

Resilience

Journal of the Emergency Planning Society Winter 2023-24



Nice to see you!



EPS National Conference 2023

www.the-eps.org

INSIDE

CONFERENCE 2023: the discussion and debates



AND THE WINNER IS... the EPS National Awards



PARTY TIME! Time for networking and dancing



A RECORD: Emergency Services Show 2023



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Resilience

Autumn 2023

Contents

National
Conference 2023
special report

Page 4
Conference
Welcome

Page 5 – 6
The exhibitors

Pages 7 – 9
Conference session 1
Frameworks,
structures, people

Pages 10 – 11
Conference session 2
Incidents,
consequences and
learning

Pages 12 – 14
Conference session 3
Looking forward -
tools to empower
and embed Human
Aspects across
emergency
planning

Page 15
Conference session 4
Adaptability,
humanities
superpower

Pages 16 – 21
The EPS Awards

Page 22
The Emergency
Services Show

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memo

GOSH, what a busy 30th Anniversary Year this has been for the EPS and resilience and emergency planning in general. Lots to celebrate, lots to reflect on and lots to look forward to in 2024.

First post-pandemic in person Conference

2023 was another busy year for the EPS with webinars, seminars, workshops, collaborations, conferences, seminars, media engagement, articles and stories and submission of the corporate statement and member submission for the Covid Inquiry.

We would like to say a big thank you to the Branches and Professional Working Groups who have provided webinars and live events, along with members who have contributed to activities on behalf of the society including consultations, articles, speaker sessions, media interviews and collaborations.

One of the highlights of the year was the EPS Annual Conference held in November in Manchester, a plethora of fabulous speakers, reuniting of friends and colleagues in actual human form and not the small screen of Covid times, along with opportunities to make new friends.

The central theme of the conference – 'a journey of adaptability' – worked well, and the speakers sessions, discussion and debates promoted the theme throughout.

We looked at the regulations and frameworks - are they fit for purpose, do they reflect the needs of modern society, the whole of society approach to resilience, and the people side of emergency planning.

We must give a special thank you, to those companies and organisations which sponsored and took part in the conference, making it financially feasible.

Indeed, one exhibitor was so enthused by the event that they have become a Member, and others have asked to advertise with us and to be involved in future EPS events.

The Awards evening was special, the chance to celebrate together, to acknowledge the fantastic job everyone has done over the last few years, and to join in congratulating all those nominated for their contribution to the society and the wider field.

We were also thrilled to announce the awarding of five new Fellowships and our very first Honorary Fellow. More information on the awards along with some photos are included in the feature pages in this edition of the magazine.

Congratulations everyone.

We will have to see if we have the capacity to repeat the event next year – everyone present felt we should, but if we do, one lesson we have learnt is that we will need more helpers. So volunteers please!

The new website

WORK is ongoing in the development of the new website and as previously noted, we have had a few bumps on the road - actually more accurately 'rivers of sticky and slippery mud'.

We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused and would like to assure you that we are working hard to ensure the new website is ready for launch early in the new year.

On the positive side, it has given us time to develop more tools. It's going to be a good product.

Some of the additional tools under development are included below:

- Members will be asked to update their information and upload photo.
- A members' directory is being developed with the option to opt in and, alongside this, opportunities to join online discussion groups
- Individual pages for active branches and PWG's.
- Members Lounge – learning resources, library, reports, case studies, discussions.

* * * *

2023 was a good year of achievement for the EPS, all of which has resulted in new opportunities for the Society and we already have a list of exciting webinars in the diary, along with invitations to contribute to different strategic consultations and speaker invites.

We have built a firm foundation to move into a new exciting era for 2024, and on behalf of the EPS Board we thank each and every member for your continued support and belief on the future.



■ Acting Chair,
Jeannie Barr



EPS National Conference 2023

Around a hundred EPS members and visitors gathered at the Manchester Piccadilly Mercure hotel for its first face to face national conference since the pandemic.

As guest chair Professor Lucy Easthope commented: “I feel as though I have been on Zoom for 47 years. I want to go around the conference room and hug everyone!”

The event was a fitting occasion for the EPS to celebrate its 30th anniversary. Opening the conference, EPS Vice Chair Stephen Arundel said: “Questions we were asking 30 years ago are still being asked today. The next two days will help us think about what the future will look like. “

The two day conference, titled ‘A journey of adaptability’, was split into four main sessions:

- Frameworks, structures, people
- Incidents, consequences and learning
- Looking forward - tools to empower and embed Human Aspects across emergency planning
- Adaptability, humanities superpower



“ It’s good to be back . I feel like I’ve been on Zoom for 47 years ”



But first, a word from our sponsors...

A SPECIAL thanks must go to those companies which sponsored and exhibited at the conference. Their financial support helped make the event possible.



BakerBaird combine experience and in-depth understanding of the public and private sector to create results for their clients. Their consultants and trainers have a background in journalism, public relations, public affairs and business, along with an enviable 'black book' of the UK's movers and shakers. This gives BakerBaird a unique ability to see business challenges from every perspective. Their team of experienced, civil service trained, emergency planning and crisis management experts can help you develop your plan and actively support your response.



PlanB specialises in cyber incidents. A full article about their services will appear in the next issue of *Resilience*.



Kenyon is renowned internationally for its International Emergency Services which offers a set of integrated, configurable solutions to help private and public organisations manage the consequences of an incident.

It was established 115 years ago, when a railway boat train jumped its tracks and crashed in Salisbury. Funeral Directors JH Kenyon Limited from London were called in to work with the Coroner and Chief Constable to prepare and repatriate the deceased, many of whom were US citizens traveling to Southampton for the trans-Atlantic liners.



Exonaut is a powerful, data-driven solution used for everything from preparing for, responding to, and recovering from business disruptions to planning and managing global exercises.

It is available in cloud, hybrid, on-prem and desktop or mobile versions.



Established in 2017, **citizenAID** is a UK registered charity with a mission to prepare individuals, communities and organisations to help themselves and each other when there are multiple casualties, particularly from deliberate attacks.

They have designed a free, award winning app to support the public during a terror attack.

Transforming your resilience with Noggin

By Chris Firth

Regional Vice President – EMEA

New risks call for new orientation to resilience

Globally, we live in an age of consecutive, concurrent, and compounding crises. Captured in this year's National Risk Register, the UK itself faces an ever-changing and growing set of risks. These are disruptions that are proving more complex than ever to solve.

In adapting to this new risk environment, organisations must embrace a comprehensive and holistic approach to resilience for effectively managing operational risks, threats, and disruptions.

To do so, they will need to improve their awareness of risks and become better prepared for incidents that could affect them.

A one-of-a-kind integrated resilience workspace

THAT'S where Noggin comes in. Founded in 2009, Noggin is an Australian software company, specialising in software that addresses the most difficult challenges that threaten resilience, including emergency management, risk, crises, intelligence, security, and safety.

Harkening back to our roots, the latest iteration of the Noggin product provides a wider breadth of, and a more strategic and co-ordinated approach, to integrated resilience capabilities.

How so? We've built an integrated resilience workspace that seamlessly unifies operational risk management, operational resilience, business continuity management, crisis and incident management, as well as security operations.

A centrally governed platform that consolidates disparate data to provide a comprehensive view of risks, threats, resources, and capabilities, Noggin facilitates the kind of collaboration and stakeholder engagement that "whole of society" actors need to remain proactively prepared to respond to adverse and complex events.

This is well within keeping with the UK Government Resilience Framework's own call for whole of society resilience, which we heed by empowering clients to co-ordinate activities related to planning, preventing, responding, and recovering from the multiplicity of threats we all face, by automating essential processes with workflows to streamline actions.

Incident and crisis management

INDEED, looking at threats in a clear-eyed fashion has informed our product development. And what's come out of it is the need to keep pushing further to promote and support interoperability practices during complex events.

We bring that level of all-hazards incident management to our clients by streamlining incident response using best-practice standards from around the world, including JESIP.

Experts have isolated the problem inherent in manual actions that slow down activation and information sharing during a response. In turn, Noggin streamlines essential incident and crisis workflows, allowing organizations to rapidly and efficiently respond to any disruption that may arise, through quick activation of pre-defined response plans and simultaneously notifying crisis response teams to ensure effective co-ordination.

Our whole platform is architected to support more efficient methods of understanding, preventing, preparing, responding, and recovering from risks. For instance, anything you work on in the platform – from response plans to business impact analyses to risk scoring – presents itself as the most up to date version available to responders.

The very concept of an integrated resilience workspace itself points up the flexibility and utility of the platform. You create workspaces associated with your role and responsibilities where you work on specific tasks and plans or in working groups associated with a given response – all without it becoming too overwhelming.

Innovative and battle-tested

WE'RE uniquely poised to deliver in this moment of poly-crisis because resilience is in our DNA. And over the last 15 years, we've amassed quite the track record in understanding a diverse range of business contexts and requirements.

In 2014, Noggin received two honours from the prestigious *Resilient Australia Awards*. Fast forward to 2021, and our COVID-19 Response Modules were shortlisted in the Continuity & Resilience Innovation category at the 2021 Business Continuity Institute (BCI) *APAC Awards*.

Just this year, Noggin was awarded the *BCM Planning Software of the Year* award by *Continuity Insurance Risk (CIR) Magazine*, recognising us as the software developer who has made the greatest contribution to enhancing continuity and operational resilience practices for companies of all sizes.

Our impressive track record aside, Noggin has so much more to contribute to managing disruption, smarter, in this age of acute crisis.

Reach out and learn what Noggin can do for you

www.noggin.io



LRFs – new role of Chief Resilience Officer



■ Paul Phipps-Williams of DLUHC addressing the conference

The conference sessions kicked off with two keynote speakers from central government resilience, **Zonia Cavanagh**, Deputy Director Legislation and Capabilities, Resilience Directorate, from the Resilience Directorate in the Cabinet Office, and **Paul Phipps-Williams**, Head of Local Resilience Delivery at the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Zonia outlined the role of the Cabinet Office – it was to co-ordinate the government's COBR crisis management role, and run the Resilience Directorate, which focused on long term resilience building.

They were reviewing today's pressures on society, and the lessons being understood from events such as the pandemic and the impact on supply chains caused by the war in Ukraine.

There had been an integrated review identifying national security risks and vulnerabilities. During the review, she said the Civil Contingencies Act was "at core, fit for purpose", but they would be enhancing accountability and responsibilities, while there would be new Category II responders, such as the Met Office and the Coal Authority.

She explained what actions the Resilience Directorate had completed:

- National Security Risk Assessment, which had refreshed the methodology used
- A New Chronic risk analysis
- Created a more transparent public National Risk Register on a digital platform.

- Held a National Power outage exercise
- A review of capabilities and planning for catastrophic risks.

There were four main areas that they were working on now for the future:

- A dynamic and digital NSRA, to be embedded across government departments in their strategic discussions and analysis.
- More precision on Lead Government Department responsibilities and how complex issues are managed better across government.
- A shared government view of risk tolerance across the risk landscape and its relationship with government spending,
- Tailoring risk information for audiences beyond government, supported by the UK Resilience Academy and the NRR.

Paul Phipps-Williams from DLUHC outlined how the Local Resilience Forums were the

best example of multi-agency working and how his department were working to strengthen this.

He said that by 2025, they would be running pilot schemes across the three key pillars of resilience reform –

Leadership, Accountability and Integration – into the UK's levelling up mission.

He said the pilot would run in eight LRF areas:

- Thames Valley,
- Cumbria
- Gloucestershire
- West Mercia
- Northumbria
- Greater Manchester
- London
- Suffolk.

This would involve creating a permanent role within the LRF area of a Chief Resilience Officer, bolstered by a Secretariat, and also more involvement by local democratically elected leaders.

He said: "Your CRO can pilot a resilience strategy that touches on all aspects of local life, and then structure their team to deliver it. This can mean better relationships with local schools, community groups and businesses, creating that 'whole of society' approach to resilience, where everyone is aware of their part to play in reducing risk."

He concluded saying that those LRFs not in the pilot did not just have to sit back and wait for the national implementation.

He said: "You know the general course of direction, the core issues of the government's Resilience Framework – think of what you can do now, be bold and think of innovative ways to get involved now."

“ LRFs know the general course of direction – think of what you can do now, be bold and think of innovative ways to get involved ”



■ Lessons are being understood today of events such as the war in Ukraine and its impact on supply chains

Getting 'whole of society' resilience operational

"It is easy to write something down on a page. It is much more difficult to deliver it."

So explained **Andrew McClelland** and **Roisin Jordan** from the University of Manchester on their session titled *Operationalising whole-of-society resilience for society and business*. Their main message was 'keep it simple; start small and grow it'.

They looked at the latest research, practice and learning on how to deliver societal resilience, including an overview of the work of the National Consortium for Societal Resilience UK (NCSRUK+), and its manual *Create a Local Resilience Capability*.

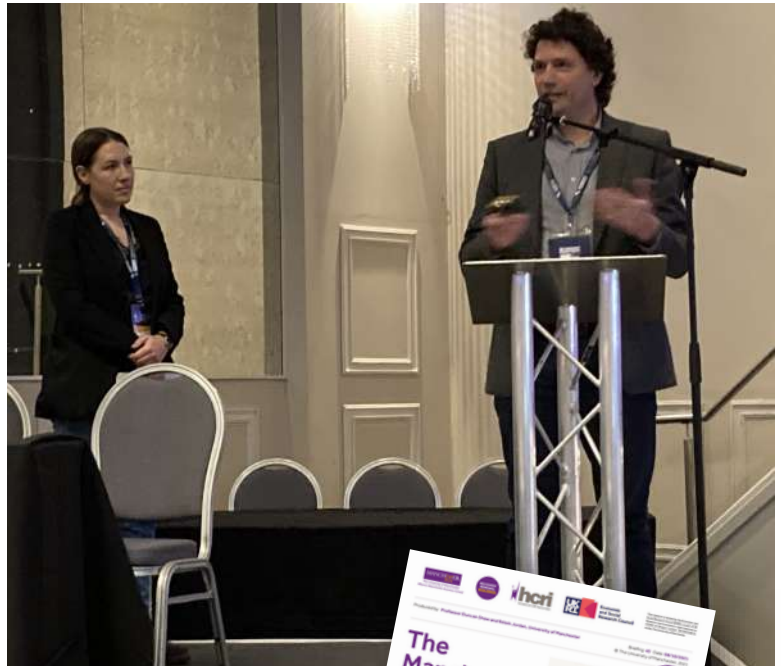
Andrew explained their work had developed through "ongoing engagement during the pandemic", established through the *Manchester Briefing*. This was a fortnightly document first published in April 2020, that brought together international lessons that inspired thinking on recovery and renewal,

with a focus on local government.

The *Manchester Briefing* is distributed to over 50,000 through a network of partners and is core to the project's engagement with the Resilient Cities Network, which in turn disseminates the bulletin to its 4,000 cities.

Roisin said they were continuing this tradition of sharing best practice and had looked at good examples of recovery and renewal from around the world, from Palestine to New Zealand.

Their partners are from the voluntary sector (VCS Emergencies Partnership, NAVCA, Cumbria CVS, Salford CVS and the British Red Cross); the Business sector (Federation of Small Business, and 'Business in the Community); the govern-



■ **Andrew McClelland and Roisin Jordan addressing the conference**



■ **Above: the Manchester Briefing which developed a network involving thousands during the pandemic**

“ You can't do everything at once, keep it in proportion: start small and grow ”



■ **The work of University of Manchester on the 'whole of society' approach developed during the Covid pandemic**

ment sector (Wales Resilience, Safer Scotland, Northern Ireland Executive, Environment Agency and the LGA); and the academic sector (University of Manchester and HCRI).

Andrew said there were four key steps to building societal resilience from scratch:

- You can't do everything, everywhere all at once.
- You need guidance on how and where to start.
- Keep it in proportion – start small and grow, and focus firstly on those most at risk.
- Develop local resilience capability, using the NCSRUK+ strategy and manual as a guide.

They finished by calling on members to get involved with the NCSRUK+ second *National Conference on Societal Resilience* to be held at Manchester University on the **4 – 5 March 2024**.

Global disasters – ‘challenges getting more integrated, responses more fragmented’

Continuing the theme of ‘whole of society resilience’, but this time from the international perspective, was **Marcus Oxley**, Senior Risk and Resilience Consultant and founder of the Global Network for Disaster Reduction.

He served as a principal interlocuter in the UN negotiations on the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*.

Marcus pointed out climate change and geo-political events across the world were increasing risk factors.

He quoted Ms Mami Mizuton, Head of UNDRR, who said: “Despite progress, risk creation is outstripping disaster risk reduction.”

He said that current reviews of the *Sendai Framework* had found that by the target date of 2030, it is estimated that there will be a 40 per cent increase in human losses in disasters. He added: “It’s not that the world is making progress – we are, but we are creating risks faster.”

He said: “Risks are the same but they are obviously more acute in poorer countries. The resources are just not there.”

Working on a global scale, you find different agencies have a different definition of what ‘whole of society’ means, while there will be different acceptable levels of risk by different sections of society.

The key is to start local: “Risk is configured locally and must be managed locally.”

‘One size fits all’ does not work – Marcus cited the example of Covid in the UK, where the same social isolation rules applied to both London and the South West of England, when clearly there were different levels of exposure in densely populated London compared to Devon and Cornwall.

At an international level, there was still silo working he said. At global level there was the *Sendai Framework*, the *Paris Climate Agreement* and the *Sustainable Development Goals*, yet there was a lack of vertical and horizontal coherence between the three, while at local level “there are not the resources downstream.”

When we respond to disasters, he said we bring in the food and blankets to deal with

the immediate problem, but how do you get people’s houses back or their jobs back?

Marcus said there needed to be more ‘Anticipatory Action’, a need to invest more in preparedness. He said: “The mantra should not be ‘build back better’, but ‘build better BEFORE’.”

He said you needed to bring in the ‘Primary Risk Bearers’ (the victims or potential victims at local level): “They approach issues in a much more wholistic way. The more you bring in the Primary Risk Bearers, the stronger the response is.”

He said the way forward was to build in resilience through risk informed development, which would include:

- The rise in systematic risk is making resilience a government priority
- We should recognise risk as an inseparable part of development: risk informed approaches can avoid creating ‘unacceptable levels of risk’ and serve to enhance development, resilience and sustainability
- Use risk insights to ‘redefine’ rather than ‘protect’ development
- Scaling out requires an ‘enabling environment’
- We need whole of society, whole of government, approaches
- We need next generation tools to address ‘risks to’ and ‘risks from’ development

In the following discussion, he demonstrated how this approach to future development had benefits to both the developed and underdeveloped world.

He cited the example of the Netherlands, where a third of the country is below sea level. They have used their experience of water management in this environment to lead on projects in Bangladesh.

However, it is a two way experience as the



■ Marcus Oxley delivering his presentation

Dutch have brought back natural water management solutions they use in poorer Bangladesh, to improve and make more environmentally friendly water management in the Netherlands.

Marcus stressed the urgency in disaster risk reduction internationally, with a quote from the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres made this year at the World Economic Forum: “If I had one sentence to describe the state of the world, I would say we are in a world in which global challenges are more and more integrated, yet the responses are more and more fragmented... and if this is not reversed, it’s a recipe for disaster.”

■ International aid being delivered in Haiti



From METHANE to MIMMS, a 30 year military journey

One of the most fascinating presentations of the conference was that delivered by **Major General Tim Hodgetts**, the Surgeon General to UK Armed Forces.

The British Medical Association has described him as “one of the most innovative doctors in the country”.

Tim explained how his journey in emergency medicine began over 30 years ago as an Army physician serving in Northern Ireland.

On 2 November, 1991, he was on his last day of his tour of duty at the Military Wing of Musgrave Park Hospital in Belfast, when an IRA bomb was detonated, killing two soldiers and wounding nine others, as well as injuring two children.

Despite the devastation, he immediately set up a treatment facility to treat the wounded. It was this experience that led him to co-author what would become the standard both in the UK and across the world in battlefield casualty procedures – MIMMS, or the Major Incident Medical Management and Support.

Another early key achievement was constructing a field hospital in just six weeks, in Kosovo during the conflict there in 1999.

He said the facility they were offered, Pristina Hospital, was in a poor state after 76 days of bombardment. It also held booby traps while surgical hygiene levels were very poor. In turn, they had no mutual aid support, a lack of equipment, a high casualty rate and lengthy supply chains because of



■ The war in Kosovo

the fighting.

Despite all that, the medical facility was rebuilt to UK best practice health standards, and over 13 tons of equipment brought in. How did he do it? “With a smile and a gun”, Tim replied.

We often think modern armies suffer just battlefield injuries, but they are susceptible to disease and illness out in the field, just like the armies of old.

Tim told how during operations in Afghanistan there was an outbreak of Gastroenteritis and Meningitis - 60 percent of this medical team also went down with the illnesses: “I felt like Lieutenant Chard at Rorke’s Drift”, said Tim.

He stressed the need for adaptability, including for yourself. In one field hospital in 2009 in Afghanistan, he ran a multi-national team of UK, US, Estonian and Danish personnel. The Danish had little English - so Tim learnt Danish.

With the growth of terrorism across Europe with events such as 7/7 and the Bataclan attack, he helped transfer military

THE Surgeon General, Major General Tim Hodgetts, was first commissioned in 1983. With Defence, Tim has been responsible



for nurturing the speciality of emergency medicine from infancy to maturing. He has implemented concept, doctrine, equipment and practice changes to transform the early management of combat injuries and led major trauma governance from 1997 – 2010.

He has served on operations in hospitals in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Oman, three tours of Afghanistan, Kuwait and four tours of Iraq.

From 2018 he was the Army’s senior health advisor, until taking on the role of Surgeon General in 2021.

medical skills to the NHS at the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Birmingham, channeling guidelines on dealing with blast injuries in the civilian setting.

Tim’s achievements appeared to know no bounds - he produced an audible surprised gasp from the conference when he casually mentioned that it was he who had invented the METHANE acronym - now engrained within JESIP - way back in 1992.

“ How do you rebuild a war damaged hospital in six weeks? With a smile and a gun ”



TIM surprised everyone when closing his presentation, by explaining that aside from all his other achievements, he was a poet, which he intended to develop further in his retirement.

He closed his presentation with a poignant reading of his poem, *The Black Snake*, about the funeral processions for the fallen, at Wootton Bassett.

MACA – how we can help: but we are not the Argos Catalogue!

FOLLOWING the Army theme, **Lt Col Rupert Clements** explained how Military Assistance to Civilian Authorities – MACA – can assist in emergencies, and the improvements the MOD are making at national and regional level.

There are 18 Joint Regional Liaison Officers, assigned to LRFs and the resilience community across the country, and 900 military personnel always on stand-by to assist in domestic emergencies at 12 hours notice.

Rupert said military assistance was “not all sandbags and pandemics”, but offered all sorts of assistance, not just from the three armed services but also Defence Estates, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, the Atomic Weapons Establishment, unexploded ordnance, CBRN (as seen in Salisbury) and Special Forces.

Emergency responders do not go to the military direct, but firstly their SCG must ask for support from the Lead Government Department

■ **MACA is ‘not just sandbags’**



ment who in turn will get clearance from COBR and/or MOD. The MOD will then instruct the military’s Standing Joint Command who in turn will inform the Joint Military Command of the three armed forces, to see what best specialist assistance can be given.

He did warn the audience though: “We are not the

Argos catalogue. You don’t turn up and say ‘I’ll have one of them, two of that...’ Rather, you give us the problem and we will decide which assets will best assist you.”

A big improvement on its way is extra people being assigned to their HQ to forward look at the sort of military assets that may be required – he said it was not just about responding, but thinking and planning for what could be coming down the line, and preparing for it.



■ **Lt Col Rupert Clements**

Engrain human aspects throughout resilience



■ **The Human Aspects Group panel at conference**

THERE was a major discussion on the Human Aspects of emergencies. This was brought to life by **Emma Dodgson**, Emergency Planning and Resilience Consultant at Essex County Council. She told of her personal experience as a 14 year old involved in a serious car crash while on holiday in France, and how the memory of the humanity shown to her and her family had stayed with her all her life.

Joining her on the conference discussion panel were **Julie Hicks**, Content Writer & Lecturer for University of Wales Trinity St. David, and ‘Civil Contingencies Officer’ for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, **Elizabeth Tassell**, Senior Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer, **Rev Peter Cheesman**, Finance Director at the EPS, and **Nathan Hazlehurst**, the EPRR Manager at Frimley Health and Care ICS.

Peter said the EPS’s Human Aspects Group’s ‘Ten Aspects of Emergency Management’ should be “engrained in every Strategic Co-ordination Group”. He said: “Looking after people should be at the very beginning, in the planning and preparations for emergencies.”

Communications – hitting the right note

AMANDA Coleman, chair of the EPS Communications PWG and a crisis communications consultant, spoke of the importance of ‘hitting the right note’ in a crisis.

She said that crisis leaders, when communicating with the public, should demonstrate the ‘five Cs’: Concern (and it must be genuine), Commitment, Competency, Clarity and Confidence.

She added that “today the world is visual – where’s your visuals? A statement alone is not enough these days.”

Amanda explained that sometimes an organisation can be in the wrong, and an apology may be necessary: “If you know you have an apology to make, don’t put it off – the longer you leave it, the less people will trust you.”



■ **Amanda Coleman, chair of the EPS Communications Professional Working Group**

Engaging the potential of social workers in disasters

By Joe Hanley

Lecturer, Open University

Social workers have a long history of working in disasters. There are documented examples of social workers supporting soldiers dealing with 'shell-shock' in World War 1, as well as supporting those impacted by 'The Great Depression' in the 1930s.

However, despite this long history, and countless examples of social workers providing vital support to those impacted by disasters, social workers consistently complain about not being adequately supported and trained in this area.

This was also the experience of social workers responding to a slew of disasters in England in 2017, including the Grenfell Tower Fire, Manchester Arena Bombing, Westminster Attack and London Bridge Attack.

In response to these events, the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) set up a 'social work in disasters' working group in 2018, involving, among others, government representatives, academics from a range of disciplines, social workers and other professionals with experience in this area, and those they have supported through disasters.

The working group has undertaken a range

of work to promote the role of social work in disasters, and was particularly active in supporting social workers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

One consistent thread that has run through all the work of this group has been the need to better train and support social workers in working in disasters. Efforts in this area have included:

- developing national guidance for social work training in disasters
- undertaking a systematic review of existing research in this area
- engaging a range of stakeholders, including through several national conferences.

The training course is designed to be worked through independently or collaboratively by social workers in their own time, taking about two days total to complete. It includes video, audio and text content, as well as workbook activities, preparation and follow-up reading and follow-up tasks designed to get social workers to engage their wider team in the issues discussed.

The pilot study that we undertook found that social workers had increased confidence and knowledge in working in disasters following the training, with several opting to become named disaster contacts in their workplaces, and to take the training to their wider teams.

■ There is a history of social work support in a crisis, from assisting shell-shocked troops in World War I, to today's recent run of major incidents

In my role as a lecturer and researcher with the Open University, I was proud to lead the work in developing and piloting the training course with a fantastic team.

From the time it was first conceived of, we always stressed the importance of finding a way that the training could be free-to-access, and with the support of the Open University, BASW and others this was achieved.

■ Joe Hanley, Lecturer in Social Work at the Open University, addressing the conference



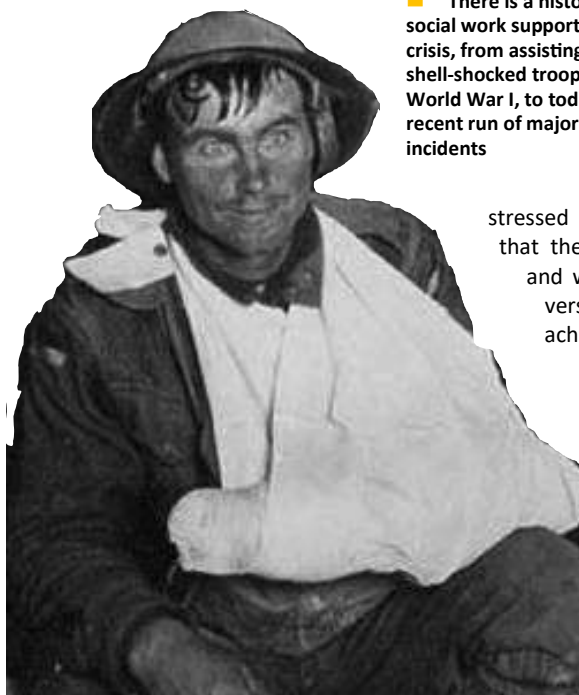
Social workers and their employers are habitually under-resourced and usually struggle to just deal with day-to-day work. Convincing them to part with what precious few resources they have to put their staff on a training course to prepare them for something that, until it happens, will not be seen as a priority, was always going to be a non-starter.

As it was, one of the biggest challenges found in piloting this training was that social workers struggled to find the time to undertake it, with other work priorities usually taking precedent.

Building on those findings, we have worked with employers, including creating a clearer explanation for employers explaining why this training is valuable, and what support social workers undertaking it will need.

As a result, following the official national launch of the training course in September 2023, we have had widespread interest from social work employers including NHS trusts, local authorities, government departments, international partners and charities, covering hundreds of social workers who will now be trained in disaster preparedness.

The hope is that there will be two chief uses of this training going forward. The first is to develop a pool of disaster



Engaging social workers *(continued)*

informed social workers who have undertaken the training and could be called upon to respond in the event of a disaster, locally, nationally or internationally.

A consistent theme in existing research in this area, is that when disasters have happened, having some sort of register of named disaster-informed social workers would have made a major difference. Instead, current practice is usually to ask for volunteers, and social workers have

“ Having this two day training helps them know what engaging in this type of work means, and could drastically change how prepared and confident social workers are ”

also described feeling pressured into taking on this role at times.

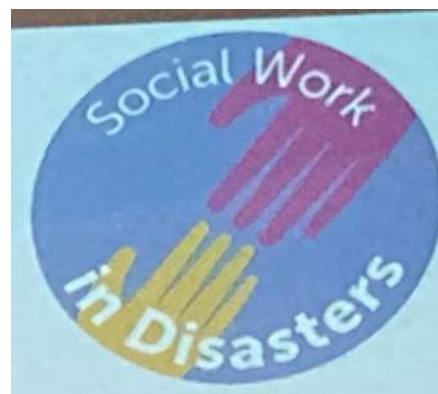
This training is now available and ready to be used to develop a pool of disaster informed social workers willing to be called upon in future disasters. However, it will take committed government and social work leaders to maintain and operationalise any register of disaster informed social workers, something that has not yet occurred.

The second use of the training is to rapidly upskill social workers in the event of a disaster.

Social workers often respond to disasters days, weeks or even months after the event, as their work tends to be based more around long-term support and community development.

Therefore, having this two day training to offer them when they know they are going to be engaging in this type of work could drastically change how prepared and confident social workers are.

The urgency of an actually occurring disaster would hopefully create more impetus for employers to support their social workers to undertake the training too, overcoming some of the workplace



challenges we identified in the pilot.

During my work in this area of I have heard dozens of stories of the amazing work that social workers have engaged with in disasters.

However, I have also heard far too many stories of the lack of support, lack of training, stress and burnout experienced by social workers in these contexts.

This training can be one step towards providing these amazing social workers with the support they deserve in this area, but it must be part of a wider national effort to ensure that these important disaster responders are forgotten no more. ■



Flood management – 25 authorities get FCRIP



Shelly Evans, a Principal Analyst at JBA Consultancy, and **Dr Paul O'Hare** of Manchester Metropolitan University, outlined the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP), in which the EPS is heavily involved.

The FCRIP sees 25 local-authority led projects, each funded over six years by the Environment Agency, to deliver practical innovative actions to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion.



Jon Vangorh, head of Partnerships at the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies kicked off the Wednesday morning session.

He said the experiences during Covid saw a shift in the voluntary sector more towards preparedness: “We are looking upstream more and more.”

He said there were four key components to building capabilities with the voluntary sector:

- Sustain what works
- Diversify the offer: there's lots of different channels and partners to be engaged
- Engage those partners in their spaces: go to them where they are
- Creating and sharing tools and processes that work.

The onus should be on the authorities to get it right – not us

IN an enlightening session titled 'Why one size does not fit all', **Terri Balon**, the north west regional campaigns officer for the Royal National Institute for Blind people, and **Nathan Hazlehurst**, EPRR Manager at Frimley Health and Care ICS, demonstrated that victims, survivors and affected people all have diverse needs.

Nathan said that Covid had highlighted the 'inequalities in our everyday response'. This was brought home by Terri who told the conference: "During the pandemic, local authorities sent out lots of letters to households. But under

lock down, I couldn't go to my neighbour and ask them to read it to me." She said the onus should not be on blind people to find solutions – after all, there are 2.2 million people with visual impairments in the UK, so that is a large slice of the population. She urged all to use the 'Alt-Text' tool on social media, which uses descriptive spoken words to explain a visual item. Terri said it involved little time: "Its just one button to press."



Learning about Victim Support

Justin Sarginson, from Victim Support, outlined the work and role of the organisation, and what it offers responders in terms of national and local services for victims of terrorism, crime and disasters, including its homicide service, 'Victims of Terrorism Project', and the online platforms available to the public.

He stressed the services were free and can be accessed at any point, even years after an incident, because of triggers such as anniversaries or enquiries.

Speakers' Corner

THE 'Looking Forward' session finished with a 'Speakers Corner', made up of Julie Hicks, Jon Vangorph, Shelley Evans, Dr Paul O'Hare, Justin Sarginson, Nathan Hazlehurst, and Barry Moss.

Barry, a Resilience Manager for a District General Hospital, outlined from his personal experience of the operational, tactical and strategic challenges for organisations affected by RAAC.



Thinking outside the box(er)

There was a very creative final session at conference, titled 'Humanities Super Power', which looked at ways creative thinking can assist in everyday emergency planning - not just in the way we respond to challenges but also thinking of innovative ways of communicating with the public.

Dr Stuart Andrews and **Dr Patrick Duggan** introduced the subject.

They have worked on projects in the US and the UK, examining the interfaces where the arts and resilience sectors can assist each other during a crisis.

A detailed look at their work can be found in the Autumn 2022 issue of *Resilience*.

Equally intriguing was the presentation by **Chris Scott**, Crisis and Incident Management Services Manager at Chemtrec. He spoke about the non-technical skills that can enhance your critical decision making.

The conference ended with a very engaging presentation of *The Boxer's Guide to Climate Resilience*, performed by **Steve Scott-Bottoms**, with help from facilitator **Angel Scott-Bottoms**.

Steve, Professor of Drama at the University of Manchester, played three roles – a boxer, King Cnut, and Jo, the EPO from Madeuptown – to explain the challenges around coastal erosion!

After the performance, they were joined for a panel discussion about ways of engaging the public, by **Phil Emonson** of JBA Consulting and Chair of the Flood Resilience PWG.

■ **LEFT: The great performance by Steve Scott-Bottoms as the Boxer (and others) and the following panel discussion on community engagement**



■ **Dr Stuart Andrews and Dr Patrick Duggan** addressing the conference. Above, the Autumn 2022 issue of *Resilience* which details their work

The Awards

AFTER a hard day's conferencing, it was time to put the glad rags on for the EPS annual awards ceremony, and dinner and dance.

Following the three course meal, it was time to sit back and applaud the winners of the following categories:

- Branch of the Year
- Professional Working Group of the Year
- Individual Excellence Awards
- 'Unsung Hero ' Awards
- The Fellowships



■ EPS Chair Jeannie Barr and Vice Chair Stephen Arundell get the Awards Ceremony underway. Below - drinks, dinner and a great night of networking (and dancing!)



And the winner is...



Professional Working Group of the Year
Humanitarian Aspects Group

BEFORE the awarding of the Fellowships, the battle was on for Best Branch of the year, and best Professional Working Group.

This was followed by the individual awards for professional excellence - and also the 'unsung heroes' who have gone the extra mile for the EPS behind the scenes.

Branch of the Year Welsh Branch

PWG runners up

Top:

Communications
PWG

Below:

Flood Resilience
& Flood
Management
PWG



Individual Excellence Awards



Emma Dodgson
(EP & Resilience
Consultant, Essex
County Council)

Barry Moss
(Resilience Manager
for a District General
Hospital)



Julie Hicks
(Consultant Writer &
Lecturer, University of
Wales Trinity St David,
& Civil Contingencies)

**Rev. Peter
Cheesman**
(EPS Director for
Finance)



Libby Tassell
(Senior EP &
Business Continuity
Officer,
Worcestershire
County Council)



Absent friends

UNABLE to attend, there were Excellence awards for **Matt Hogan** (Head of Site Management, DLUHC), **Ian Cameron** (former Chair, South West Branch) and **Emma Jane Beattie**.



'Unsung Hero' Awards



Philip West
(Chair, South West Branch)

Beverley Griffiths
(Senior Lecturer on
Emergency Planning,
Buckinghamshire New
University)



Stephen Arundell
(EPS Vice Chair &
Director for
Governance)



Bob Wade
(Editor, Resilience - I forgot to take a
picture of myself!)



**Nathan
Hazlehurst**
(EPRR
Manager at
Frimley
Health and
Care ICS)

Absent friends

THERE were also 'Unsung Hero' awards for the following who could not attend the conference:

Sarah Alcock
Kevin Claxton
William Reed
Gail Rowntree
Monika Al-Mufti

Take a bow, Jeannie

■ Central to organising both the conference of course but also the awards was EPS Chair Jeannie Barr.

But behind her back, the organisers felt Jeannie deserved an Unsung Hero award too.

They waited till the next day's conference to make the surprise presentation, with Jeannie treating the audience to a curtsy.



Jolly good Fellows!



Major General Tim Hodgetts:

“It’s the first time I’ve spoken at the EPS and I am starting to wonder why, because there is a lot of kindred spirits here. I have been involved in disaster and emergency planning for most of my career – everything being said here today chimes with me.”

AS ALWAYS, the highlight of the Awards Ceremony was the appointment of the latest batch of Fellows of the EPS - three were awarded to EPS members Julie Hicks, Beverley Griffiths and Emma Dodgson, and an Honorary Fellowship to Major General Tim Hodgetts



Emma Dodgson

EP & Resilience Consultant, Essex County Council

“You work so hard, I’ve invested so much time over the past two decades now, so to have that recognised is very special.”



Julie Hicks

Consultant Writer & Lecturer, University of Wales Trinity St David, & Civil Contingencies Officer for Blaenau Gwent Borough Council:

“I am absolutely thrilled and made up. I was a member of the Emergency Planning Association before the EPS, and I have always supported the work of the EPS and the Welsh Branch, in lots of different guises. “



■ Above: Beverley Griffiths (Senior Lecturer on Emergency Planning, Buckinghamshire New University) receives her Fellowship from Chair Jeannie Barr and Professor Lucy Easthope



THE venue for the Awards and dinner and dance, was the luxurious ballroom at the Mercure Manchester Piccadilly Hotel. The excellent venue also hosted the conference sessions themselves.

20 | *Resilience*

Also appointed Fellows but unable to attend were:

Jacqui Semple
Laura Drew



Sorry
you
missed
it?

FEAR not! The conference sessions were filmed and will be available soon on the EPS website - as well as a short film about the conference and the Awards.

www.the-eps.org





Stand boost for EPS at event

THE EPS were among the 600 exhibitors with a stand at the Emergency Services Show.

This time we included a lounge area for members and guests, with a drinks receptions held on the afternoon of day one of the Show, all of which helped build the profile of the EPS, hopefully resulting in new members joining.



Record numbers at Emergency Services Show

The major event for emergency planners this Autumn was the annual Emergency Services Show at the NEC in Birmingham in September.

This year, a record number of visitors attended the event, this time co-located with the Emergency Tech Show. The UK's largest event for the emergency services attracted over 12,000 visitors and buyers, with strong representation from across all the emergency services including police, fire and rescue, ambulance, and search and rescue.

Total attendance was over 30 per cent higher than last year's record for the event.

For the first time too the Emergency Tech Show brought together all the latest in digital transformation tools; connectivity; control room solutions; software and apps; wearable tech; cloud storage; virtual reality training simulation; and the use of AI for predictive emergency response, resource allocation and data analysis.

The show's visitors participated in over 140 hours of CPD-accredited seminars running in

nine theatres: the Lessons Learned Leaders' Summit, Innovation Theatre, College of Paramedics Theatre, Resilience & Recovery Theatre, Policing Theatre, Health & Wellbeing Theatre, Microsoft Partner Theatre, Emergency Tech

Keynote and the Tech Hub. Every session was well attended, with one of the most popular being actor and documentary maker **Ross Kemp's** fireside chat in the Policing Theatre looking at reality TV verses real policing.

The show's biggest audience also joined **Adam Kay**, BAFTA-winning television writer, comedian, former doctor and author of *This is Going to Hurt* in the Lessons Learned Leaders' Summit, where he shared his thoughts on how the NHS could better support the mental health and retention of its staff.

The College of Paramedics' CPD workshops also proved extremely popular again.

There were over 600 exhibitors, with perhaps the jet suit demonstration by **Rowan Poulter** of Gravity Industries the main crowd puller.



The Emergency Services Show and the Emergency Tech Show return to Halls 4 & 5 at the NEC, Birmingham from 18-19 September 2024.

Companies and organisations interested in booking a stand should contact info@emergencyuk.com.



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