice and guidance to commanders on emergency management arrangements to enable them to access the right information and networks of support. They work most closely with Council Gold, Council Silver and the BECC. | Remotely provide advice and support to the ECM via the BECC. |

Agencies/ local authority services that support emergency centres

Agencies/ services that may attend an emergency centre to support the local authority response are detailed in the table below. It should be noted that not every organisation needs to attend each emergency centre. The table is a suggestion of some organisations that could attend a centre. It is not exhaustive, and decisions on which services are required at the centre should be based on an assessment of the needs of individuals affected.

Ultimately, the request of attendance of an organisation is incident-specific and can be actioned by Council Silver for centres immediately opened to respond to the incident (first 24 hours) and by the HALO thereafter (where activated).

| **Organisation** | **How the organisation may support an emergency centre** |
| --- | --- |
| **British Red Cross (BRC)** | London local authorities have a Memorandum of Understanding with the BRC to support emergency centres 24/7. They are specialists in humanitarian assistance, especially emotional and practical support to those affected by an emergency. |
| **Venue management and staff** | Key to the successful operation of a centre are those who manage and operate the centre on a day-to-day basis, as they hold an in-depth knowledge about both the venue itself and the surrounding area. |
| **Local authority** | Social Care:   * Provision of support to vulnerable people at a centre * This includes support to unaccompanied children, those already in receipt of social care services and those who, through assessments made at the centre, require social care services |
| **Local authority** | Environmental Health Officer:   * Provide advice to council staff on health and safety, food hygiene and sanitation issues within the centre * Liaise with dog warden(s) and/or the RSPCA on concerns with pets * Provide advice to the public on issues within the Environmental Health Officer's area of competence |
| **Local authority** | Housing Officer:   * To assess the attendee’s housing needs and make provision for alternative accommodation for those that are unable to do so for themselves through insurers or other means |
| **Police**   * Metropolitan (MPS) * City of London (CoL) * British Transport (BTP) | **SuRC, FFRC**   * Lead agency and will provide direction to local authority ECM to best support * Lead with family support for investigation or family liaison   **RC, HAC**  The Police can support in several ways. They *could*:   * Provide officers for public reassurance and information sharing/ updates * Provide officers for public order (Note: they are not ‘security’). * Facilitate interaction with investigative officers or Family Liaison Officers (FLO) |
| **Victim Support** | Specialists of emotional and practical support for those that are victims of crime or traumatic events.  Government primary response partner for victims of crime and terrorism. |
| **Samaritans** | Provide emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide. |
| **Salvation Army (SA)** | Ordained ministers of religion trained in pastoral care and support. Trained officers can provide support to family members and friends and act as the conduit for relevant multi-faith support. They can also provide support to an emergency mortuary viewing area as friends and family attend. |
| **Community and faith leaders** | Offering pastoral, faith and religious support and advice to those affected by an incident. |
| **Local voluntary organisation(s)** | A borough may have local voluntary organisations in addition to the above which can offer services to an emergency centre. |
| **Registered providers of social housing** | Those who work with local authorities to provide housing to its residents, particularly during evacuations of their properties. |
| **Age UK** | Provision of specialist support to the elderly at an emergency centre. |
| **Citizen’s Advice** | Offer a range of free advisory services, including financial and legal. |
| **St John Ambulance (SJA)** | Provision of first aid and befriending to attendees. |
| **Utility companies** | Provision of practical support and information where utility disruption is part of the incident. |
| **Cruse Bereavement Care** | Bereavement care specialists, who offer support to those who have lost someone close to them in an emergency. |
| **Rail Delivery Group** | Provide information and practical assistance to those involved and those affected by the incident. |
| **Transport for London** | Provide information and practical assistance to those involved and those affected by the incident. |
| **Home Office** | Provide support on topics such as passports and citizenship. |
| **Foreign and Commonwealth Office** | In situations where people from other countries are involved, it may be prudent for representatives from embassies to attend in order to offer specific advice in relation to visas, repatriation, etc. |
| **Business groups** | Offering support to those local businesses affected by the incident. |
| **Association of British Insurers** | Offering advice on insurance matters to those affected by an emergency, especially where there has been loss or damage to property or personal effects. |

Local authorities, nor emergency centre managers, should not feel pressured to accept every offer of professional support and give careful consideration to the needs of those accessing the centre(s) as well as assessing the professional status of the organisation/ individual offering. Sometimes a polite decline of offers of support may be required. Seek assistance from Council Silver or HALO if required, there may be other places where the offers of support are better suited[[1]](#footnote-2).

Please note there is a London framework document entitled “Voluntary Sector Capabilities Document” which provides more detail around the different roles and responsibilities of each organisation. This can be found here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/file/16930/download?token=z_s1lJfq>

# Emergency Centre Annexes

## Activating an emergency centre

| **Action No.** | **Action Summary** | **Action Tasks Process** | **Responsible Officer** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actions for all centre types** |  |  |
| **1** | Request / potential need for an emergency centre (EC) | 1. Dynamic assessment of whether an EC is necessary. 2. If yes, inform Council Silver. | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (CPC) |
| **2** | Select and activate venue | 1. Select the most appropriate venue from the list of emergency centres [saved here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/Resilience/ERqhx8_UJXJGkSA0UVkDrAIBbnnbAn5ik6816JxlKnDPcA?e=CJsdwO). 2. Contact key holder to activate the venue. 3. Confirm the time the venue will be open. | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer / Council Silver (CPC) |
| **3** | Activate emergency centre manager (ECM) | Contact ECM and provide details of incident, location of EC venue and contact details for the building keyholder.  Confirm how equipment and resources are being provided to the EC chosen. | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (SHAO) |
| **4** | Activate emergency centre officer (ECO) | Contact ECOs and provide details of incident and location of EC venue. Contact Details of Tower Hamlets Resilience Reserves can be found [saved here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/Resilience/EYSim6vMy-RMrbP3eqH4RCkBZDzMpmC4BkxFs0-Z4V8G7Q?e=IgBbgH) on the Resilience Teams page. | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (SHAO) |
| **5** | Activate the British Red Cross (BRC), if required. | 1. See Section [2.1](#_British_Red_Cross) British Red Cross activation card. 2. Confirm EC location (need post code). 3. Provide ECM contact details to BRC. 4. Get BRC Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) & number of staff expected. 5. Request specific resources, if needed. | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (CPC or SHAO) |
| **6** | Confirmation EC is opened | ECM to inform SHAO who should inform CPC / BECC that EC is operational. ‘On-call’ CPC / BECC should notify relevant officers, including Council Silver and LALO. | ECM / Emergency on-call officer |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | Activate NHS | 1. Ring NHS 01 on 0844 822 2888 and state that a rest centre is being opened. 2. Further guidance: [*NHS Assistance to London Local Authority Emergency Centres*](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/Resilience/EQH0yaxSsMNFniaU5v4US0QB1WJttGawgtNGRY8gCuS_yA?e=eVFkeM)*.* | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (SHAO) |

**Rest Centre**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | Transportation of attendees | 1. Consider what transport, if any, is required for attendees to access the emergency centre. Where this is necessary, arrange through transport providers. | Emergency ‘on-call’ offer (CPC/SHAO)  In Liaison with LALO |
| **8** | Consider sleeping arrangements | 1. Determine sleeping arrangements (in the RC or in temporary accommodation) 2. Confirm how equipment (camp/air beds) is being delivered if sleeping is taking place in the RC. | ECM/SHAO  Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (CPC/SHAO) |

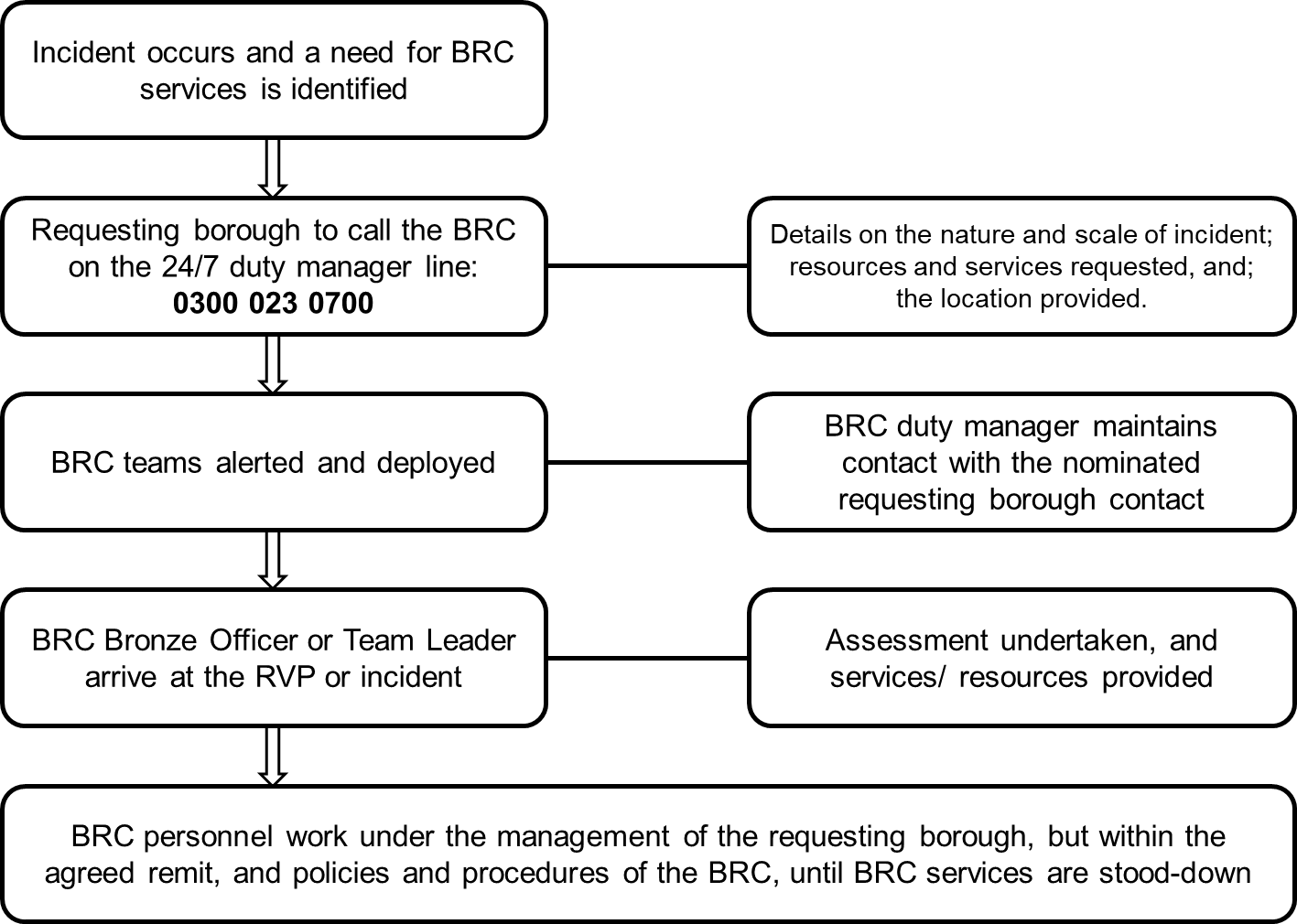
**Survivor Reception Centre / Family and Friends Reception Centre**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | Assess building suitably and enhance if necessary. | 1. Dynamic risk assessment 2. Review layout, access, privacy, refreshments, etc. | ECM |
| **8** | Arrange for equipment and resources to be brought to the centre. | Arrange equipment and resources to be delivered and advise ECM. | Emergency ‘on-call’ officer (SHAO/CPC) / BECC |
| **9** | ECM to link in with Police lead. | Determine what support is required and report back to Emergency ‘on-call’ officer or BECC, as necessary. | ECM |

**Humanitarian Assistance Centre / Community Assistance Centre**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **7** | The establishment of a HAC/CAC is to be agreed through Council Gold, the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) and Council Silver. Each HAC/CAC will be bespoke to the needs of the impacted community in which it is supporting. Please see Section [2.6](#_Humanitarian/Community_Assistance_C), HAC/CAC SOP. |

British Red Cross activation card



## Senior Humanitarian Assistance Officer (SHAO) aide memoir

Please note that because each emergency is different you will need to adapt some of these actions. **Record all decisions on your incident log and keep records of any expenditure. If you make a decision, try to record the reasoning behind your decision.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Phase 1: STANDBY to ACTIVATION**  ***Upon activation call…*** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **1** | **Start a log** of key activity / actions / decisions  You will be called by the Civil Protection Coordinator (CPC) who will be coordinating the response to an emergency on behalf of the council. They will brief you on the nature of the incident.  Alternatively, you may be contacted by a member of the BECC or Civil Protection Unit.   * *Suggested to be recorded in a notebook until emergency centre log is established.* |  |
| **2** | **Find out the following** **information from the CPC**   * Details of incident * Estimated time of arrival of first evacuees? * Number of people likely to use the rest centre? * How long is the incident likely to last? * Are there any known vulnerable people such as lone children or elderly that may need extra assistance? * Does a vulnerable person check need to be carried out? * Is there any media interest? |  |
| **3** | **In liaison with the CPC**, confirm which building has been identified as an Emergency Centre and what time it will be open. |  |
| **4** | **Resilience Reserve Volunteers –** Using the Resilience Reserve volunteer list saved [here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/Resilience/EYSim6vMy-RMrbP3eqH4RCkBZDzMpmC4BkxFs0-Z4V8G7Q?e=IgBbgH), start to contact volunteers to cover the following roles within the centre (refer to Activation Section of plan).   * Rest Centre Manager * Rest Centre Officers |  |
| **5** | **Brief staff members** on the nature of the incident before they make their way to the rest centre, inform them of any sensitive issues and if there are likely to be any vulnerable people amongst the evacuees.   * Brief **ALL** staff on how to relay information to evacuees – **Under no circumstances must information concerning evacuees and survivors be discussed with persons who are not Emergency Centre staff, LBTH officers or emergency services.** |  |
|  | **Phase 2: ON ARRIVAL / ESTABLISHING THE EMERGENCY CENTRE** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **6** | **Before activating the premises** as an emergency centre request the Premises Manager and Rest Centre Manager perform a walk-through of the building.   * + Record any existing damage   + Record any hazardous or off-limits areas and ensure they have been closed off   + Record valuables that cannot be removed   + Ensure all fire exits are clear of obstruction   + Check building security   + Arrange for heating to be switched on if necessary   (The records are used during a closing walk-through, so any losses or damage caused by rest centre usage is appropriately identified for cost recovery purposes.) |  |
| **7** | **Communications** are critical. You will need to make and receive telephone calls.   * Inform the CPC and all volunteers of the telephone arrangements. |  |
| **8** | **Request that the emergency centre box is delivered** to the centre and set up the rest centre, including labelling the relevant areas as appropriate using the signs provided. All the relevant documentation, forms and leaflets are provided in the rest centre box. If you require any further equipment / supplies, please request through the Civil Protection Co-Ordinator or Borough Emergency Control Centre. |  |
| **9** | **Ensure that the Emergency Centre Manager** has nominated reception area staff, registration staff and information area staff. Action Cards are included in the rest centre bags. |  |

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|  | **Phase 3: OPENING THE CENTRE & RECEIVING PEOPLE** |  |
| **10** | **Refreshments / Catering**– If possible, request to Premises Manager, if refreshments for visitors on arrival (and for staff), can be provided whilst the rest centre supplies are on route. Records of expenditure should be kept for future reference. |  |

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| **Estimated operating time** | **Catering provision** |
| Under two hours | Hot and cold drinks |
| Two hours but under eight hours | Hot and cold drinks  Fast food (e.g., a range of sandwiches  or similar) |
| Over eight hours | Hot and cold drinks and 3 meals a day |

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|  | **Phase 4: EMERGENCY CENTRE OPERATION** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **11** | **Updates**– continue to brief your Emergency Centre Manager hourly. |  |
| **12** | **Transport / Medical Support** – Check with the Emergency Centre Manager if any transport / medical support is required, if so, liaise with the CPC. |  |
| **13** | **Sleeping arrangements –**If it is confirmed that the incident will go through the night a decision will need to be made as early as possible whether sleeping arrangements within the rest centre and provision supplied by the CPC or hotel accommodation is sought. If hotel provision is agreed, contact local hotels to confirm their availability and make necessary arrangements to secure rooms as required. |  |
| **14** | **Handover**– if you are being replaced at the end of your shift it is important to follow the Handover Checklist**.** |  |

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|  | **Phase 5: CLOSE DOWN** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **15** | **Closure**– The CPC will inform you when the rest centre is no longer required.   * Thank all staff for their help * Forward any documentation (logbook / forms) to emergency planning * Contact the CPC to notify them when the closure is complete and ensure you are invited to attend the debrief processes |  |

## Emergency Centre Manager (ECM) and Officer (ECO) aide memoire

Use the following actions to activate, open and operate an emergency centre. **Remember to record any key activity or decisions in the emergency centre log (or your own log until the centre log is established).**

* + ***(M)***– denotes an action for Emergency Centre Managers only, though some tasks may be delegated if there are officers available.
  + **(O)** – denotes an action for Emergency Centre Officers only.
  + No M or O means action is applicable to all staff.

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|  | **Phase 1: STANDBY to ACTIVATION**  ***Upon activation call…*** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **1** | **Start a log** of key activity / actions / decisions   * *Suggested to be recorded in a notebook until emergency centre log is established.* |  |
| **2** | **Find out the following** **information**   * Nature and location of incident * Location of emergency centre (if already identified, otherwise agree location). * Manager/keyholder of the Emergency Centre venue and their contact details – list of Emergency Centres saved [here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/Resilience/ERqhx8_UJXJGkSA0UVkDrAIBbnnbAn5ik6816JxlKnDPcA?e=I5WHcH). * Estimated number of displaced people/ expected attendees ***(M)*** * Any particular demographic details (e.g., elderly, disabled, families, tourists) ***(M)*** * Any needs/ vulnerabilities that are known (e.g., everyone is in pyjamas) ***(M)*** * How attendees are getting to centre. Is there an estimated arrival time? ***(M)*** * Cordons in the area (of the incident and centre) * How many council centre officers are available to staff the centre and their estimated time of arrival? ***(M)*** * Who is activating/ coordinating the officers? ***(M)*** * If the British Red Cross has been / needs activating ***(M)*** * Is there anything that needs collectingon the way to the centre? |  |
| **3** | **Contact the building key holder** to agree timings and access ***(M)***   * Arrange a time to meet at the centre to gain access. |  |
| **4** | **Consider/ arrange transportation of the emergency centre equipment *(M)***   * Emergency centre manager or officer collects on way to centre/ other assistance (e.g., facilities management). |  |
| **5** | **Before you leave for the centre**   * Plan your route to the centre, check road closures/ public transport disruptions. * Confirm your estimated time of arrival at centre. * Inform someone (family / friends) of where you are going. |  |
| **6** | **Prepare yourself** - gather equipment and personal items & proceed to the centre.   * Hi-vis * Council ID * Emergency centre plan/ borough documents * Contact directory * Wear warm and comfortable clothes * Personal items > glasses, money, phone & charger, medication, snacks   *Remember, you may be away from the office/ home for a significant period of time.* |  |
| **7** | **Confirm your arrival** to the centre with Council Silver / BECC ***(M)***   * Keep in regular contact with them, especially if you are by yourself. |  |

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|  | **Phase 2: ON ARRIVAL / ESTABLISHING THE EMERGENCY CENTRE**  *Where possible, before making yourself known to attendees of the centre…* | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **8** | ***(M)* Introduce yourself to the key-holder/ site manager** – explain who you are and brief details of the situation (take their contact details if you don’t already have them). |  |
| **9** | ***(M)*** Ask the key-holder to help familiarise you with the **layout of the premises *(M)*** |  |
| **10** | ***(M)*** Complete the brief **risk assessment** of the premises (incl. **water, gas, electricity, heating**, **sanitary facilities, access, security** & location of **fire exits**):   * Do this as early as possible * To be completed by ECM (or delegate to an experienced officer/ deputy) * Remedy any issues where you can (e.g., moving cables or opening windows for ventilation) * Notify the BECC of any unresolvable issues or issues that need the attention or assistance of the BECC   *(Risk assessment template in Section* [*2.20*](#_Facilities_management_and_1) *and in the emergency centre box)* |  |
| **11** | ***(M)*** Identify within the premises **areas to be used:**   * Reception * Registration * Information / advice / update board (including posters) * Refreshments * Quiet / prayer area * Staff area * Administration table/ area * Sleeping area (if required) * Smoking area   *(Further layout considerations see Section* [*2.7*](#_Emergency_Centre_set_1)*)* |  |
| **12** | ***(M)*** Set up **staff register***.*As staff arrive on site, ask them to assist with set up. |  |
| **13** | ***(M)*** Set up areas with signage, documentation, stationery.   * Posters should be considerately located and placed where most visible to have most impact (e.g., behind registration desk, at information desk/ area). |  |
| **14** | ***(M)*** Where possible, ensure that sufficient **staff resource is allocated** to the centre. If more staff are required, contact BECC/ Council Silver. |  |
| **15** | ***(M)*** Make arrangements for **refreshments** (see Section [2.10](#_Attendee_welfare_1))**.** |  |
| **16** | ***(O)* Introduce yourself to the centre manager** and **sign yourself in** to thecentre by using the **staff register.** |  |
| **17** | ***(O)*** Familiarise yourself with the **layout of the premises** – this could be via a tour conducted by the manager/ keyholder or by walking around yourself. You may be asked to support setting up the centre as per item 11 above. |  |
| **18** | ***(M)* Brief staff\*** as per Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1) (including supporting partners) of their roles within the emergency centre   * Allocate roles and provide a brief of expectations/ key information * Walk through the centre (when possible) to familiarise staff with layout and where toilets are etc. * Go through the emergency centre log and how to make entries into it. Reiterate the importance of following up on actions as well as escalating issues to the centre manager. Consider allocating an officer to be responsible for overseeing the logbook * Resources available in the emergency centre box   \*In a SuRC or FFRC, this may be led by the Police Centre Manager. You may wish to hold a separate local authority briefing. |  |
| **19** | Ensure all **staff have a tabard, incident response notebook & pen**   * the notebook is to jot down interim information to assist attendees (e.g., how they have their tea/ coffee; special requests) before action is taken or recorded in the emergency centre log (*Mr Patel (#087) requires footwear, size 9 men’s*). |  |
| **20** | ***(M)* Is the centre ready to receive?**   * **YES?** Open the doors! * **NO?** Remedy issues and open when ready |  |

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|  | **Phase 3: OPENING THE CENTRE & RECEIVING PEOPLE** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **21** | **See emergency centre set up** (Section [2.7](#_Emergency_Centre_set_1)) **and attendee movement** (Section [2.9](#_Attendee_movement_1)) |  |
| **22** | **Facilitate a warm welcome and undertake the reception process** (Section [2.9](#_Attendee_movement_1)) |  |
| **23** | Ensure **unaccompanied children** are identified and placed with DBS checked staff and BECC/ Council Silver immediately notified for action/ advice (Section [2.16](#_Safeguarding)). |  |
| **24** | Act on **identified immediate needs**. E.g., interpreter, infirm / frail care, health / medication. |  |
| **25** | For SuRC, FFRC, RC only: **Prepare the Registration desk**, facilitate and operate when ready   * For SuRC and FFRC this will be a desk that people can approach for assistance e.g., a taxi home. |  |
| **26** | For RC only: **make announcements** to the emergency centre attendees for:   * Any more immediate needs? * Registration commences if needed – get advice from BECC/Council Silver if this is needed for all * Full registration forms should be completed for those with identified immediate needs at reception stage |  |
| **27** | Ensure that all **documentation procedures are adhered to** within the centre:   * Registration * Out/ In * Administration (i.e., log keeping; rotas) |  |
| **28** | Ensure that sufficient **discreet areas** are set up to meet the needs of attendees and staff. |  |
| **29** | ***(M)* Notify the BECC** when the centre has been set up and you are receiving attendees. Keep them up to date with any key activity and attendee numbers within the centre. |  |

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|  | **Phase 4: EMERGENCY CENTRE OPERATION** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **30** | ***(M)* Confirm with the BECC** how they would like attendee information collated / passed on to the designated BECC Officer (e.g., number tally every hour; Registration Form information) |  |
| **31** | ***(M)*** Schedule **regular briefings for ALL staff** (including partner agencies)to keep them informed on the progress of the incident. See Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1) for a briefing guide for staff. |  |
| **32** | ***(M)* Ensure regular briefings and updates to information boards are provided to the attendees.** If you say there will be an update at X o’clock, make sure it happens, even if it is “no update”! See [Section](#_Communication_(including_informatio) [2.11](#_Communication_(including_informatio_1) for a communication guide for attendees. |  |
| **33** | ***(M)*** Arrange for **regular checks on toilet/ washing facilities** to ensure they remain satisfactory. See Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1). |  |
| **34** | Regularly **review resources** – including refreshments, sanitary and entertainment items**.** |  |
| **35** | ***(M)* Monitor staffing** in specific areas and adjust where necessary. |  |
| **36** | **Watch out for signs of stress** amongst attendees and staff. Befriend / arrange support where required. |  |
| **37** | **Monitor capacity** (if 75% and rising, contact the BECC as a further centre may need to be established\*).  \*If SuRC / FFRC, discuss first with Police Centre Manager; this is unlikely needed within a HAC/CAC setting. |  |
| **38** | Based on incident information, **consider longer term needs** – hot meals, bedding, etc. See Sections [2.10 - 12](#_Attendee_welfare_1) and Section [2.16](#_Safeguarding_1) for further guidance. |  |
| **39** | Provide details of the attendees within the EC to the BECC (if required). This information could be shared by:   * Photos of Registration forms shared with the BECC * Copying information from Registration forms into a spreadsheet and sending to the BECC * Inputting into a shared database/ application |  |
| **40** | ***(M)* Keep a record of any expenditure** for reimbursement and reconciliation. Seek approval for spend if requested of Council Silver/ BECC. |  |
| **41** | Ensure staff are having **regular breaks** (including you!) and are provided with a quiet area to do so. See [Section](#_Breaks) [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1) for a breaks guide. |  |
| **42** | ***(M)* Maintain the centre logbook** (Section [2.14](#_Emergency_centre_logging_1))of key actions/ decisions/ activity. Remember it may be easiest to allocate an ECO to be responsible for the logbook.   * Regularly review entries and action * Escalate issues to the BECC where required or assistance is required |  |
| **43** | Carry out **periodic health & safety checks** and dynamic risk assessments (e.g., spilled drinks, blocking of fire exits). See Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1). |  |
| **44** | **Feedback issues or requirements** to the BECC. |  |
| **45** | Ensure the Corporate Communications Team are aware of any VIP/media attendance and are on site to escort the individual(s). You may be asked to support the visit. See Section [2.18](#_Press_and_visitors) |  |
| **46** | **Record any accidents or incidents** (staff and attendees) on own borough incident report form (hardcopy or electronic). See Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1) for more guidance. |  |
| **47** | See dynamic risk assessment for information on **fire alarms and evacuation procedures.** See Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1) |  |
| **48** | Prepare centre for **handover** (if shift change) allow enough time for handover discussion and (de)briefing of incoming/ outgoing staff. See Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1) for a handover guide.   * Outgoing staff must attend the debrief before leaving * Report to the BECC any staff you have concerns regards their welfare and onward shifts |  |

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|  | **Phase 5: CLOSE DOWN** | **Tick**  ***once complete*** |
| **49** | ***(M)*** Ensure you get **clear** confirmation from the emergency services via the BECC that people **can** return home. |  |
| **50** | ***(M)*** Make the **announcement** to attendees\* (you may wish to directly tell those with immediate needs first to allow them space to leave).  \*The police may do this in an SuRC or FFRC |  |
| **51** | **Arrange/ manage transport** for attendees (if required). This may be arranged via the BECC. |  |
| **52** | **Deregister attendees** by noting their departure / onward location on their Registration Form (if completed). If everyone is going home, then you could simply cut off everyone’s wristbands as they leave the centre and update/ reconcile the registration forms afterwards. |  |
| **53** | **Check people do not remove anything** other than their personal property. |  |
| **54** | Check the premises for **lost property, and for remaining attendees.** |  |
| **55** | **Secure, and document any personal property** of attendees left behind. If known, ensure all such items are clearly tagged with destination/ owner's name. |  |
| **56** | **Collate all centre forms and documentation (registration, staff register, centre logbook, expenses receipts)** to be handed to the BECC or emergency planning team. |  |
| **57** | Collect centre equipment and **re-pack the box** (emergency planning teams should aim to replenish consumables after close down). See Section [2.7](#_Emergency_Centre_set_1) for the equipment guide. |  |
| **58** | **Tidy up / clean** (contact the BECC should a ‘special’ clean be required). |  |
| **59** | **Assist any supporting agencies in their departure** and thank them for their assistance. |  |
| **60** | **Leave rubbish for collection** at the designated place (or arrange for it to be taken with you). |  |
| **61** | Ensure relevant stakeholders are made aware that the centre has been closed (e.g., emergency services, LALO, etc.) through the on-call officer / BECC |  |
| **62** | ***(M)* Arrange for the centre equipment box to be returned** to the BECC/ emergency planning team. |  |
| **63** | ***(M)* Debrief staff** See Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1).   * allow time to ‘decompress’, allow time to talk * make a note of any pressing concerns or positive achievements * thank all staff for their help * ensure everyone has arrangements for a safe journey home |  |
| **64** | ***(M)* Release staff** – ensure the staff register is completed.  ***(O)* Stand down** – make sure you have a safe way to get home. |  |
| **65** | ***(M)* Complete a final check** of the premises with the manager/ key holder and note any damages as a result of the emergency centre. |  |
| **66** | ***(M)* Handover to the premises manager/ key holder** and leave the site. |  |
| **67** | ***(M)* Complete any paperwork** required and pass to the BECC. |  |
| **68** | ***(M)*** (ECM) **Stand-down** once agreed with the BECC/SHAO. |  |



## Survivor Reception Centre Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose

A SuRC provides a safe environment for survivors who do not have immediate medical needs, directly after an incident.

The SuRC has several purposes:

* To provide immediate shelter for those who have been directly involved with a major incident but who have no immediate medical needs or hospital treatment requirements
* To allow documentation of survivors and the collection of evidence and witness statements relevant to the investigation of the incident
* To provide initial care and welfare support to attendees, including basic first aid
* To organise onward travel or temporary accommodation for attendees
* To provide information to attendees about the incident they were recently involved in

Activation and location

The police will determine if there is a need for a SuRC after a serious or major emergency. The police may decide the location of the SuRC at the time of the incident, or a predetermined venue may be selected in partnership with the local authority.

Those who have been involved in the emergency/ major incident may have been directed to a nearby restaurant or café or may congregate elsewhere. Others may try to leave the scene and may not wish to attend the official emergency centre.

Responsibilities matrix

The two primary agencies at a SuRC are the police and the local authority. Several other agencies and voluntary organisations such as the British Red Cross may be in attendance. These agencies will be likely be coordinated by the local authority.

Police

The police are responsible for the establishment, the set up and management of the SuRC with the assistance of the local authority. The SuRC will be managed by the Police Centre Manager, who leads the SuRC. Main activities include:

* Identify survivors and potentially missing persons
* Identify witnesses and those involved in the incident, taking statements as required.
* Evidence retrieval

Local Authority (LA)

The local authority is responsible for supporting the Police with the set up and the running of the SuRC. They are also responsible for notifying and coordinating the council, voluntary and faith services/attendance within the centre, as required. Main activities include:

* Registering attendees
* Welfare support, including emotional support, befriending and similar services
* Helping source accommodation, if necessary
* Sourcing food and refreshments

The table below details the key tasks of the police and local authority within the SuRC:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Local Authority** | **Police** |
| Briefing survivors | ✓ | ✓ |
| Assistance in contacting relatives | ✓ | ✓ |
| Safeguarding unaccompanied children and vulnerable adults | ✓ |  |
| Assistance in accessing medical support (NHS) | ✓ |  |
| Refreshments | ✓ |  |
| Clothing / Blankets | ✓ |  |
| Onward transport | ✓ |  |
| Temporary rehousing | ✓ |  |
| Welfare support | ✓ |  |
| Coordination of voluntary agencies at SuRC | ✓ |  |
| Selecting venue and opening of SuRC | ✓  (If predetermined location agreed between local authority and police) | ✓ |
| Data collection for survivors and missing persons |  | ✓ |
| Evidence retrieval |  | ✓ |
| Identification of witnesses and suspects |  | ✓ |
| Security of SuRC venue |  | ✓ |

Welfare support in a Survivor Reception Centre

It is possible that the Police may want attendees to be seen by their officers to get evidence or information about missing persons before they are seen by Local Authority staff for any welfare concerns. If possible, try to agree with the Police that LA staff can meet attendees while they are waiting to see a police officer. This has the following benefits: -

* Welfare issues are dealt with more speedily
* Attendees become less anxious about welfare concerns and are thus more willing to wait to see a Police Officer
* Attendees spend less time in the SuRC

There may be concerns that attendees may feel they can leave as soon as they have seen a local authority officer. LA officers should therefore encourage attendees to stay until they have also seen the Police to support their evidence gathering and survivor/missing persons identification.

With agreement from the Police and where enough EC Officers are present, it can be helpful for an EC Officer to be attached to a Police Officer during their evidence gathering or missing persons interviews so that any welfare concerns can be identified and followed up seamlessly.

## Family and Friends Reception Centre Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of a Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC) is:

* To help reunite friends and relatives with survivors
* To provide a place for the police to record missing persons enquiries and to collect information at may aid their investigation
* To provide friends and relatives with a safe area to gather, away from media attention
* To provide friends and relatives with up-to-date and accurate information on the response arrangements that have been put in place
* To provide access to practical and emotional support to those friends and relatives affected

Activation and location

The decision to open a FFRC is made by the police. The local authority should be consulted about the opening of a FFRC to provide support and agree its location.

Merging the FFRC with another centre type should not be considered.

An FFRC location should have the same facilities detailed in Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1) Facilities Management. Particularly important is the need to have private rooms for attendees to receive information and be interviewed.

Role and responsibilities matrix

Police

The police are responsible for the establishment, the set up and management of the FFRC with the assistance of the local authority. The FFRC will be managed by the Police Centre Manager, who leads the FFRC. Main activities include:

* Receive reports of missing people who may be connected to the incident
* Coordinate with the casualty bureau established to identify the whereabouts of missing people and provide information to friends and family
* Liaison and family coordination with family and friends of the missing or deceased

Local Authority (LA)

The local authority is responsible for coordinating with the police the set up and the running of the FFRC. They are also responsible for notifying and coordinating the council, voluntary and faith services/attendance within the centre. Main activities include:

* Registering attendees
* Welfare support, including emotional support, befriending and similar services
* Helping source accommodation, if necessary
* Sourcing food and refreshments

The table below details the key tasks of the police and local authority within the FFRC:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Local Authority** | **Police** |
| Locating a suitable location in liaison with the local authority. |  |  |
| Activating/ setting up the FFRC with support from the local authority. |  | ✓ |
| Carrying out a dynamic risk assessment of the FFRC premises/ operation; ensuring the site perimeter is safe/secure and can control those entering and leaving. |  | ✓ |
| Providing a Police Centre Manager to oversee all officers for the centre and to act as a single point of contact (SPOC) with the local authority centre manager. |  | ✓ |
| Registering persons entering the FFRC, filling in National Casualty Bureau forms and providing this information to the casualty bureau. |  | ✓ |
| Informing families within the centre that their data may be shared with other responder agencies as per the information sharing statement on the bottom of the Casualty Bureau forms. |  | ✓ |
| Informing the families and friends of the processes in the centre and provide information updates to agencies, families, and friends within the centre. |  | ✓ |
| Providing a safety briefing to those present in the centre. |  | ✓ |
| Supporting Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) efforts. |  | ✓ |
| Ensuring the retention of all police paperwork for audit/ enquiry. |  | ✓ |
| Consulting with the police strategic lead about the closure of the FFRC after everyone within the centre knows the whereabouts of their friend(s)/family member(s). The decision to close the centre should be a joint decision between the agencies also present within the FFRC and will likely be formally agreed in the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group. |  | ✓ |
| Providing an Emergency Centre Manager to act as a single point of contact (SPOC) with the Police Manager. | ✓ |  |
| Calling out supporting staff and coordinating the voluntary and faith sector response within the centre (British Red Cross, Victim Support, Cruse Bereavement, etc). | ✓ |  |
| Arranging accommodation for relatives and friends, if required. | ✓ |  |
| Ensuring the support of multi-faith traditions when required. | ✓ |  |
| Liaising closely with the Police Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) and police documentation teams within the FFRC. | ✓ |  |
| Ensuring sufficient refreshments are made available for the persons in the centre. | ✓ |  |
| Advising the police of specific information requests from attendees. | ✓ |  |
| Assisting with access to translation services. | ✓ |  |
| Providing special support services for the young, elderly or those with disabilities. | ✓ |  |
| Liaising with the appropriate social care teams in the hospitals and local authority. | ✓ |  |
| Ensure welfare of council staff within the centre. | ✓ |  |
| Coordinating aftercare, in conjunction with the police, health authority, voluntary and faith sector. | ✓ |  |
| Assessing and responding to long-term social and psychological impacts of the incident on family and friends, and the wider community in conjunction with the NHS. | ✓ |  |

## Humanitarian & Community Assistance Centre Standard Operating Procedure

This section should be read alongside the [London Humanitarian Assistance Framework](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/fire-and-resilience/london-resilience-partnership/planning-emergencies-capital).

This section should be used by the council’s Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) and Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) to support the establishment of a humanitarian assistance offer for those impacted by the emergency.

More specific details for how a HAC or CAC should be established and operated cannot be prescribed as all incidents are different and so the needs of those affected will be different. However, the principles and considerations for any HAC are similar if they remain flexible and scalable.

Please note, this list is not exhaustive. It is advised to speak with other councils who have had recent experience delivering humanitarian assistance to seek their advice, discuss lessons learned, etc. The emergency planning team can facilitate this.

Additional support needs and resources may become evident in the early days of the HAC operating. Always remain flexible and build in regular review points to ensure the provision is suitable and appropriate.

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| **Humanitarian Assistance Centre Considerations** |
| **Location / building specifications** |
| * Is a physical location needed, or can the offer be provided virtually? Or is both a physical and virtual location required? * Facilities management colleagues will be crucial to these arrangements. * The chosen location(s) should be relevant to the communities impacted. * The chosen location(s) should be easily accessible by public transport, but also have free parking available for attendees and staff. * The building must be Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. * From the building chosen, the incident site should not be visible. * How can the security of those in the HAC/CAC be ensured? Should entrance be restricted to only staff and those affected? How will you know if someone truly needs support or not? (For example, at the Grenfell HAC, different colour wristbands were used each day for attendees). * Consider opening times and days. The HAC shouldn’t be a 24-hour drop-in centre, but are you going to provide out of hours support (i.e., a telephone line)? * What will the “flow” of the building look like? How will attendees know where they need to go to access the support they require? * How might a staffing structure work? Where can a full staffing complement be sourced and sustainably resourced. * What other “spaces” may be needed for the operation? How can the privacy of those attending be maintained? * What facilities will there be for attendees? What about the staff working in the HAC? * Consider the communities impacted and what cultural and faith needs they may have, and reflecting the signage, support, and resources available accordingly. * What sign off process will there be before the HAC/CAC is approved to open to the public? |

|  |
| --- |
| **Working with partners / staffing** |
| * What may be the needs of those impacted by the emergency? What agencies or services may be able to provide this support? What resource can they give to the centre and for how long? * How will the HAC be staffed? It may be open for a while, so is there the commitment for prolonged resourcing? * Will it be by appointment only, or drop-in sessions? Or both? * How will those working in the HAC be visually differentiated from attendees? * What information or data are you going to collect to inform how long the HAC/CAC is required for? Such as attendance data (numbers and key timings), what services are being accessed and are there any further requests from attendees? |
| **Resources** |
| * What information and communication technology (ICT) provision is required? ICT colleagues can advise and support these arrangements. * What signage will you require inside and outside the building? * Will refreshments be provided? By whom? Where? What? When? Consider dietary needs. * Companies and businesses often want to provide support and donations following an emergency. How can this be capitalised to support the HAC? How will this be managed? |

## Emergency Centre set up and equipment

On approach to the emergency centre, be mindful that there may be cordons in place which may restrict access.

If the centre is already in use by attendees

It is common to arrive at an already accommodated emergency centre, and it may also not be a council pre-identified emergency centre. If the centre is not council identified and it is not suitable to continue as a centre, liaise with Council Silver/ the BECC to activate another centre and arrange transport to move the attendees.

Emergency centre layout

Inside the emergency centre suitable areas, where possible, should be identified for the following aspects:

* Reception (should be as close to the entrance as possible)
* Registration
* Information desk/ board
* Refreshment area
* Quiet area
* Prayer room
* First aid
* Family area
* Luggage area (if required)
* Secure staff area

If the emergency centre is small, it may not be possible to have a separate room for each area.

Ensure that the outside area of the emergency centre is considered on set up. Check with the building manager arrangements for site parking (including access and egress).

Remember to confirm with the BECC how the attendees are arriving at the emergency centre (taxis, foot, buses, personal cars) and allow for the space required. Also consider how your partner organisations are arriving at the centre. You may need to request that the BECC liaises with the council’s highways and parking teams for exemptions to be made.

Emergency centre equipment guide

Emergency Centre Managers may be issued with a kit bag and other useful items by the emergency planning team. When deploying ECMs must have:

* Staff ID
* Emergency centre tabard/ hi-vis (unless located in EC equipment box)
* Mobile phone (and phone charger)

It is recommended that there is at least one laptop on site with internet or Wi-Fi connections to enable data input and management. Ideally this should be present at the start of the centre but can be provided shortly after opening.

Two fully stocked Grab Bags are held in the CCTV Room, Ground Floor, Mulberry Place. One grab-bag should be transported as soon as possible to a proposed evacuation centre, preferably before the centre is opened for use. The bags should be re-stocked as soon as possible after being used. The following items may be contained within the grab box:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** |
| **Reception / Registration** |  |  |
| Emergency Centre Paperwork |  |  |
| * Emergency Centre Logbook | 2 books | M |
| * Emergency Centre Plan | 2 copies | M |
| * Reception forms | 20 | M |
| * Registration forms | 100 | M |
| * Staff register | 5 forms | M |
| * Out/In Record | 5 forms | M |
| * Borough accident and incident forms | 2 forms | M |
| * Multilingual phrasebook (BRC) | 1 book | R |
| * Signage pack | 2 sets | R |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Posters:   * Welcome to the centre poster * FAQs * Filming / social media | * Information management and security * Luggage * Zero tolerance of poor behaviour | 2 of each | M |
| Wristbands (numbered) |  | 200 | M |
| Staff notebooks (pocket size) |  | 10 | M |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stationery** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** | **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** |
| Scissors | 2 | M | A-Z index dividers | 1 set | M |
| Ruler | 2 | R | Blutak | 1 pack | R |
| Stapler & staples | 1 & 1 box | M | Plain A4 paper | 1 pack | O |
| Sellotape | 1 | O | Flipchart paper | 1 pack | M |
| Hole punch | 1 | M | Black ball point pens | 10 | M |
| Lever arch file | 1 | M | Flipchart pens / Whiteboard pens | 5 | M |
| **Electricals** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** | **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** |
| Phone chargers  (USB-C, Lightning, Micro USB) | 2 of each type | M | Extension lead | 1 | R |
| Laptop | 1 | M | Megaphone | 1 | R |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Refreshments** | **(Can be bought as required)** |  |  |  |  |
| **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** | **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** |
| Black bin bags | 1 roll | R | Tea | 1 box | O |
| Kettle / urn | 1 | O | Coffee | 1 jar | O |
| Plastic disposable cups | 100 | O | Sugar | 1 bag | O |
| Thermal disposable cups | 100 | O | UHT milk/ coffee whitener | 1 carton / 1 jar | O |
| Plastic cutlery | 100 sets | O | Paper plates | 100 | O |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Health & Safety** |  |  |
| **Item** | **Suggested Minimum Quantity** | **Mandatory (M),**  **Optional (O),**  **Recommended (R)** |
| Workplace first aid kit | 1 | M |
| Emergency centre staff tabards (if not personal issue) | 1 | M |
| Small trolley (for transporting box / items) | 1 | O |
| PPE as advised by Public Health for any prevailing epidemic/pandemic (face masks/coverings, gloves, hand sanitiser) | 50 face masks/coverings  50 pairs of disposable gloves | M: Under pandemic conditions  R: Not under pandemic conditions |

The borough also has stores with the following equipment:

* Baby packs
* Blankets (‘high protective’ & ‘survival’)
* Blankets (wool / nylon)
* Camp beds
* Disposable paper coveralls
* Disposable pillows
* Flood bags
* Leak proof body bags
* Overshoes
* Personal hygiene packs
* Plimsolls
* Sleeping bags
* Socks
* Tracksuits

The stores quantity may fluctuate due to use, disposal, or replacement. A current list of stock can be found on the Resilience Teams site [here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/Resilience/EZbA0sD8ztxYslTtF8UzktYBpTRquNtxH61cqxvrqcJgEA?e=INE2FO).

* Civil Protection (CP) Stores located at
  + Blackwall Transport Depot, Silvocea Way, E14
  + William Place, E3
* Containers located at
  + Victoria Park, E3
  + Blackwall Transport Depot, E14

Other additional items for the emergency centre can be procured as necessary or can be sourced from the BECC or British Red Cross following liaison with the BRC Duty Officer or BRC contact centre. Refer to [2.10](#_Attendee_welfare_1) for sleeping and alternative accommodation.

Suggested Signage:

* Toilets / showers
* First aid
* Reception
* Registration
* Information
* Refreshments
* No smoking

## Staff management and welfare

Briefings

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Things to cover** | **Suggested audience** |
| **Arrival / handover briefing** | * Introductions * Staff registration * Incident update * Number of attendees * Mood of the centre * Attendees of concern (health, attitude, etc.) * Any issues to raise with centre operation * Centre familiarisation (layout, equipment, other agencies present, fire / evacuation procedure) * Open actions (in the centre log) [if not 1st shift] * Centre priorities (e.g., food order in next hour; beds arriving in 2hr) * Emergency centre logbook and note taking guidance * Social media rules * Breaks, welfare, staff area * Security of premises and risks (e.g., disorder) * Tasking (and familiarisation if required) * Handover [if not 1st shift]   + Particular methods/ ‘top tips’ for function areas (luggage management, refreshment coordination, information sharing, etc.)   + Outstanding actions on the centre logbook. * Next briefing (time & location) | Led by ECM  Council emergency centre staff running the centre, **plus**  team leader of other agencies in attendance |
| **Regular briefings** | * Number of attendees * Incident update * Mood of the centre * Attendees of concern * Open actions (in the centre log) * Staff feedback/ concerns * Centre priorities (e.g., food order in next hour; beds arriving in 2hr) * Re-confirmation/ re-allocation of tasking * Reminder for EC logging & note taking, social media, breaks, personal welfare * Next briefing (time & location) | Led by ECM  Council emergency centre staff running the centre, **plus**  team leader of other agencies in attendance |
| **Hot Debriefing**  (End of shift, before going home) | * How does everyone feel? Consider options for a private hot-debrief where individuals require this * Does everyone have a safe way to get home? (Escort to cars/ taxi/ travel in pairs/ text to confirm home etc.) * Thank you * Collect notebooks * Follow up/ signpost to additional support   + Formal (i.e., from BECC; employee assistance)   + Informal (i.e., talk to colleagues; coffee & chat) | Led by ECM |

It is expected that team leaders from other agencies will attend the briefings and then relay to their own staff. However, use your discretion in inviting all agency staff if more practical if they are small in presence (i.e., 1 BRC team leader and 2 BRC officers).

Rota

The standard shift length is 8.5hr, which includes 30 minutes of handover overlap. For example, a shift pattern could be:

* Shift 1: 0630hr – 1500hr
* Shift 2: 1430hr – 2300hr
* Shift 3: 2230hr – 0700hr

When developing shift patterns and rota, consideration should be given to the severity of the incident, the level of stress this will likely place on staff and how long the centre will likely be operational. It may be necessary to reduce shift lengths to protect staff welfare and avoid burnout. The centre rota will be coordinated by the BECC. The ECM should prompt the BECC to confirm next shift staff half-way through shift (in smaller emergency centres the ECM may be asked to manage the rota).

Staff **must** respect their shift times (arriving and leaving on-time), unless otherwise agreed with the BECC/ ECM.

The ECM is responsible to ensure staff stick to handover times to enable current shift staff to leave on time (there should 1/2hr cross-over time to allow this).

After handing over, ECM to make sure staff are debriefed and leave the centre promptly. Staying longer than allocated shift times should not be encouraged for staff wellbeing.

The BECC and centre staff should be mindful of the number (and frequency) of shifts being undertaken by an individual, particularly if the incident is particularly traumatic or challenging.

The ECM should feedback to Council Silver/ the BECC Manager any staff welfare concerns for further attention and management.

Breaks

Taken from Working Time Regulations: workers required to work more than six hours at a stretch are entitled to an uninterrupted rest break of 20 minutes.

The ECM must provide the opportunity for a break, though staff are not obliged to take it. Staff should be encouraged to take breaks. (Managers will need to point out the health and safety considerations of staff not taking a break).

The ECM must establish a break rota/ timetable early in the shift for staff awareness and efficient management of the team and centre.

The ECM should consider sourcing a quiet area away from the main centre activities to allow space for staff to eat and rest.

Staff should not feel ‘chained’ to their workstation and should be comfortable to take breaks to go to the bathroom, have refreshment or have a simple ‘breather’. Staff must check and have their break agreed by the ECM to ensure there is an appropriate level of staff cover in the centre.

20 minutes is the minimum requirement, however depending on the type of centre and busy-ness of it may require a more flexible approach to breaks. i.e., 2 x 15mins, 1 x 30mins, 2 x 20mins.

If it is agreed that staff leave the centre for their break, they should use the out-in form like other attendees to maintain clarity of numbers for health and safety.

Handover

Handovers will generally take place as team to team, rather than individual to individual, except in the circumstances as:

* ECM to ECM
* Specialist roles (i.e., officer overseeing the centre log)

After handovers have taken place, a record should be made within the centre logbook. In addition, all officer notebooks should be left behind to form part of the centre document record set.

Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1) covers things to cover in a handover briefing.

British Red Cross’ role

The BRC are not there to manage the centre. They are there as an additional support mechanism alongside the local authority as per the London Local Authority Panel BRC Memorandum of Understanding.

Identify what skills the team has with the BRC team leader.

If you have other organisations present, follow the same principles - link with the team leader and utilise the skills of the organisation/ staff present.

Other voluntary/ community sector organisation’s role

There are a number of different types of agencies and organisations that may provide service and support to an emergency centre. Section [1.13](#_Roles_and_responsibilities) outlines some of the typical ones and what type of support they can provide to a centre.

If present, the British Red Cross (Team Leader) should be the centre voluntary/ community sector lead, and coordinate most of this activity within the centre, such as collating and rationalising resource. However, this will be at the discretion of the Emergency Centre Manager and determinate on the number of agencies operating within the centre.

Other council services within a centre should be under the management of the Emergency Centre Manager as the centre’s lead council officer.

Conflict

It is important to manage conflict from the outset of setting up an emergency centre. There are some key principles to avoid conflict and manage it if it arises:

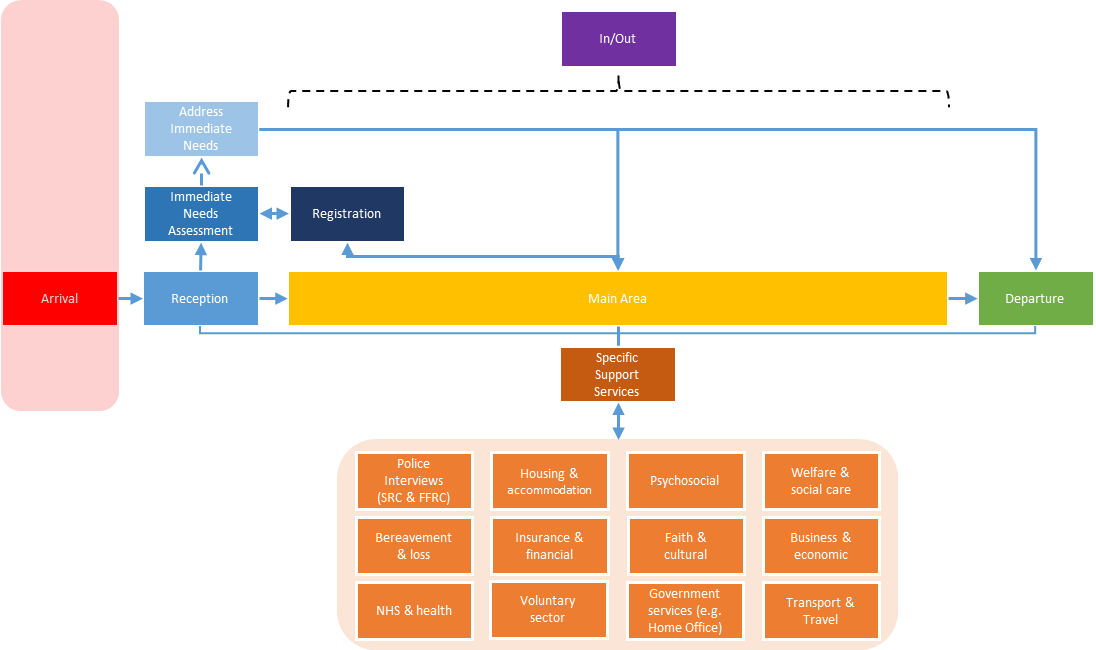
Initial actions:

* Establish clear boundaries and rules within the centre from the outset.
* Ensure that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with immediately before it can escalate. Do not ignore it.
* Use a separate location within the centre to deal with conflict to avoid additional unsettled behaviour or distress.
* Conflict conversation skills:
* Ensure a buddy system is used to ensure the safety of yourself and everyone involved.
* Establish a safe environment.
* Remain calm, non-defensive and respectful.
* Speak clearly and concisely to the individual.
* Ensure there is the option to seek compromise and avoid punishment.
* Develop a warning system to manage repetitive behaviour.
* Manage any extreme emotions quickly to avoid unnecessary distress.

For persistent conflict, dangerous or unpleasant behaviour contact Council Silver/ BECC for further advice and support. If there is immediate danger, call 999 and request police assistance.

## Attendee movement

The following chart demonstrates the standard movement of an attendee when arriving at an emergency centre:



|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Purpose** | **How to do it** | **What do you need?** | **Troubleshooting/ tips** |
| *Arrival* | Receive, meet, and greet. | Welcome attendees into the centre. | One officer | Making attendees feel welcome is important, it sets the tone for the remainder of their time at the centre. |
| **Reception** | Understand who & how many are in the centre.  Identify immediate needs of attendees.  Signpost to resources in the centre.  Safety of attendees. | Fill in Reception form.  If immediate needs are declared, complete full registration.  Usher attendee into main centre. | Wristbands  Reception forms  Pens  One or two officers | Fast track attendees in obvious need.  To reduce queues, reallocate staff from other areas.  Use staff and signage and posters to ensure attendees know they are in an emergency centre and what it can provide. |
| *Immediate needs assessment* | Identification and prioritisation of further resources needed (vulnerable, mental health needs, learning disabilities, elderly, physically disabled, families with young children). | If immediate needs are identified at Reception, full registration should be completed and actioned. | Registration forms  Pens  One or two officers | Additional information on attendees may be shared by partners or the BECC. For example, known vulnerable individuals from properties evacuated and any direct support available to them. |
| **Registration** | Help ensure attendee receives most appropriate support.  Support police investigation into the incident.  Assist with safety and security of the centre. | Set up specific registration desk(s).  Invite/ call attendees (in wristband order) to desk to complete registration.  Ideally, staff should complete forms. | Registration forms  Pens  Lever arch file and hole punch  One or more officers | Full registration should only be undertaken if the information gathered during Reception is not adequate to provide support.  Registration can be time consuming and should not get in the way of an attendee’s access to the centre’s services unnecessarily.  Store the completed Registration forms in the lever arch file. Order alphabetically by surname. |
| **Out/In** | Ensure that all attendees are accounted for. | Ask attendee if leaving temporarily or permanently.   * + - Temporarily: record on Out/In form.     - Permanently: follow Departure. | Out/In form  Pens  One officer | Only the police have the right to hold people at an emergency centre, and only in specific circumstances. |
| **Final Departure** | Record when an attendee leaves.  Ensure that all attendees are accounted for.  Record of who has left and destination.  Support departure e.g., onward travel | Remove wristband.  Record on registration form onward destination (i.e., home; hotel). | Registration forms  Scissors  Pens  One or two officers | If everyone’s destination is ‘home’ at the same time, simply cut wristbands off as people leave and reconcile with forms after people have left.  If a centre is closed, the demands upon those responsible for the departure process increases significantly and the ECM should divert resources accordingly. |

## Attendee welfare

Refreshments and catering

The need to provide food and drink in an emergency centre makes the availability of kitchen and dining facilities a high priority. Whilst there may, in certain circumstances, be a need to bring in meals from outside the premises or to set up a temporary kitchen, having the facilities on site is obviously the most desirable option. However, the emergency centre manager should use their discretion in determining and obtaining food for attendees and staff (i.e., supermarket sandwiches/ snacks, pizza delivery).

The British Red Cross have an agreement with Tesco for emergency access to food supplies. Most supermarkets operate similar ‘emergency assistance policies’ and will support local authorities and the BRC with food supply. Payment methods should be confirmed with the Council Silver/ the BECC. Council Silver/the BECC should also be consulted for ongoing or more complex catering needs (i.e., large numbers or prolonged incidents).

A guide below is a suggestion for the appropriate times for catering – however bear in mind the time of day and length of incident (i.e., if it is 3 A.M., there should not be a strong need for a full hot meal; however, snacks or a sandwich would be appropriate).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Estimated operating time** | **Catering provision** |
| Under 2 hours | Hot/ cold drinks and light snacks |
| 2 – 8 hours | Hot/ cold drinks and light snacks; Fast food (e.g., a range of sandwiches or similar) |
| Over 8 hours | Hot/ cold drinks and light snacks; 3 meals per day |

Clothing

Attendees may need a change of/extra clothing (if they’ve been evacuated in pyjamas, for example). The British Red Cross may have a reserve of clothing; however, basic clothing may need to be sourced from elsewhere, such as a supermarket or retailer.

Options for sourcing clothing:

* Contact the British Red Cross and ask if they have a supply of clothing that can be brought to the emergency centre location.
* Arrange for an officer to attend a supermarket or retailer nearby, either from the emergency centre or organised through Council Silver/ the BECC.
* Payment for clothing and other items should be agreed in advance between the EC Manager and Council Silver/ BECC.
* Officers sourcing clothing should be informed of:
  + Type of clothing required (considering time of year, religious/cultural requirements, needs of attendees).
  + Quantity of clothing required.
  + The sizes required.

Hygiene

In addition to the facilities at the emergency centre (detailed in Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1)), attendees may need to be provided with the following basic items, dependent on how long the centre will remain operational, the time the incident occurred and when the centre was opened, and the type of incident that has occurred:

* Sanitary products
* Toothbrushes and toothpaste
* Antibacterial wipes or flannels (if showers are not available or if attendees don’t want to use showers)
* Deodorant
* Clothing (see Clothing section above)
* Soap, shampoo, and towels (personally issued for showering); and/or
* PPE in pandemic / epidemic conditions, according to Public Health guidance.

Payment for items should be agreed in advance (see Clothing section above).

Babies and children

Where possible, emergency centres should provide:

* Play-zones to keep children entertained
* Room for a nursery, baby changing, etc.
* An area for nursing mothers

Children should not be allowed to run around the centre. Parents/ guardians are ultimately responsible for supervising their children.

In a HAC, it may be preferable to establish a formal crèche/nursery to allow parents to give all their attention to conversations with the support services.

Items that should be provided specifically for children/ babies:

* Nappies and nappy bags
* Wet wipes and cotton pads
* Clothing (speak with parents/guardian for their child’s/children's needs)
* Formula milk and bottles (and method for sterilising)
* Muslins/ bibs/ dummies
* Toys, books, or other entertainment (dependent upon what is available in the centre)

Luggage

People who have been instructed to leave their homes urgently, but with some warning, tend to bring as much as they can carry with them, including their valuables.

Whilst in the centre, it is important to:

* Inform people who arrive with luggage that the council cannot accept liability for its safekeeping. They should keep luggage with them whilst in the centre.
* The luggage must not create a trip or fire hazard and should be placed in a safe place.

If the situation arises whereby, it would be prudent to have a designated luggage holding area/room, because of the quantity of luggage or the need for overnight sleeping in the centre, then:

* Identify a location within the centre, ideally an area that can be secured. If cannot be secured, ensure this is in view of centre staff. CCTV coverage would also be beneficial
* Ensure that there is a log of what luggage is being stored and who the owner is. Record on the attendee’s registration form
* Remind those placing luggage within the holding area/ room that the council cannot accept liability for its safekeeping

**There is a poster available for luggage/valuables, etc. - not responsible for belongings.**

Inebriated attendees

Alcohol consumption is prohibited within the emergency centre. However, if an attendee within the centre is drunk and their behaviour is unacceptable, then staff should:

* If possible, enlist the support of their family/friends who may be in the centre with them to calm the drunk attendee down.
* Approach the drunk attendee and calmly, but firmly, ask to speak to them privately. Be respectful, polite, and friendly, not authoritative.
* Once in a private space, offer the attendee a non-alcoholic drink and/or food to attempt to sober them up. If the individual is too drunk it is unlikely pointing out their unacceptable behaviour will have the desired effect. Ensure you are not alone with the individual and that support is on hand, but do not overcrowd the space and create alarm.
* Calmly advise that their behaviour has not been acceptable and is causing distress to other emergency centre attendees and/or staff. Remind them that you, along with other staff and agencies present in the centre, are there to support their welfare and if their unacceptable behaviour continues, advise that they will be asked to leave the emergency centre. Emphasise that this is a last resort and you really do want to help them, but this cannot be to the detriment of others
* Engage with the individual and ask how they are coping, what concerns they may have that you can support with. Think about what support services they may require and consider how this can be provided, whether through agencies present in the centre or coordinated through the emergency on-call officer or BECC.
* If the attendee is sleeping within the centre, try to ensure they are sleeping on their side, to avoid them potentially choking on their own vomit.
* If the attendee wishes to leave the emergency centre, ensure you arrange transport for them so they can safely travel to their destination.
* If the attendee becomes confrontational and/or aggressive, and their behaviour continues to be unacceptable, then ask them to leave and call the Police if support is needed.

It is important to be sympathetic to drunk attendees, who are likely in the emergency centre directly or indirectly because of the impacts of the incident and may not be coping.

A person under the influence of illegal drugs will present different challenges within the centre. Apply similar principles and actions from the list above and seek further advice and assistance via Council Silver/ BECC or agency partners (police, ambulance) particularly if you are concerned of their, or others, safety.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Within an emergency centre, if ASB occurs this will likely be:

* Shouting, swearing, and fighting
* Nuisance noise
* Verbal abuse
* Threatening/abusive behaviour
* Harassment and intimidation
* Vandalism/ criminal damage

If this occurs within the centre, take the following action:

* If a criminal offence has been committed, call the police and report this.
* Ask the attendee(s) to stop or to leave the emergency centre. Follow the advice on ‘conflict’ in Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1).

Pets and animal welfare

Sometimes displaced people will arrive at the emergency centre with their pets. Research suggests that animals can have a calming effect on some people but not all. However, because of sanitation and safety (i.e., allergies), pets should only be allowed in the building if absolutely necessary. There therefore may be a need to set aside an area for those with pets.

The exception is for trained and authorised Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs or Assistance Dogs which have unrestricted access.

A flexible approach should be taken after considering the pet(s) that have arrived at the emergency centre - the number of pets in attendance, the emergency centre size/ number of rooms available and the comfort of other attendees.

Sensitive management of these situations is important and is the responsibility of the emergency centre manager. If necessary, Council Silver or the BECC can support the management of pets and can contact the council’s dog/ animal warden for support with dogs, and other local agencies for other animals.

If animals are staying with their owner in the emergency centre, additional consideration is required for the animal’s welfare – i.e., litter trays, food, and water.

**There is a poster available for pets and animal welfare if you have allowed them into the centre.**

Psychosocial support

Everyone attending the emergency centre (including staff) should be monitored for the need for psychosocial support. This could include psychological first aid (and possibly counselling) for shock, stress, trauma, or bereavement.

Where this need is identified for an attendee, a welfare check should be performed by a centre officer to ask what immediate support might be needed by the attendee and to seek their permission to refer them to other services for support. This information should be recorded on the attendee’s registration form.

The centre manager should consider whether it is beneficial to have other agencies/ council services in attendance to support attendees with psychological support (see Section [1.13](#_Roles_and_responsibilities) agencies that support Local Authorities in an emergency centre).

Trauma support

The Council will provide trained staff where required to provide trauma support and counselling. Debriefs will be arranged following an incident to discuss and review the impact of dealing with the incident with all staff.

The Council will deploy trained officers to be called on for support at any stage or at any location during an emergency and provide some, or all of the following services:

* Providing and receiving information from traumatised persons
* Referral and liaison with other agencies
* Supporting the general welfare response services at the incident/rest centre
* Liaising with and assisting when requested the Police Family Liaison Officers
* Staffing support, advice, and information telephone lines

The Council Employee Assistance Programme with our partners Vita Health Group is a service that is available for our staff (24/7, 365 days per year). Staff are now able to access a full confidential service which includes the following services:

* Unlimited telephone calls to seek help and advice with personal and/or work-related concerns
* Individual referrals for counselling, face to face, telephone, or online counselling
* Independent Legal and Tax information advice and signposting
* Independent support and advice in dealing with Debt and other Money Management issues
* Access to a wealth of regularly updated wellbeing resources on our employee wellbeing website “Well Online”
* Additional support features for managers through the Manager Advice support line with many more additional options.

Signposting to support services

Attendees may not wish to engage with the support services within the centre, nor may the right support be immediately available. There are a wide range of organisations who have 24hr help and advice lines. Below is a list of common charities and agencies who could help an attendee, you may wish to display some of these details at the information station. More information or other organisations could be sought via an internet search.

**Health/ medical concerns**: You can book an appointment with your GP, or call NHS 111, who can refer you to the right support services. Call 999 if it is an immediate health emergency (see Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1) for further First Aid advise).

**Victim Support**: an independent charity that provides a confidential 24-hour helpline that supports individuals who have been affected by crime or traumatic events. Helpline 0808 168 9111.

**Samaritans**: Confidential 24-hour support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair. Helpline 116123.

**Cruse Bereavement Care**: a national charity that provides telephone, email, and website support to bereaved children, young people, and adults. Helpline 0808 808 1677.

**Childline**: a confidential support service for anyone under the age of 19 in the UK to discuss any issues they’re going through with trained staff and volunteers. Helpline 0800 1111.

**Age UK**: have a free, confidential national phone service for older people, their families, friends, carers, and professionals. 0800 055 6112 (8am – 7pm), 365 days a year.

**Citizens Advice**: network of independent charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person. 03444 111 444. Available 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Resident Support Pack

In Tower Hamlets there is also a Support Pack available to give to residents. This covers a range of signposting options and information that may be useful following the incident. A handful of copies are included in the Emergency Centres kit bags, along with QR codes residents can scan to access the information online.

The information can also be found at the following link: <https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_safety__crime_preve/emergencies/Emergency-support-for-residents.aspx>

PDFs of the booklet and copy of the QR code are saved [here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/Resilience/Eod_oushydFFji6vShD2KTkBZxdUudPkmDTgrjsQBRnBUQ?e=RkdpUJ).

Sleeping and alternative accommodation

Emergency centres are designed to supply basic welfare, however, there may be a need to enable sleeping and alternate accommodation. This is most likely facilitated within a Rest Centre, however, may rarely be required within a SuRC or other centre type.

Attendees do not have to attend a local authority emergency centre and therefore attend mainly on their own accord or (in a Rest Centre) due to an absence of alternative shelter options at that time.

As a local authority, we have a duty of care to provide temporary shelter following an emergency as well as assess centre attendees for eligibility for temporary emergency accommodation.

* It is preferable for all if attendees can have a private and comfortable space to rest, recoup and recover from their experience (i.e., an emergency centre).
* Emergency centre staff should support re-accommodation/ shelter of attendees with relatives/ friends or alternatives provided by the landlord and/or insurer.
* Conversations of this nature can occur at any point during the evacuation/ displacement and emergency centre process.
* Emergency centre staff should enable as best as possible access to tools/ resources to enable people to assist themselves (i.e., sourcing contact phone numbers for insurers, supporting transport to friend/ relative).
* Attendees with immediate needs or special circumstances (i.e., mobility concerns; very young children; significant/ contagious illness) should be prioritised for alternate accommodation where possible.

If sleeping/ rest areas within the centre are required:

* Designate specific areas for rest/ sleep. Consideration to space used, male/ female areas, noise, light, etc. should be given.
* People from different backgrounds will have different levels of tolerance as to what will constitute acceptable sleeping arrangements.
* The council, alongside the British Red Cross, should discuss availability and access to beds, bedding and other toiletries. This may be done via Council Silver/ the BECC.
* More formal emergency accommodation needs should be discussed with Council Silver/ Gold as per the council’s usual emergency accommodation processes.
* The approach will be based upon the incident’s circumstances such as likelihood to return home, number of people requiring alternative accommodation and availability within the borough.
* Booking, payment, transport (agreement and responsibility of) should also be agreed via Council Silver.
* A pragmatic and system approach should be taken to ensure that there is enough accommodation sourced and allocation is undertaken fairly. Clear records must be kept centrally (as agreed between Council Silver and the Emergency Centre Manager).

Insurance advice for attendees

Arrangements should be made to provide access to advice concerning insurance matters. Supporting attendees to contact their insurance companies can be helpful in enabling them to find alternative accommodation or other support earlier.

During the registration process, remind attendees to contact their insurers in relation to:

* Home insurance (for those who are homeowners)
* Landlord building insurance
* Contents insurance

All attendees where alternative accommodation is required should be encouraged to:

* Stay with family or friends
* Contact their insurance company to make arrangements

Where attendees do not have insurance and require advice, they should be signposted to relevant support services, such as Citizens Advice Bureau, donations, etc. It should be noted that those unable to replace their belonging via insurance cover may require greater access to services in the longer term.

Housing Support

The Council has a duty to provide emergency accommodation if residents are made homeless by an emergency. Those the residents who are unable to return to their property i.e., Fire or Flood they are treated as ‘Priority Need’ for homelessness help. The Senior Humanitarian Assistance Officer will liaise with the Housing Options Service or relevant Resident Social Landlord to assist with seeking alternative arrangements.

## Communication (including information sharing)

Communication in and around the emergency centre will be critical to its success. Some typical examples of communication will be:

* Staff - between Emergency Centre Manager (from Council Silver/ BECC); to/ between manager and Emergency Centre Officers
* Agency partners and service providing organisations
  + Briefings/meetings (formal and informal)
    - Agenda
    - Chair (lead)
* Attendees
  + Verbal (e.g., officer to attendee)
  + Announcements (officer/ manager to all)
    - Verbal
    - Written (posters; noticeboards)
* Building/premises manager
* Council Silver / BECC

The frequent provision of accurate information to attendees will reduce tension and uncertainty, as well as reduce the number of repetitive questions to staff which distracts people from more immediate tasks.

Provision of information can be achieved in a combination of ways:

* Periodic announcements of current status of the incident can be given verbally (direct person to person or via loud hailer or P.A system particularly if the information is urgent or there are many attendees)
* Constant information (i.e., not subject to frequent change/update - telephone numbers, etc.) can be written on a status board (whiteboard / notice board / flipchart), including the time of current and future updates
* If attendees leave the centre, note updates can be provided through the Council’s website, social media and contact centre/specific freephone telephone number set up for the incident with recorded updates

Refer to Section [2.7](#_Emergency_Centre_set_1) for guidance on emergency centre set-up including signage.

In all circumstances, the emergency centre team should be mindful of those who may have difficulties reading, hearing, or understanding messages, and should be accommodated appropriately.

Refer to Section [2.12](#_Faith,_ethnic_and) for guidance on languages.

It is important to record significant instances of communication (e.g., briefings or all attendee announcements) in the centre logbook.

The table on the following page provides some further detail to the types of communication that will be taking place/ should be considered in an emergency centre.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Communicate with…** | **Suggested frequency** | **What to communicate?** | **How?** |
| **BECC**  **(Council Silver)** | Determined by the council operational rhythm (ECM should ask for this upon opening the centre) | Ask **BECC** for:   * Incident updates * Return home update * Accommodation/ transport decisions/ updates * Staffing/ rotas * When next ‘Centre to BECC’ update required (& ‘BECC to Centre’ update expected).   Centre **operational** updates:   * Numbers currently in the centre * Numbers received & numbers registered * Mood of the attendees * V.I.P/ press visits/ attendance * Security/ safety concerns * Agencies present & role   **Logistics** needs (resource requests) e.g.:   * Purchasing (how to pay for things) * Immediate needs guidance * Equipment (chairs/ tables) * Catering * Clothing * Hygiene supplies * Transport * Medical/ health support * Pets/ animal welfare | Phone (mobile/ centre landline)  Communication should be between the EC Manager and designated BECC Officer unless otherwise directed to minimise confusion/ duplication.  The contact and resulting actions and decisions should be logged in the centre logbook. |
| **Staff** | See Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1) “Staff Briefings” |  |  |
| **Other agencies in the centre** | See Section [2.8](#_Staff_management_and_1). “Staff Management & Welfare” for guidance on other agencies. |  | Agency team leaders to attend ‘manager’ briefing (led by EC Manager) and then will brief their teams. |
| **Attendees (dynamic incident updates)** | Hourly (more regularly if available) | * Incident status * ‘Return home’ update (even if it is stated as ‘unknown’) * Time of next update | Written announcements - whiteboard/ flipchart |
| **Attendees (static centre operations updates)** | Constant / update alongside incident updates (**at least** every 2hrs) | Initial orientation   * Fire / evacuation procedures * Toilets * Refreshments * Quiet space * Out/In (smoking etc.) * Food will arrive at XXXXhr, tell us if you have dietary requirements * Transport/ accommodation updates/ timings * We will/ won’t be providing * Information sharing (see Section [2.13](#_Information_management_and_1)) | * Posters * Verbally (tannoy/ P.A/ group briefing) * Written   + whiteboard/ flipchart |

**Note**: frequency of updates will be subject to the incident type and information received from third parties (BECC, emergency services, Council Silver)

**Note**: it is important that if you give a time that you will provide an update that you stick to that time – even if there is ‘nothing further to report’.

## Faith, ethnic and cultural considerations

Certain ethnic or cultural groups may present unfamiliar situations for centre workers. Customs and language may also present additional barriers to communication and understanding. Attendees should be treated as individuals and staff should not make broad assumptions of attendee need based on a disclosed religion, ethnicity, or cultural factor.

Particular faith, ethnic and cultural needs (e.g., diet, religious practices, etc.) should be identified at reception/ registration or in general engagement and conversation while within the centre and recorded where appropriate. Staff should do their best to accommodate needs though in some circumstances, due to the inherent limitations of the building, centre operations or incident dynamics, needs may be unable to be met in full. Early engagement and conversation with attendees should be had to manage expectations and provide alternative options if available.

Consider use of a group spokesperson, council communities/ faith leads, local faith and cultural leaders, local faith plans and use of technology (internet searches) to assist in understanding needs and how best to provide support to attendees.

Languages

There are at least 87 different languages spoken by families in London, with the most common languages spoken in the home after English being Polish, Bengali, Gujarati, French, Urdu, Portuguese, Turkish, Spanish, and Arabic[[2]](#footnote-3). Approximately 20% of households in London do not have English as their main language spoken in the home[[3]](#footnote-4). There should also be consideration for visitors (such as tourists) who may be part of the incident but also do not speak English well/ at all.

Using different tools to assist communication in the emergency centre is encouraged. Family group members, Google translate, translation & interpreter services and the BRC Major Incident Response Multilingual Phrasebook (simple statements translated into 51 languages) are all good tools that can support communication in an emergency centre.

It is important to be aware of those in the centre with barriers to communicating in English and for centre staff to ensure that new information and important messages during the attendee’s time in the centre is effectively understood.

## Information management and data security

Throughout the process of developing these emergency centre arrangements, the principles of data protection law have been considered. It has been ensured that the information needed to be processed (that means collected, stored, and used) is adequate, relevant, and limited to what we need.

There is a poster available, summarising the information in this section which should be visibly displayed for attendees, at least during reception and registration.

Key principles

Everyone who works for or on behalf of local authorities have a responsibility for ensuring data is collected, stored, and processed appropriately in line with the 2018 GDPR Act and relevant policy.

As such, all Emergency Centre staff must be clear, open, and honest with attendees about why you are collecting their data, who you will be sharing it with and how long you will keep it.

**Data protection law does not prevent you from collecting personal data** that people provide voluntarily as long as it is lawful, fair and that you tell people what you are doing.

There are gateways known as lawful bases that allow you to collect data without consent under data protection law.

The lawful basis used for data collection in emergency centres is “public task”, meaning the processing is necessary for you to perform a task in the public interest or for your official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law.

The legislation, policies and guidance that relate to this service include, but are not limited to:

* The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and (contingency planning) Regulations 2005 - allows the local authorities continue to exercise its functions in the event of an emergency.
* The Local Government Act 2000 - give powers to local authorities to promote economic, social, and environmental well-being.
* Care Act 2014 - legal framework for local authorities support an individual’s ‘wellbeing’.

Why are we collecting personal data?

There has been an emergency and the attendee has either been directly or indirectly impacted by it. We need to collect certain personal data to understand who has been affected by the emergency and how, so that we can provide an appropriate level of support to those people.

Every council has a privacy notice which can be found on their website which states why they need the data, what they’ll do with it and who they may share it with.

What if someone doesn’t want to give their personal details?

If someone doesn’t want to give their details, it is recommended to discuss with them why they may not want to provide their details. As the issue could be resolved simply this way.

We recommend all attendees provide their contact details, as we want to be able to appropriately support them. Unfortunately, we won’t be able to allow them into the emergency centre if they don’t provide their basic details for health and safety reasons.

Where and how should personal data be stored?

Emergency Centre managers and officers are all responsible for ensuring that the personal data you hold is kept securely.

That includes making sure it’s physically safe, in the case of paper records, or digitally safe, in the case of electronic records. You may need both.

You must also follow rules to make sure information isn’t lost, stolen, or destroyed.

Basic suggested security measures include:

* In centre initial staff briefings, make everyone aware of the importance of keeping personal data safe and that they cannot share or use attendee information for any purposes other than to support them in the emergency.
* The centre manager should consider which members of staff need access to the personal data and limit access to those staff.
* Keep the attendee details paperwork locked away in a cabinet or drawer when you’re not using them, if possible.
* This includes paper lists and any laptops or devices if you’re storing the data digitally.
* Do not leave paperwork open or uncovered where attendee details are visible to everyone.
* If you’re using online storage or a laptop to collect records, you should use a strong password, and different passwords for different devices.

Security measures needn’t be so onerous that they prevent you carrying out your work. Think about the impact on a vulnerable person if the information they entrusted you with becomes lost or stolen. Then apply measures to reasonably reduce the risk of that happening.

Who might we share personal data with, and why?

In an emergency, working with partners and sharing information with them can make a real difference to public safety. In fact, it could be more harmful not to share the data than to share it.

The council may need to share an individual’s personal data with third parties to enable the provision of appropriate support.

We may need to share information with (not exhaustive): police; NHS England (acute trusts); Clinical Commissioning Group; London Ambulance Service; housing, social care, and counselling services; emergency accommodation providers; translation and interpreting services.

The council will only share personal data if it is in compliance with data protection principles and is justified on the basis that the benefits (after taking into account any relevant safeguards) outweigh the risks of any possible negative effect on the data subject concerned.

Where sharing is justified the council will take all reasonable steps to minimise any negative impact on the data subject. The amount of information shared, and the extent of sharing will be limited to that which is necessary to carry out a particular function.

The council will continue to balance the right of an individual to privacy against necessary use of the information to be used to provide vital services and protect residents and businesses.

How long will we keep the personal data collected?

The retention period is 50 years from the closure of the incident.

The rationale for this is based on HSE accident reporting forms which have various legislation supporting this, such as Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations; Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR); Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations: Limitations Act, 1980.

When you hold their personal data, people have rights under data protection law. These rights can be viewed on the ICO website: <https://ico.org.uk/>.

How and when is it going to be destroyed?

The data will be destroyed when it is no longer needed for the purpose it was collected.

Paper records will be destroyed via confidential waste.

Digital records will be deleted.

## Emergency centre logging

What is an emergency centre log?

The emergency centre log is a single logbook that captures key actions/ requests/ decisions applicable to the centre. It is separate to the LALO log or a personal log. The Emergency Centre Manager (ECM) and Emergency Centre Officers (ECO) should ensure all key actions/ requests/ decisions are logged in the centre log. The ECM may appoint an ECO as an Administrator/ Centre Loggist to maintain oversight of the centre log. The log should be used to ensure all actions are followed up on and that main events in the centre are noted down (e.g., briefings; key updates). The centre manager has overall responsibility for the logbook.

The centre log is for Local Authority use only, and should only include information, decisions, actions, and updates that relate to the Local Authority.

Who can write in the log?

* Emergency Centre Manager: emergency centre managers should log in this book. The ECM must keep an overview of this log to maintain situational awareness, ensure entries are actioned where required and followed up/ closed.
* Emergency Centre Officer: centre staff (council) should themselves log their actions and the updates. The EC staff member is responsible for ensuring this action is completed/updated.
  + Emergency Centre Loggist/ Administrator: In a large centre, the ECM may assign an ECO as a centre loggist. The loggist can log actions and updates on behalf of EC staff and the manager, as well as oversee coordination of requests/ information, however the action is still owned by EC staff/ manager.

What to log?

All key communications and decisions made, including the rationale and any actions linked to the decision must be recorded. If there is a centre Loggist, EC staff should report actions to be logged to the Loggist to ensure key information is recorded.

* **Decisions:** key decisions made and the reason for the decision. This will include why a decision or course of action was taken or, why a decision or course of action was not taken.
* **Information:** Information available at the time the decision was made.
* **Actions:** Any actions undertaken.
* **Progress/ updates:** Progress of an action.
* **Key developments:** Key developments in the incident, such as escalation of situation, arrival or departure of council services and requests for support from other organisations. Key developments also include handovers between Local Authority teams or staff.

Logging handovers

Handovers between Local Authority emergency centre staff will need to be undertaken if the incident is protracted and the need for an operational centre remains. More details on the handover process can be found in Section [2.6.4](#_Handover).

The handover must be logged between incoming/outgoing staff, so that there is a record of what staff members were in the centre.

Finalising and storing the logbook

Whilst the centre is open, the logbook remains responsibility of the centre manager. Once there is no longer a requirement for the centre, and it has been closed down, the logbook should be finalised. On the front page of the logbook, the date and time of final entry, and the number of booklets used should be filled in. Add a final entry within the logbook to state the centre is now closed down.

Once completed, the logbook should be returned by the centre manager to the Emergency Planning team as soon as practically possible.

The logbook should be securely stored in a locked location, such as in a locked cabinet in the BECC.

## Finance/Procurement

In most cases, Boroughs will have Emergency Centre boxes stocked with the items necessary to operate the emergency centre (see Section 2.5) and will have arrangements for these to be delivered to the centre or stored within designated centres.

However, there will be instances where additional items and services may be required, such as refreshments and catering, transportation (taxis, Oyster Cards, etc), temporary accommodation, restocking of consumables, other items required by attendees (e.g., nappies, sanitary products, etc.).

The EC Manager should agree with the BECC and Council Silver what and how additional items and services are to be procured, as necessary. Within the Emergency Centre, this may include:

* Corporate credit cards: Within Tower Hamlets, these are issued to individual Civil Protection Co-ordinators and Senior Humanitarian Assistance Officers, who should be aware of procurement guidance/criteria and spending/transaction limits.

All records of expenditure should be logged, and all receipts should be retained.

The EC Manager should also confirm with the BECC if any pre-existing contractual arrangements exist with suppliers/businesses to support resourcing or providing services to the emergency centre, and how this can be accessed. These could include:

* Arrangements with supermarkets to access their goods. For example, the Sainsbury’s Emergency Assistance Policy and similar supermarket assistance policies.
* Arrangements with local authority catering providers or voluntary sector food banks to provide meals.
* Arrangements in place for transportation (use of existing local authority vehicles, contracts with taxi firms, etc.).
* Locally within Tower Hamlets, there are arrangements with Transport Services for the provision of coaches. There is also a Civil Protection Unit Account with local taxi providers for minibus and taxi hire.

## Safeguarding

Adult safeguarding

Safeguarding is defined as ‘protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.’ (*Care and support statutory guidance, chapter 14 ii*). Adult safeguarding is about preventing and responding to concerns of abuse, harm, or neglect of adults. Staff within the Emergency Centre should work together with the adults in partnership so that they are:

* Safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect
* Treated fairly and with dignity and respect whilst in the centre
* Protected when they need to be
* Able easily to get the support, protection, and services that they need.

Children’s safeguarding

* Safeguarding children and promoting welfare of children is defined as:
* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children’s health and development
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Prevention

This is a core responsibility of safeguarding adults and children. There are some important prevention strategies within an emergency centre, which include:

* Clearly identifying adults and children at risk of abuse during reception/registration where possible
* Identifying adults or children who might pose a risk to other attendees
* Providing clear advice and information regarding safeguarding
* Working alongside multi-agency partners and internal adults/children’s social services (local context to be provided regarding safeguarding process)
* Provide social services training to work within emergency centres to provide expertise on site
* Being proactive where concerns have been raised within the centre
* Clear internal safeguarding escalation process instructions for any safeguarding issues
* Appropriate training and education for emergency centre staff
* Necessary DBS checks and clearance for staff supplied
* Establishing community links and community support where required
* Enforcing regulation and legislation.

Identification of a safeguarding need

An adult safeguarding concern describes the process where someone is first alerted to a concern or incident that indicates someone may require intervention by a supporting agency. Effectively identifying a safeguarding need within a centre will not always be straightforward, however some signs to look out for are:

* An abusive act is witnessed
* Evidence of possible abuse or neglect
* Active disclosure by the attendee (or 3rd party)
* Suspicion or concern that something is not right

How to raise a safeguarding concern

Inform the centre manager, who should escalate it to Council Silver for action by the council’s safeguarding service.

Complete a full registration form with the person if not already done and make sure the person is comfortable in the centre (move to another room if available).

If possible, and if safe to do so, to speak to the attendee and get their views on the concern or incident.

Log the situation in the centre logbook.

## Entertainment and technology

Entertainment

All attendees may benefit from the provision of a form of entertainment such as TV/ film and should be considered, if available. Note: content broadcast should be appropriate to the audience and not be in an area that is disruptive to other users.

Many people will have access to their own entertainment and TV/ game content on mobile phones should they have them with them. Enabling access to mobile phone chargers, Wi-Fi or good 4G is a useful way to support people to entertain themselves and their household.

The purchase of newspapers/ magazines, or small toys for children could also be considered. All purchases should be recorded, and receipts kept.

Technology

Access to effective technology can enable a smooth-running emergency centre for both staff and attendees.

Things to identify and/or consider:

* The Emergency Centre Manager should bring their laptop (& charger) for emergency centre administration. Access to a printer will be helpful.
* Microsoft Teams may provide a useful tool for communication between the BECC/CPC, SHAO, and ECM.
* Availability of Wi-Fi for staff, and attendees. Consider how to share and display login/ password information within the centre (or displaying the fact that there isn’t Wi-Fi available).
* Using a 4G mobile ‘hotspot’/ tethering or obtaining a 4G dongle for staff access to internet (e.g., from an emergency centre laptop).
* Sourcing multiple (in number and type) mobile phone chargers (for sharing) to enable attendees to charge their phones and support themselves for entertainment or contacting others (USB-C, Lightning, Micro USB are the main charger types).
* Computers or laptops for public use (supervision may be required).
* If providing charging ‘areas’, be clear to remind people of their responsibility for their own property and not to leave items unattended.

## Press and visitors to the centre

Press and social media (including photos and filming)

Emergency centres are spaces designed for safety, security and above all privacy of the occupants displaced. Press should not be allowed into the building in any capacity in order to maintain individuals right to personal privacy and safeguarding for vulnerable persons. There may be opportunities for Press to visit when the centre is not occupied to enable videos of the space as long as no sensitive material is on display.

Reflecting on the freedom of the press and right of the media; the occupants (not staff) may speak to the media but must do so outside the premises.

No photos or videos should be taken whilst in the emergency centre out of privacy and consideration of other centre users.

The use of social media within the centre whilst not banned should be used sensitively and respectfully noting the previous no photo or videos rule.

There is a poster available for display to users of the centre regarding using social media respectfully.

Visitors, including VIPs and donations

VIP visits can be an uplifting experience for attendees during a difficult time, however they may also create further distress for attendees.

It is advised that any visitor or VIP should give pre-warning of their intention to visit and receive a briefing from the appropriate lead officer(s) before they enter the centre to engage with attendees to ensure that they are aware of key issues and atmosphere. **At an SuRC or FFRC the police must agree to the presence of VIP visitors.**

**For Rest Centre; Humanitarian Assistance Centre:** any requests for a VIP visit shall be organised by the communications team via the BECC, in conjunction with the emergency centre manager. The VIP should be accompanied throughout the visit by a member of the corporate communications team, the centre manager and, where available, the Leader of the Council or a nominated ward Councillor.

**For Survivor Reception Centre; Family & Friends Reception Centre:** VIP visits are likely to be made through the police and should be coordinated by the Police Centre Manager.

The public may wish to donate items to the centre in support of those affected by the incident. Advice should be sought from Council Silver via the BECC as to how to manage spontaneous donations of items (e.g., food, clothing, and household items).

## Stand down and closing the centre

Forward plans to either maintain or close the centre should be considered at an early stage of an incident. Early anticipation of how long a centre may be required should always overestimate resources to allow for relief managers and staff to be available. Handover protocols should include plans for closing down the centre - the original manager may be the only one with specific knowledge of anything agreed with site operators at the time of establishment of the centre.

The decision of when to close a centre will be made by Council Silver in conjunction with advice from the centre manager and stakeholders such as police/ fire/ ambulance and the council’s own services such as repairs and housing. Early consideration will allow for any additional services to be ordered prior to closure- for example if a premises requires cleaning or minor repair prior to handing back to the usual occupants.

All stakeholders and centre users need to be made aware in advance that the centre will close at designated time and that decision needs to be recorded in the incident and centre log.

The centre manager should ensure the following in respect of the centre users and building (refer to Phase 5 of the Manager Aide Memoire):

* All centre users have a clear understanding of their individual next steps.
* Equipment or furniture is packed away and returned to how it was found.
* Signs are taken down including those directing public to the centre.
* Any borrowed kit or equipment is returned to the centre/ owner.
* Documentation gathered at the centre (centre logbook, registration forms, officer notebooks, out/in form, risk assessment, incident/ accident forms) is filed for onward transport to the BECC/ emergency planning team for record keeping.
* The centre is returned to the owner in a clean and tidy site in its original layout and condition.
* There should be a clear point at which responsibility is handed back to the usual occupiers. That point to be recorded in the centre and incident log.
* The emergency planning team to be informed of any items that have been used from emergency centre boxes so that the supplies can be replenished (in correspondence with the kit list).

The centre manager should also consider staff needs:

* All emergency centre staff need to be able to travel home safely (especially if the centre is being stood down at night).
* Staff are informed about their next steps, including returning to work and from where additional (psychosocial, welfare and work) support is available if needed.
* A hot debrief is conducted with all emergency centre staff.
* A short report is compiled of the incident to submit to the BECC/ emergency planning team (if requested).

Emergency centre managers and officers and other stakeholders are likely to be asked to take part in an internal debrief or review to identify good practices, issues, and lessons to be learned from the incident.

## Facilities management and health & safety

Responsibilities

Generally, the Emergency Centre Manager (ECM) is responsible for the running of the emergency centre. This includes the facilities and consumables within the centre and the health, safety and welfare of attendees and staff.

The ECM is responsible for:

* Ensuring the emergency centre premises (building and outdoor spaces) is safe for use. See this Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1) for ‘Risk Assessment: Dynamic’.
* Where the emergency centre premises is not safe for use, take corrective action to address the risks or request a new emergency centre location.
* Sourcing or procuring, either directly or through Council Silver/ BECC, items to enable the effective operation of the emergency centre. This could include signage, equipment (e.g., kettles, seating, tables, beds), etc.

The ECM is unlikely to be responsible for choosing the emergency centre location. This decision is usually agreed by Council Silver.

In some instances, these responsibilities may pass to the premises manager/ owner or the police in the following circumstances:

* Agreements are established with the emergency centre premises managers/ owner in advance and state they have responsibility for the premises and/or consumables whilst the building is in use as an emergency centre.
* The emergency centre is operating from a premises that is not a pre-identified emergency centre location (this could be community or commercial premises), not managed by the local authority, where responsibilities are yet to be agreed with the premises manager/owner.
* The emergency centre operating is a Survivor Reception Centre or a Family and Friends Reception Centre, where the police are the lead agency.

It is important to agree which stakeholders have what responsibilities as soon as possible and where this is not clear, seek clarification through the Council Silver/ BECC.

Emergency Centre location and suitability

When choosing where to locate an emergency centre, the following needs to be considered:

* Who is responsible for selecting the location? Local authority or police?
* Is the building likely to be impacted by the incident itself? What if the incident escalates?
* Is the building large enough to accommodate the attendees, both known and anticipated to attend?
* Does the building have all the facilities necessary for the particular requirements of the incident? (Toilets, showers, disabled access, kitchen, IT infrastructure/equipment, separate spaces for privacy, parking, etc).
* Does the council have agreement from the building manager/ owner to use the space? Can we use the premises in the longer term, or will we need to relocate?
* Is there already an emergency centre operational, being run by the community, another agency or where those impacted have decided to shelter? Will we need to move elsewhere, or can we continue operating from the location?
* What’s the incident duration? Do we need to make provisions for sleeping and what are these?

Where the local authority is responsible for the emergency centre, the decision on the location will likely be made by Council Silver.

If there is an issue with the building, the ECM is responsible for making Council Silver/ BECC aware and discussing the need to move the emergency centre.

Please see the contact list in the Resilience Teams site [here](https://towerhamlets2.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/Resilience/ERqhx8_UJXJGkSA0UVkDrAIBbnnbAn5ik6816JxlKnDPcA?e=I5WHcH) for the list of pre-identified emergency centre locations.

For a Humanitarian Assistance Centre / Community Assistance Centre, the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) will decide on the location of the centre, which is likely to be operational for a significantly longer period of time than the other centre types.

As a minimum, all emergency centres should have the following features:

* An area for reception and registration
* Be accessible to disabled users
* Have washing/ toilet facilities including facilities accessible to disabled people
* Easy access for vehicles, including coaches/delivery lorries, ideally with parking on site or nearby
* Internet access for agencies and attendees

Further considerations for a HAC are in Section [2.6](#_Humanitarian/Community_Assistance_C).

Emergency Centre Locations in Tower Hamlets

Twenty-seven of the borough’s schools have been designated for use as emergency centres. Some of the schools have been selected because they have superior facilities, or because they are large with plenty of room, these are normally secondary schools that also benefit by having separate gymnasiums that can be used for civil emergencies during school hours.

Other schools on the list (mainly infant or junior) are not ideal but they are included for logistical reasons, because there are no other suitable buildings in a particular part of the borough.

All designated schools are surveyed by the CPU every 2 years for their suitability. Premises Managers and their deputies are updated on the following, and training in these areas is also available to them.

* Why their schools have been selected
* The co-operation and liaison required between them and council staff
* The facilities, areas and equipment that will be required by the evacuees
* How to assist in preparing the school as an evacuation centre
* Safety, security, and management of the building
* Feeding and sleeping arrangements that may be required
* Guidelines regarding division of responsibilities between the school premises staff and council staff.

Centre temperature (heating/ cooling)

Ensure that the centre is kept to a comfortable temperature (ideally between 16-24°C). After taking remedial actions, if this is not achieved, considerations should be given to relocating the emergency centre.

Fire safety

The ECM is responsible for the following:

* Identify potential risk of fire within the centre and take action, as required, to mitigate the risk of a fire occurring (see risk assessment in this Section [2.20](#_Facilities_management_and_1)). Ensure existing fire mitigation measures are maintained (such as close fire doors).
* Ensure you are aware of who is in the emergency centre. Staff should be signed in. Attendees should be recorded through the reception process.
* Understand the fire evacuation procedures for the building, as displayed. Identify where the fire exits, and assembly point are located.
* Communicate to staff and attendees where the fire exits, and assembly point are.

If a fire occurs or fire/smoke detectors activate:

* Call 999 and report the fire. Advise, if known, where the fire is located. Do not try to tackle the fire yourself.
* Follow the existing fire evacuation procedures for the building. Communicate to staff and attendees to leave the building via their nearest safe route and ask them to attend the assembly point.
* If safe to do so, coordinate with emergency centre officers to check areas of the centre that were in use, including toilets, quiet/ sleeping spaces, etc. and ensure attendees are informed and evacuating.
* Support attendees who require assistance evacuating the building.
* If safe to do so, collect the documentation, including the out/ in form, staff register, reception & registration forms.
* Where practical, at the assembly point, count/ check off the staff and attendees against the documentation to identify if anyone is remaining within the building. This information should be passed to the London Fire Brigade once known.
* Notify the Council Silver/ BECC that you have evacuated the centre due to fire. Ask for any support you need. A new emergency centre may be required.

If the centre, following the fire, is deemed unfit for use, and is relocated to a new location, all attendees must complete the reception process again. Where appropriate, wristband numbers can be matched with reception/ registration forms and details confirmed.

If the emergency centre can continue to be used, attendees will again need to complete the reception process again.

Accident and incident reporting

All accidents and incidents to emergency centre staff and attendees, or any dangerous occurrences/ near misses, should be reported on an accident form (borough forms are provided in emergency centre equipment box) at the earliest opportunity. Completed forms should be returned to the Council Silver/ BECC for processing through the council’s health and safety service and insurance service, as necessary.

This is very important to ensure the safety of staff and attendees and to ensure there is an accurate record of events for future queries, claims and to provide ‘lessons identified’ for emergency centre improvement.

It is the lead agency which holds overall H&S responsibility at an emergency centre. In addition, the line management of organisations at an emergency centre hold H&S responsibility for their own staff.

Cleaning

It is important to keep the emergency centre clean for those who are occupying it, as well as returning the centre to its owners in a clean state (including waste removal).

Facilities management services (of the site or the council) may be able to assist in some of the cleaning, however this should not be expected. The BECC should be contacted to arrange for extra or specific cleaning equipment if not at the centre location (e.g., mop/ bucket and bin liners) or services (e.g., contracted cleaning company).

It may be necessary to task centre officers with some cleaning responsibilities and to check areas such as toilets.

Hygiene and sanitation

Personal hygiene and sanitation facilities are essential - the more extensive the better as the number of people involved may be considerable. Appropriate facilities should be available for babies, young children, the elderly and the disabled. These areas should be monitored by staff on behalf of the emergency centre management.

For toiletry kits, utilise council stocks or acquire through Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs), contracts, local providers or supermarkets as detailed in ‘Attendee Welfare’ (Section [2.10](#_Attendee_welfare_1)).

First aid

A basic first aid kit is provided in the centre equipment box. Some premises types, such as community or leisure centre, might have first aid equipment and first aid trained staff present. Centres open for extended periods or with large numbers of attendees should consider dedicated on-site first aid services, which can be arranged via Council Silver/ BECC, which may contact voluntary agencies such as St John Ambulance.

If medical assistance is required, the ECM should make an assessment and take appropriate action. Options available are as follows:

Non-life threatening, but advice required:

If you have an urgent medical problem and you’re not sure what to do, go straight to NHS 111.

To get help from NHS 111 you can:

* Go to the [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk/) website (for people aged 5 and over only)
* Call 111 by phone

If you have difficulties communicating or hearing, you can:

* Call 18001 111 on a textphone
* Use the NHS 111 British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter service at [www.interpreternow.co.uk/nhs111](http://www.interpreternow.co.uk/nhs111)

How NHS 111 works

You answer questions about your symptoms on the website, or by speaking to a fully trained adviser on the phone.

The phone service is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Depending on your symptoms you’ll:

* Find out what local service can help you
* Be connected to a nurse, emergency dentist, pharmacist, or GP
* Get a face-to-face appointment if you need one
* Be told how to get any medicine you need
* Get self-care advice

*Emergency:* London Ambulance Service 999

*Obtainment of medical supplies/ prescriptions in a local setting*: contact 'NHS01' (ask the BECC for the contact telephone number).

Council Silver/ the BECC should also consult the NHS England (London) document *NHS Assistance at Emergency Rest Centres* (available in Resilience Direct).

Private/ quiet area

Consider providing a private/ quiet area for attendees where possible for:

* Time and space to reflect
* Use as personal counselling/ advice area
* Use as a private prayer/ religious need area
* Women only area, for example for breastfeeding or expressing

Security

Consideration should be given to ensure that appropriate security measures are introduced at the emergency centre. It is recommended that the reception desk is located near the main entrance to control and best manage access. It is also important to establish alternate entry/ exit points.

A security presence is not automatically provided when an emergency centre is established. The police may be prepared to assist in providing a presence at an emergency centre and are likely to be present at a SuRC, FFRC and HAC however this will be to maintain public order rather than provide security. Alternatively, the BECC may be able to arrange for council security (or similar) provision to attend the centre (however, this should not be expected).

The attendance of the police should be considered in persistent or extreme cases of intrusion and where it is felt that public order issues may occur.

If there is any immediate issue or security concern, then the police (999) should be called to assist and centre staff should not put themselves at risk of injury.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted inside the centre and attendees who wish to smoke should be directed to an outside area with a dedicated ashtray (where possible). This area should be far enough away from the entrance to avoid smoke fumes entering the centre. Signage should be displayed where available.

Those leaving the centre to smoke should be noted on the ‘Out/in’ form and re-recorded when they return to ensure that numbers within the centre are noted at all times. A pragmatic approach should be taken.

Risk Assessment: dynamic for ECMs

To be completed soon after the venue is opened to function as an emergency centre.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date Completed: |  |
| Time Completed: |  |
| Emergency Centre Location: |  |
| Risk Assessor: |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Questions you should ask:** | **Yes** | **Further action needed?** | **N/A** |
| **Vehicle movement** | **1.1:** Are there enough staff (in hi-vis) to marshal the car park? |  |  |  |
|  | **1.2:** Is the car park well lit? |  |  |  |
|  | **2.1:** Is the internal flooring in a good condition? |  |  |  |
|  | **2.2:** Are there any changes in floor level or type of flooring that need to be highlighted? |  |  |  |
|  | **2.3:** Are corridors kept clear? |  |  |  |
| **Slips, trips, and falls** | **2.4:** Are trailing electrical leads/cables prevented wherever possible? |  |  |  |
|  | **2.5:** Is lighting bright enough to allow safe access and exit? |  |  |  |
|  | **2.6:** Are procedures/resources in place to deal with spillages, e.g., water, blood from cuts? |  |  |  |
|  | **2.7:** Are access steps or ramps properly maintained and provided with handrails? |  |  |  |
|  | **3.1:** Are permanent fixtures in good condition and securely fastened, e.g., cupboards, display boards, shelving? |  |  |  |
| **Furniture and fixtures** | **3.2:** Is furniture in good repair and suitable for the size of the user, whether adult or child? |  |  |  |
|  | **3.3:** Are hot surfaces or radiators etc. protected where necessary to prevent the risk of burns to vulnerable young people? |  |  |  |
|  | **4.1:** Are fixed electrical switches and plug sockets in good repair? |  |  |  |
|  | **4.2:** Are all plugs and cables in good repair? |  |  |  |
| **Electricity** | **4.3:** Has portable electrical equipment, e.g., kettle, been visually checked and, where necessary, tested at suitable intervals to ensure that it’s safe to use? (There may be a sticker to show it has been tested) |  |  |  |
|  | **5.1:** If there are fire exit doors, are they:   * Unobstructed * Kept unlocked * Easy to open from the inside? |  |  |  |
|  | **5.2:** Is fire-fighting equipment in place? Do volunteers know the location of this equipment? |  |  |  |
| **Fire** | **5.3:** What is the full address of venue, including postcode? (To summon emergency services quickly) |  |  |  |
|  | **5.4:** Does the smoke alarm work? |  |  |  |
|  | **5.5:** Are you aware of the evacuation drill, including arrangements for any vulnerable adults or children? |  |  |  |
|  | **5.6:** Are fire evacuation procedures clearly displayed? Or has an announcement taken place? |  |  |  |
|  | **6.1:** Does the room have natural ventilation? |  |  |  |
| **Ventilation and heating** | **6.2:** Is there a thermometer available, within the rest centre, to allow the temperature to be measured, and adjusted? |  |  |  |
|  | **6.3:** Can a reasonable room temperature be maintained during use of the rest centre? |  |  |  |
|  | **6.4:** Are measures in place, for example blinds, to protect from glare and heat from the sun? |  |  |  |
|  | **7.1:** Are you aware of what resources are available for a medical emergency? (Disabled pull cord in toilet, defibrillator, first aid kit etc.) |  |  |  |
| **Medical emergency** | **7.2:** Do all volunteers know where the first aid kit is located? |  |  |  |
|  | **7.3:** Is there an adequate supply of soap, towels (or hot air drying) at this facility? |  |  |  |
|  | **7.4:** Has everyone been made aware of the No Smoking Policy? |  |  |  |
|  | **7.5:** Is food being checked for allergens before being distributed? |  |  |  |
|  | **8.1:** Are demands matched to volunteer’s skills and abilities? |  |  |  |
| **Stress** | **8.2:** Do volunteers have a clear plan of work? |  |  |  |
|  | **8.3:** Do volunteers feel able to report their concerns? |  |  |  |
|  | **8.4:** Are volunteers encouraged to seek support at an early stage? |  |  |  |
| **Overcrowding / lack of space** | **9.1:** Are you aware of the capacity of the venue? |  |  |  |
|  | **9.2:** Is the capacity being monitored? |  |  |  |
| **New or expectant mothers** | **10.1:** Are you aware of any? (Alternative accommodation should be found ASAP) |  |  |  |
| **Infectious diseases** | 11.1: Have any attendees made you aware that they are currently sick, not requiring medical assistance, with an infectious illness? (These attendees should be distanced from other attendees and advice on infection prevention should be sought from Public Health) |  |  |  |
| **Other vulnerable people** | 12.1 Are you aware of any other vulnerable people for whom the centre may not be suitable or safe? |  |  |  |

This is not an exhaustive list, and you should identify any other hazards associated with the use of the emergency centre in the space below, including any further actions needed. If necessary, discuss this with your Council Silver/ BECC, who will escalate as required.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Additional issues** | **Yes** | **Further action needed?** | **N/A** |
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Further Action needed:

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| --- | --- |
| **Hazards noted** | **Action taken and when** |
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--End of Document--

1. Offers of practical items or money should be guided by regional donation management guidelines. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. 2011, <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/main-language-spoken-at-home-borough> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. 2018, <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/country-of-birth> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)