

Guidance to support engagement with flood risk communities.

Community Groups Information Note

Introduction:

This information note will outline the diverse range of community groups and social assets that could be engaged in flood risk communities, indicate relevant legislation and suggest good practice points.

Before engaging, it can be useful to think about your engagement aims and consider:

- The type of community engagement you want to achieve
- An engagement plan, strategy and priorities
- You are aware of your authority's strategic engagement.

Good Practice Point:

Remember, the wider your engagement plan the more likely it will result in better quality, and quantity of dialogue with flood risk communities.

Mining The Community:

Engaging flood risk communities is a bit like old fashioned mining with some rich strikes and some not so great finds, but they all count towards building awareness of flood risks. Set out below is a range of community groups and a short description with some suggested good practice points.

Community Planning Partnerships:

A [Community Planning Partnership](#) (or CPP) is the name given to all those services that come together to take part in community planning. There are 32 CPPs across Scotland, one for each council area. Each CPP is responsible for developing and delivering a plan for its council area. CPP's will likely have an outcome to develop on safer and resilient communities and this can have relevance for flood risk management plans. The Community Empowerment Scotland Act will place a greater significance on responsible authorities to engage with CPPs and develop [local outcome improvement plans](#).

Good Practice Point:

CPPs will have active community members that are already involved but they may be those that are already empowered to participate.

Remember, the [Community Empowerment Scotland Act](#) now means that community bodies do not need to be constituted to request to improve a local authority outcome and this can widen community engagement.

Third Sector Interface:

Learning The Lessons. Engaging Flood Risk Communities To Reduce Flood Risks
Supported by:

Interfaces provide a single point of access for support and advice for the third sector within the local area. They provide a strong coherent and cohesive representation of the third sector with clear links to Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreements. Access further information on third sector interfaces ([TSI's](#)) and the location of your local TSI for your responsible authority.

Traditionally excluded groups:

It is important that everyone has the opportunity to engage with flood risk management issues. However, it is well known that particular groups such as ethnic minorities, young people, sexual orientation, disability and other needs are under-represented in mainstream participation structures. How can underrepresented groups get involved in flood risk management?

Good Practice Point:

Consider how to engage with these groups and identify existing organisations representing excluded groups.

Community Councils are well known statutory voluntary organisations that have a significant role to play in engaging flood risk communities. Community councils have a statutory right to be consulted on applications for planning permission. As the most local tier of elected representation, [Community Councils](#) play an important role in local democracy.

Community Council Subgroups:

Many flood risk communities engage collectively through their Community Council and choose to form a group that will focus on preventing flooding, lowering flood risk, increasing resilience, raising awareness and working in partnership with responsible authorities. They may benefit from being covered by the Community Council public liability insurance scheme if they choose to carry out agreed actions.

Community Flood Action Groups:

[Community Flood Action Groups](#) come in different shapes and sizes with some being independent organisations with their own constitution, committee and bank account to access funding. Others are more informal or subgroups of other organisations such as Community Councils or Development Trusts. They may choose different titles such as flood group, flood volunteers and usually focus specifically on flood risks as a result of previous flooding in the community.

The [Scottish Flood Forum](#) maintains a register of these groups who can be active, passive or inactive due to the nature of community development in flood risk communities. The SFF provides dedicated impartial support.

Resilience/Emergency Groups:

Resilient community groups are made up of volunteers who have come together to develop, test and implement where necessary a local community emergency plan in partnership with responsible authorities. They can be independent informal groups but tend to be set up as

*Learning The Lessons. Engaging Flood Risk Communities To Reduce Flood Risks
Supported by:*

subgroups of Community Councils depending on the needs of the community and all partners involved.

The methods, approaches and processes through which local authorities and others respond to emergencies, including flooding, are set out in national [guidance](#) produced by Scottish Government.

Good Practice Point:

There is no one way to develop collective engagement with flood risk communities and the choice of group structure should be based on local needs.

[Voluntary Action Scotland \(VAS\)](#) is the intermediary body representing the 32 Third Sector Interfaces. Their role is to develop, support and represent the TSI network. They can provide a rich source of experience and contacts to engage flood risk communities. They have one mission at their heart: **to build empowered, resilient communities with a thriving third sector.**

Good Practice Point:

The voluntary sector can help facilitate wider engagement in flood risk management issues.

Churches and Faith Groups:

Churches and faith groups carry out a wide range of charitable activities and possess a huge amount of skills, resources, experience, knowledge and access to local networks. These can be valuable to the engagement process especially in the [recovery phase](#) of flooding where they can bring unique skills around care and recovery to flooded communities.

Business Organisations:

Business big and small are important to every flood risk community and they can play an important role before, during and after a flooding incident. Business continuity is a local authority duty and guidance is underpinned by the principal legislation involved, the [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#) and the [Civil Contingencies Act 2004 \(Contingency Planning\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2005](#) .

Guidance on businesses can be viewed at [Ready Scotland and Business In The Community](#) and the [Scottish Business Resilience Centre](#). Local authority Emergency Planning Staff can give further information and guidance.

Social Media and Community Engagement:

There is a wealth of virtual social media communities engaged in a variety of topics linked to flood risk management.

Learning The Lessons. Engaging Flood Risk Communities To Reduce Flood Risks
Supported by:

The use of social media is now integrated into flood related communications on response, recovery and resilience and can be part of your engagement with flood risk communities. One of the leading online [digital engagement portals can give further information.](#)

Tenants and Residents Organisations:

Tenants and Residents Organisations is a term that covers both formal and informal community groups. The vast majority are governed by [Tenant Participation](#) legislation and recognised by social landlords as independent community bodies.

They aim to represent local views and work in equal partnership to influence housing conditions, amenities and the environment. There are approximately 700 tenants and residents' organisations operating across Scotland who have developed engagement and partnership with a range of registered social landlords.

Good Practice Point:

Your local authority housing department and other social housing providers will have lots of engagement knowledge and experience.

Trusts and Charities:

There are 24,500 registered charities in Scotland and a number of them will have an environmental and local community focus that could benefit engagement with flood risk communities. Further details can be viewed at the [Scottish Charity Regulator](#).

There are 245 development trusts in Scotland enabling communities to make their own plans and aspirations a reality. Further details can be viewed at [Development Trusts Association Scotland](#).

Schools:

Schools can be great way to engage young people and plug your flood risk engagement activities into the wider community. There are ways to link flood risk engagement directly to the school's curriculum using innovative methods and gaining the support of your flood risk partners, voluntary sector, Scottish Flood Forum, Universities and commercial organisations. See the Clackmannanshire Council [case study](#) for further details.

[Education Scotland](#) can give range of advice, support and materials to support engagement with schools as can [SEPA](#) as Scotland's national flood forecasting, warning and strategic flood risk management authority.

Youth Groups:

Engaging young people in flood risk communities as discussed can be achieved through schools but there are a wide range of other youth related organisations that may get involved in flood risk management. Recent examples include the [Scouts Scotland](#) helping with sand bag disposal in Aberfeldy and [The Conservation Volunteers](#) supporting young people to record and monitor hydrometric data as part of flood risk management.

For further information and advice on engaging young people contact [Youth Link Scotland](#) or your responsible authority community learning and development staff.

*Learning The Lessons. Engaging Flood Risk Communities To Reduce Flood Risks
Supported by:*



Good luck on your community engagement journey!

Registered Charity: SCO 43783

*Learning The Lessons. Engaging Flood Risk Communities To Reduce Flood Risks
Supported by:*

