



Community Resilience Newsletter

Welcome

Welcome to the Autumn and Winter Edition of the Resilient Communities Newsletter.

In this edition we look at the impact and response to the:

- Rawburn Water Treatment works outage
- Individual Resilience and why its important
- Protect Your Home and Property this Winter (Information provided by the Met Office)
- NHS Borders Resilience Planning Officer
- Winter Debrief 2026

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- Individual Resilience
- Protect Your Home and Property this Winter - Met Office
- NHS Borders Resilience Planning Officer
- Winter Debrief 2026

Rawburn Treatment Works Incident Impact & SBC Emergency Planning/Resilient Communities Response

As most of you will be aware an incident at Scottish Water's Rawburn treatment works near Duns on the 26th August resulted in a large number of properties being without water for several days.

These properties were mainly rural and covered a large area of the eastern borders. It should be noted this was a Scottish Water led incident with SBC and other responders supporting them.

The Incident in numbers:

- 6000 properties affected
- Rawburn supplies up to 7 million litres per day to 10000 properties in Berwickshire
- Network has 9 storage tanks and 370 miles of water mains
- 4000 properties protected by altering the network
- 12 million litres moved to the area via tanker
- 20 tankers operating 24 hrs a day
- 210 pallets of water = 100800 bottles = 201600 litres supplied

- 1600 doorstep deliveries and 15 bottled water collection points set up.

Incidents affecting so many people are thankfully rare, however this incident brought into focus how something we take for granted can have a big impact when it is unavailable. Invariably these incidents happen without warning, and you might not know you are affected until your tap stops running or cistern doesn't refill.

Scottish Water have response plans to deal with these types of incidents. When SBC became aware of the scale and number of properties affected, we brought our resources to bear by.

- Sharing communications from Scottish Water across our platforms
- Communicating with resilient community coordinators in the affected area
- Sharing the locations of bottled water drop off points
- Liaising with our care at home and social work teams to identify affected clients with vulnerabilities
- Advising SW of information coming in from Resilient Community groups

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Rawburn Treatment Works Incident cont...

Resilient community groups, although not “stood up” provided vital assistance in their areas by.

- Sharing information through their networks
- Assisting at bottled water collection points
- Assisting in identifying appropriate collection points
- assisting in the delivery of water to the elderly and less able
- feeding back information for Scottish Water when stocks were running low
- identifying where new failures occurred and confirming restored supplies

Scottish Water have the responsibility to meet service needs of customers. This was an exceptionally challenging incident which showed that multi agency support at different levels can alleviate some of the challenges. Next we will look at how individuals can improve their own resilience in the short term when facing challenging events.

Individual Resilience

What is resilience?

Traditionally resilience has been viewed through the lens of services that the council, other responders, or community groups can provide. However, recent weather events and the water network failure have taught us that responders can also be affected by an emergency and as individuals and households we may need to be resilient ourselves. Reflecting on those emergency events we recognise that across The Scottish Borders we need to collectively enhance resilience at Individual, Household, Family and Community levels.

Resilience can be thought of as the rungs of a ladder.

The bottom rung is having individuals who are resilient, who have the basics skills and knowledge to manage on their own until help arrives, or the emergency is resolved.

Those who live together can use their shared skills to make their home more resilient and using networks of friends and families to help each other manage.

Finally, resilient individuals, households and families can come together with others to be resilient communities.

Of which there are already many good examples across the Borders.

The Scottish Government defines resilience as:

“Communities and individuals harnessing resources and expertise to help themselves prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, in a way that complements the work of the emergency responders”.

Ready Scotland <https://ready.scot/> has a wealth of information and advice on how to prepare yourself and your community to be ready for an emergency.

In the coming months we will be looking at ways to connect with those members of your community who may not be aware of, or involved with their local group, and have no idea how to plan for an emergency.

We appreciate that encouraging our neighbours to get involved can be a challenge.

So, let's make the first step education.

Increase awareness of how to become personally resilient, sign posting to advice, guidance and existing groups. Then family, and community.

We have previously highlighted the benefits of having a group email for contacting resilience groups. By setting up a group email it ensures you are not reliant on one individual picking up messages. You have control over who has access to the account, you can add or delete access as the group changes, you don't have to use personal email addresses, there are no GDPR issues as you are not sharing personal contact details without consent. It provides an opportunity to broaden your communications to a wider audience, possibly generating more volunteers and the sharing of information across your community easier.

We would strongly recommend a group email account, such as many already have for contacting your Community Councils.



Protect Your Home and Property this Winter

(Information provided by the Met Office)

Whether it's strong winds, heavy rain or extreme cold and snow, there's something you can do to prepare for winter.

Here are eight top tips

There are a number of tasks you can do to prepare your home, garden, or business from the winter weather.

1. Know what to do in a powercut

It's now really simple to get in touch with your Electricity Distribution Network Operator - just call 105. Find out more about what to do in a powercut.

2. Ensure you're insured

Sometimes no amount of planning and preparation can prevent the weather damaging your property. Buildings insurance offers peace of mind, so ensure your policy is up to date and covers what you need it to.

3. Avoid flying garden furniture

When high winds are forecast, remember that some everyday items in the garden can become 'missiles'. Most winters we see pictures of airborne trampolines and garden furniture.

4. Check your roof

Before it gets windy it's also worth checking for loose tiles, slates and flashing and consider removing dead branches from old trees.

5. Clear your guttering

As leaves start to fall, there's a risk that wind will blow leaves into your gutters and drainpipes will get filled up. If this builds up, the water will go back into the guttering and leak into the roof and sides of your house.

6. Trim up

To avoid build-up of leaves in the guttering, the best thing to do is to prune your trees before winter really kicks in. This can also help with avoiding snow building up on the trees, which with it brings the risk of damage from broken branches.

7. Don't leave yourself open to frozen and burst pipes

It's important to make sure water pipes and water tanks in the loft are insulated with good quality lagging. This will not only protect from freezing but it will help insulate your hot water system and save you money.



8. Check your flood risk

Check if your home is at risk of flooding, and sign up for free flood warnings at:

• Scotland

Floodline (England, Scotland and Wales): **0345 988 1188**

For more information and advice on a range of subjects visit: **How to get your home and property winter ready - Met Office**



Staying Well and Resilient in the Colder Months - NHS Borders Resilience Planning Officer

Advice on looking after yourself, your community, and our health services this winter

As we move into the colder months, NHS Borders is encouraging everyone across the region to think about how falling temperatures, icy weather and changing weather patterns - increasingly influenced by climate change - can affect our health and wellbeing.

While winter brings its usual challenges, Scotland's climate is changing. Winters are becoming wetter and more unpredictable, with milder spells followed by sudden cold snaps, storms, and heavy rainfall. These changes can affect both physical and mental health - and make it even more important to stay prepared and connected.

Why This Matters!

Cold weather increases the risk of hypothermia, heart attack, stroke, and respiratory infections such as flu, COVID-19, and pneumonia. It can also worsen existing conditions like asthma, COPD, and diabetes.

For people who are older, live alone, or have long-term health conditions, winter can be particularly difficult. Cold homes, damp and mould, poor diet, or limited mobility can all have a serious impact on health.

Periods of severe weather and illness also place additional pressure on NHS and Social Care services. By taking simple, proactive steps to stay warm and well, we can all help reduce avoidable demand and ensure our teams are available for those who need urgent care most.

What You Can Do?

By looking after yourself and those around you, you're helping to build community resilience and supporting our local health services through the busiest time of year.

Top Tips for Staying Safe and Well!

- Keep your home warm: Try to heat your main living area to at least 18°C if you can. Close curtains at dusk, block draughts, and wear several thin layers of clothing rather than one thick one.
- Stay stocked up: Make sure you have sufficient stores of medications to last over weekends, holidays, or during bad weather when travel may be difficult. Order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time and keep a small supply of basic items like paracetamol, plasters, and first aid essentials.
- Eat well and stay active: Regular, hot meals and drinks help maintain body heat and energy levels. Gentle movement at home also supports circulation and mood.
- Check in on others: Keep an eye on neighbours, family and friends who might struggle in cold weather - especially those who live alone or have health conditions. A quick call or visit can make a big difference.
- Be ready for bad weather: Check local forecasts, charge your phone, and keep torches, blankets and non-perishable food handy in case of power cuts or travel disruption.
- Get your winter vaccines: Flu and COVID-19 vaccines are offered every winter to those most at risk. If you're eligible, book your appointment when invited.
- Look after your mental health: Shorter days and longer nights can affect mood and motivation. Try to stay connected, spend time outdoors in daylight when you can, and talk about how you're feeling. NHS Inform has advice and support if you're struggling.
- Know where to go for help: Your local pharmacy can give expert advice on common winter illnesses. NHS 24 (111) can help if your GP is closed or you're unsure what to do. Only attend A&E in a genuine emergency.

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Staying Well and Resilient in the Colder Months cont...

Looking After Mental Health!

Winter can take a toll on mental wellbeing. Shorter days, limited sunlight, and bad weather can make it harder to stay motivated or connected, leading to feelings of isolation, fatigue, or low mood. It's important to look after your mental health just as much as your physical health.

Try to spend time outdoors in daylight when possible, stay in touch with family and friends, and keep a regular routine - including good sleep, balanced meals and gentle activity. If you're feeling anxious, lonely, or overwhelmed, talk to someone you trust or reach out for support early. Small steps like joining a community group, volunteering, or helping a neighbour can also lift your mood and build local connection.

NHS Inform offers advice on coping with low mood, anxiety and stress, as well as links to local support and helplines. Remember - you are not alone, and help is always available.

Building Community Resilience

Resilient Communities groups play a vital role each winter. By sharing accurate information, coordinating welfare checks, and linking people to local services or warm spaces, you help protect those most at risk and keep our communities connected.

Simple actions - from clearing paths to helping someone collect prescriptions - all make a real difference. Staying informed through Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders social media channels will help ensure your group is ready to respond if severe weather, flooding or power disruption occurs.

Climate Change and Winter Preparedness

Climate change means Scotland's winters are becoming milder overall but wetter, with more intense rainfall and an increased risk of storms and flooding. These events can have major health, housing, and transport impacts - especially in rural areas like ours.

Preparing for these challenges is an important part of climate resilience. By insulating homes, improving energy efficiency, using local warm hubs, and staying connected with neighbours, we can protect both our wellbeing and the environment.

Together for a Resilient Winter

By planning ahead, looking out for each other and following trusted advice, we can all stay safe and well — and reduce unnecessary strain on health and social care services this winter.

For reliable health information, visit www.nhsinform.scot

For weather and emergency updates, see www.readyscotland.org

Let's keep the Borders well, connected and resilient - whatever this winter brings.

Winter Debrief & Co-ordinator Development 2026

We will be hosting a session in spring 2026 to debrief the winter season and provide development for Coordinators. Look out for updates and a "Save the Date" email in the Spring.

We hope you have found the information in this newsletter useful and would encourage you to provide feedback to the Emergency Planning Team at Scottish Borders Council on what you would like to see included or better yet share your own personal story or group experience to help others.

Kind regards
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