

# Community Emergency Hubs 2026-06-10

## 12:53(GMT+1:00)

### Key Outcomes

Devon Communities Together is offering **community emergency hub boxes** to up to 100 Devon communities, with approximately 20 currently established or in progress. The hub system provides organizational tools for local emergency coordination, requiring minimal resources while enabling communities to manage incidents until official services arrive.

### What Community Emergency Hubs Are

- **Coordination centers**, not shelters—designed to manage local emergency response and direct spontaneous volunteers during incidents
- Originally developed in **New Zealand** for earthquake response in remote areas; now adopted worldwide and studied by the National Consortium for Societal Resilience
- Function as **first-response infrastructure** when emergency services are delayed or incidents don't meet thresholds for official response
- Operate independently of emergency plans—communities can have both, or just a hub

### Hub Box Contents and Structure

#### Physical components provided:

- Instruction booklet with operational guidance
- Seven role cards with specific job descriptions
- Lanyards and badges for volunteer identification
- First aid manual (first 60 hubs receive British Red Cross donated manuals)

#### Seven operational roles:

- **Supervisor:** Maintains overall oversight without other duties
- **Receptionist:** Triage incoming people and directs them appropriately
- **Information Officer:** Collects, organizes, and shares incident information
- **Public Information Officer:** Manages press inquiries and protects personal data
- **Needs Officer:** Coordinates requests for help and incoming donations
- **Welfare Officer:** Provides direct support and comfort to affected people
- **Facility Manager:** Manages operational logistics for extended incidents

Roles are flexible—can be combined if only three people arrive, or expanded based on incident scale.

## Location Requirements

- **Accessible venue** with reliable key/code access for emergency activation
- Basic facilities for operators (restroom, warmth, tea-making capability)
- Can be village halls, churches, community buildings, or even **private homes** if most suitable for the geography
- Should avoid flood-prone locations in at-risk areas
- May co-locate with shelter space but must maintain separate coordination function

## Activation and Operation

- **First person on scene** activates the hub—may be emergency plan member or any local resident
- No standing committee required; system designed to function with whoever arrives
- Supervisor unpacks box, takes supervisor role, and allocates other roles as volunteers arrive
- Information flows in from community members reporting conditions; flows out via whiteboard, verbal updates, or digital channels depending on power/connectivity
- When emergency services arrive, hub provides **local intelligence** on incident status and vulnerable residents

## Emergency Scope and Examples

**Consequence-based approach:** Focus on impacts (power outage, road blockage) rather than causes (storm, cyber attack, equipment failure).

### Incident examples cited:

- Electricity transformer failure affecting quarter of village
- Gas outage (Kingsbridge example—not in emergency plan but plan still deployed effectively)
- Tree blocking road during medical emergency requiring 4x4 coordination to ambulance
- Flooding, snow, or widespread power loss

**Threshold understanding:** Small local incidents stay locally managed; larger incidents trigger

**Category 1 responder protocols** and Local Resilience Forum coordination (example: Plymouth bomb requiring multi-agency response with British Red Cross door-knockers and military involvement).

## Community Engagement Process

**Ownership principle:** Hub must be **community-owned**, not solely parish/town council property, even if council initiates setup.

### **Communication strategy for setup:**

- Initial outreach: "We're thinking of setting up a hub—who wants to be involved?"
- Use all local channels: council meetings, parish newsletters, Facebook pages
- Engage venue organizations (village halls, churches) as potential hub hosts
- Connect with groups experienced in managing volunteers

**Public awareness:** Communities must ensure residents know hub location and function before emergencies occur.

## Registration and Next Steps

### **Registration process:**

1. Secure community buy-in, particularly from key connected members
2. Identify suitable location with reliable access
3. Complete Survey Monkey form - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B7PJXCT>
4. Devon Communities Together delivers hub box
5. Register hub with **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Resilience Forum** using their online form

### **Support available:**

- Devon Communities Together provides setup advice and equipment guidance at no cost
- Additional emergency equipment funding may be available for communities needing supplies beyond the hub box
- District emergency planning officers available for ongoing resilience conversations (contact details provided by Devon Communities Together)
- No County Council contact required for emergency plan or hub setup—communities operate independently

## Technical Notes

- Survey Monkey form requires all mandatory fields; some users reported being kicked out—test completed successfully by presenter
- Form does not provide copy of submitted information; available on request
- Hub locations will be **mapped publicly** on Local Resilience Forum and Devon Communities Together websites once sufficient hubs established
- Meeting slides and contact details sent to all registrants within 48 hours

## Contact and Resources

- Primary contact: Devon Communities Together (Rod, Anderson, Martin Rich)
- Emergency planning introductory events available with desktop scenarios
- District emergency planning officers accessible through Devon Communities Together referral
- Funding source: Local Resilience Forum grant enabling training and hub box production