



North Wales Flood Warden Training

October 2013

Report

NWRF Flood Planning Group



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The North Wales Resilience Forum Flood Planning Working Group agreed as part of its work programme 2012 and 2013 to develop a schedule designed to capture the training & exercising needs of the Flood Group over the next two years.

1.2 The schedule was identified by referring to training and exercise recommendations from recent training event reports in North Wales including Exercise Watermark and Exercise Taran.

1.3 The recommendations included the need for/to:

- Multi-agency Communications and Operational Flood Exercise in other identified Flood Risk areas
- Flood Warden Training
- Operational training – use of sandbags, pumps etc.
- Water Hazard Training
- Forward Command Post Familiarisation
- Communities to take responsibility
- Test community arrangements as promoted and supported by the NRW through Floodwise Campaign
- Test organisational/business BCM
- Ensure that Businesses, Communities & their representatives are familiar with responder roles and own obligations

2.0 Flood Warden Training

2.1 It is recognised by the Flood Planning Group that as the Flood Wardens provide a critical service in ensuring communications between responding services and affected communities during floods that the priority should be to give training to those Flood Wardens where community plans have been completed.

2.2 The training was planned to give a comprehensive insight into Flood Warden roles and responsibilities; and how Flood Wardens fit into general Flood Response.

2.3 The Core Themes being:

- Principles of Flood Response Control & Communications
- Role & Responsibilities of The Flood Warden
- Health & Safety Issues

2.4 The training programme was as follows:

No.	Item	Timing
1.	Registration	15mins
2.	Introduction	5mins
3.	Role of the Fire Service	5mins
4.	Role of the Local Authority	5mins
5.	Role of Natural Resources Wales & the Flood Warning Service	15mins
6.	Role of the Police, Command and Control and Evacuation during a Flood	20mins
7.	Flood Wardens - Role and Responsibilities, Communications and Health & Safety, and Community Plans	20mins
8.	Understanding your Community Flood Plan	35mins
9.	Feedback Session	10mins



2.6 This Training also provided an opportunity to review the various Community Plans across North Wales and start the process of providing Wardens with Identification Cards by taking photographs.

2.7 It has been agreed that this Training should be held annually as a refresher and to catch those Wardens not previously trained.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 The Flood Planning Group set up a Task & Finish Group to develop and deliver the training. Members of the group were:

- Jonathan Williams, Civil Contingencies Manager CCBC – Chair
- Linda Thomas, Flood Incident Management Technical Specialist NRW
- Kate Davies, NRW
- Russ Jones, Operational Planning Department NWP
- Mark Kassab, Resilience Manager NWF&RS

3.2 The Task & Finish Group was set up in July 2013 and developed the Training package via:

- Meetings
- Electronic Correspondence

3.3 At the 1st meeting of the Group it was decided to deliver 3 Training Sessions on the following basis:

- October 1: Flood Warden Training Conwy/Denbighshire 10 – 12 Conwy Business Centre Llandudno Junction
- October 3: Flood Warden Training Gwynedd/Ynys Mon 10 – 12 Madog Room Porthmadog Leisure Centre
- October 8: Flood Warden Training Flintshire/Wrexham 2 – 4 Alyn and Deeside room Flintshire Council Offices, Mold

It was hoped by doing it this way it made the Training sessions manageable and that Wardens had not a long way to travel.

3.4 It was decided that only Wardens where there was a completed Community Plan would be invited to the Training. Other Wardens where plans are in development would be invited to future sessions.

3.5 Invitations to the sessions were sent by the NRW to all Wardens via Letter

3.6 Feedback in relation to the various Training Sessions was by:

- De-briefing Sessions of Task & Finish Members immediately on completion of a session,
- An Internal Debrief by the NRW (Report Annex 1),
- By the Wardens completing Feedback Forms at the end of each session.

4.0 Participation and Warden Feedback



4.1 Participation figures:

Date	Session	No. of Wardens Invited	No. of Wardens Attended	%
01/10/13	Conwy/Denbighshire	100	37	37
03/10/13	Gwynedd/Ynys Mon	37	12	32
08/10/13	Flintshire/Wrexham	54	32	59
Total:		191	81	43

4.2 Further 5 people attended these sessions, 3 of whom have volunteered and have been accepted as Flood Wardens

4.3 From these figures it is apparent that there is a wide variation in attendance figures, and this may be partly due to the fact that the Wardens in Gwynedd and Ynys Mon had a longer way to travel to the venue, with the Flintshire and Wrexham Wardens with generally less way to travel and on better roads.

4.4 The Task & Finish Group did not expect near full attendance as these sessions were during working hours with many Wardens in employment.

4.5 80 Feedback forms were completed and returned by the Wardens.

4.6 4 of the Questions on the form had Yes/No answers the results being:

Question:	YES	NO	*N/A
1. Do you better understand your role as a Flood Warden?	77	2	1
2. Was there sufficient time given to cover all topics discussed today?	51	29	0
3. Do you have a better understanding of your Community Flood Plan?	68	9	3
4. Was the venue Suitable?	75	5	0

*N/A = Not Answered

4.7 Analysis of the first 4 Questions provide us with the following.

4.8 The main purpose of the sessions was to provide Wardens with a better understanding of their roles and where they fit into the overall planning and response arrangements. In this respect answers to Question 1 indicates that the training was an undoubted success with a 77% approval rate.

4.9 There is also a high approval rate for the Venues.

4.10 The main concern raised by the Wardens was in relation to Question 2 in relation to timing, but 25 of the no responses were submitted in the 1st session (Conwy/Denbighshire). The Task and Finish Group reviewed the training programme at the end of this session and adapted as necessary. Only 4 no's were submitted thereafter.



4.11 It is also of some concern that 9 no's was submitted in relation to Question 3. Again 8 of these were submitted in the 1st session (Conwy/Denbighshire). This may be a reflection that this session was somewhat fractious as many Wardens were still annoyed in relation to the Flooding events that had occurred in St Asaph and Llanfairtalhaiarn the previous Year.

4.12 Questions 5, 6 & 7 requested only comments and had no YES/NO values. These questions were:

5. Which parts of the event were most useful for you?
6. Which parts of the event were of little use to you?
7. Can you suggest any change or improvement to this event?

4.13 The overall response to question 5 was positive with many respondents finding the sessions provided more information on their Flood Warden Roles and providing an useful insight into the role and responsibilities of responding agencies. Respondents found the presentation on the 'Role of the Police, Command and Control and Evacuation during a Flood' particularly useful.

4.14 Many did not answer question 6, some that answered stated that they had no negative impressions. However the few negative comments submitted were in relation to the flood video shown during the 1st training session that was considered unnecessary; and the NRW Terms and Conditions that was considered unrealistic.

4.15 The majority of comments submitted in relation to question 7 were to do with the time i.e. not enough time for feed back and to discuss questions and time to review the plans.

5.0 Lessons Learnt

5.1 The methodology used to develop and deliver these training events was good. The formation of an event planning team (task and finish group) consisting of members from the NWRF Flood Planning Group and also representing individual organisations was critical for ensuring the relevance of the sessions.

5.2 Having short de-briefing sessions for the event planning team immediately after each event ensured that we could adjust and improve arrangements for the following event.

5.3 It was important that the sessions were split into 3 individual sessions as 1 big event would have been less manageable, less local and increased distances of travel for Wardens.

5.4 However overall attendance was a bit disappointing (less than 50%), with this due to some extent in that the sessions were held during working hours.

5.5 The duration of the events could also have been longer to ensure that Wardens had an opportunity to ask questions, provide input and have more time to review the plans. However this dialogue would need to be properly managed to ensure that acrimony does not dominate proceedings.



5.6 The event planning team identified early on during the planning process that it was important that Wardens understand the wider planning, response and recovery context, and where they fit into this. There is no doubt that this element worked well and was well received as it helped Wardens in understanding their own role..

5.7 It also became apparent after the 1st session that Wardens want training that is deemed relevant and to the point.

5.8 These training events were no doubt a good opportunity to review community plans as Wardens were motivated and had new information to work with. These events also provided an opportunity for Flood Wardens to meet other Wardens and also to sign the NRW 'Flood Plan Lead' documents.

5.9 Also refer to NRW report Annex 1

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Further regular Flood Warden events should be planned for other areas where community plans have been developed and refresher events offered to those that have already participated.

6.2 Future Flood Warden training events (or any other NWRF training events) should follow the same methodology including:

- The use of a Task & Finish group under the auspices of the NWRF Flood Planning Group (or appropriate NWRF Group)
- That the 'big picture' is included
- Use to review community plans
- The use of de-briefing sessions immediately after each event

6.3 Consideration to be given to plan future sessions for out of working hours.

6.4 Consideration to be given to extend the duration of the sessions to ensure more time for debate and the revision of plans.

6.5 Strategies need to be considered to ensure that any debates are positively managed

6.6 Also refer to NRW report Annex 1. Some picks:

- LA EPO's to represent their relevant county by giving the Local Authority presentation.
- Better use of the Welsh Language
- Use experienced Flood Wardens to give a talk

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 These training events were organised in recognition that Flood Wardens provide a critical service in ensuring communications between responding services and affected communities during floods.

7.2 The NWRF Flood Planning Group is eager to continue with this strategy and improve arrangements where possible.



7.3 The NWRF Flood Planning Group would like to extend it's thanks to all Wardens that attended these events and ensured that the events were a success with their willing contribution.

7.4 The NWRF Flood Planning Group would also like to extend it's thanks to the NWRF Learning & Development Group that financed the costs of the venues and refreshments.

END



Annex 1 – NRW Internal De-brief Report