



Annual Report 2023/24

This is the annual North Wales Councils - Regional Emergency Planning Service report for the year 2023-2024. It covers the work carried out by NWC-REPS across the six local authorities in the region, as well as multi-agency activities undertaken to support North Wales Local Resilience Forum.

North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service

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North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service (NWC-REPS)

Isle of Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council work together in a partnering relationship through the establishment in 2014 of a Regional Emergency Planning Service for North Wales. This service undertakes the functions of the councils in respect of civil contingencies and is accountable to an Executive Board that comprises senior representatives of those Councils.

NWC-REPS provides a service to ensure the Local Authorities are compliant with the following legislation: -

- Civil Contingencies Act, 2004
- Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations, 2015
- Pipeline Safety Regulations, 1996
- Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations, 2019

The Service works to:

- Reduce duplication and repetition of tasks
- Improve the harmonisation of the work and resilience of teams
- Improve deployment of available resources by sharing specialist support and common tasks
- Improve consistency of response between authorities
- Improve communication channels between the North Wales Resilience Forum and local authorities



Incident management

NWC-REPS provides a 24/7 all year-round Duty Officer to act as the initial point of contact for emergency response.

During financial year 2023 - 2024, NWC-REPS assisted in this role in the following ways: -

- **Receiving and assessing Natural Resources Wales warnings and alerts:**
 - 56 Community Flood Alerts
 - 181 Flood Alerts
 - 5 Community Flood Warnings
 - 8 Flood Warnings
 - 8 Early Warnings
- **Receiving, and assessing Met Office Weather Warnings:**
 - Gwynedd = 104 (100 yellow / 4 Amber)
 - Conwy = 100 (95 yellow / 5 Amber)
 - Anglesey = 68 (65 yellow / 3 Amber)
 - Denbighshire = 92 (87 yellow / 5 Amber)
 - Flintshire = 78 (72 yellow / 6 Amber)
 - Wrexham = 86 (80 yellow / 6 Amber)
- **Receiving and responding to incidents that included: -**
 - Amber snow incident February 2024
 - Storm Babet October 2023
 - Storm Isha January 2024



Learning & Development

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

In order to learn from other local authorities who have faced major incidents/emergencies, NWC-REPS facilitated a series of workshops looking at the following events:

- [Manchester Arena](#)
- [A HQ Fire](#)
- [Salisbury poisonings](#)

The workshop consisted of an officer from the affected local authority detailing the event.

What went well during the response and the issues faced meant we could learn from this to assist us with our preparedness going forward.

The workshops were well attended, valuable and received excellent feedback.

E-Learning

All 14 modules have been under review by the Senior EPO and are now available on Learning@Wales. The provision of a new bespoke training and exercising database will enable more accurate recording of the modules completed and will provide an automatic refresher schedule to take place.

- [Training and Exercising](#)
- [Multi-Agency](#)
- [JESIP](#)

NWC-REPS is a key member of the JESIP planning and delivery group and assist in facilitating the Operational and Tactical training packages.

- [JESIP Operational](#)
- [JESIP Tactical/Wales Silver](#)
- [Loggist training](#)
- [Exercises](#)

Power Outage Exercise

An exercise to test the impact of a widespread electricity outage and to build a shared understanding of the implications for local multi-agency partners in their response.

Wales Gold

An exercise to prepare strategic leaders to work effectively in a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) and Recovery CO-ordinating Group (RCG) in response to recovery from a major incident.

Exercise Bardic Llif

A military planning exercise for UK operations in support of civil authorities. Military assets were tasked to test 160th (Welsh) Brigade's ability to plan for and execute multiple MACA tasks within the scenario. Civilian partners supported the SCG and Exercise Control (EXCON) during the live exercise.

Exercise Electra

Several team members from NWC-REPS and local authority colleagues attended this exercise which was organised by NWMWTRA to demonstrate compliance with Pen-y-Clip tunnel emergency operating procedures.

Learning & Development

Wildfire Exercise - During March 2024, NWCREPS attended meetings, and a live exercise for NWFRS on Moel Famau, which is on the Flintshire/Denbighshire border.

Other

Rest Centre Exercises

Following the successful roll out of the new Rest Centre Plan, the plan required exercising to embed within all local authorities. Exercises were planned within designated rest centre venues across North Wales. The exercise started with an introduction by the Local Resilience Forum Co-ordinator on its role during emergencies followed by a presentation from North Wales Police and NWC-REPS. The scenario was then detailed to the attendees. This gave attendees a chance to talk through issues that they may face when running a rest centre.

Actions for Lead Emergency Planning Officers emerged from these exercises, and they are currently working with colleagues in their designated local authority to complete the actions and ensure all local authorities are prepared should a rest centre be required.

Exercise Cooper

Exercise Cooper took place to test the accuracy and availability of staff which are detailed in the local authority Emergency Contact Directories (ECD's). A total of 48 staff were randomly selected to check the accuracy of 107 contact numbers. Following this exercise, changes were made to ECD's to ensure accuracy is maintained.



Conwy County Borough Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Major incident response

Following the adoption of the NWC-REPS template, Senior Managers attended a presentation in March to embed the Plan and structure. It was also used as an opportunity to raise awareness of the work of NWC-REPS and the responsibilities of local authorities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This is complimented by engagement on the 2024 Wales Gold and JESIP training programmes.

The Conwy Valley Flood Partnership Group convenes quarterly, and NWC-REPS chair a working group to develop the Conwy Valley Multi Agency Flood Response Plan.

Morfa Rhuddlan Community Partnership has focused on the consultation regarding proposed flood defences.

NWC-REPS attend and contribute to the work of the Cyber Response Programme Group.

A review of Rest Centre provision and activation procedures is currently underway and following completion will be tested.

Throughout the year NWC-REPS joined partners from the CCBC wrap-around services and local councillors to support over 200 refugees via the activities of the Ukraine Re-settlement Support Group.

Business Continuity Management

The suite of documents produced by NWC-REPS were introduced to Conwy for consultation. A workshop was held with senior managers to review the Corporate and Service Continuity Plans. The Corporate Plan is in final stages of draft awaiting approval following amendments.

NWC-REPS attend the PSPG and SAG meetings and are working with group members to assist regarding the impacts on local authorities regarding the introduction of Martyn's Law.

Planned work for financial year 2024/2025

- Work is ongoing with NRW and CCBC licensing regarding caravan and holiday park evacuation arrangements.
- NWC-REPS, Dwr Cymru and Conwy CBC are liaising to develop water distribution arrangements. This is required to provide and distribute alternative water supplies to the public following the declaration by DCWW of a major incident affecting the production or distribution of the piped water supply (treated water to domestic and non-domestic customers).



Isle of Anglesey County Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Bridge Contingencies

During Scrutiny Committee in October 2023, members asked what contingencies were in place when and if both bridges were suddenly to close. Important factors such as hospital access to Ysbyty Gwynedd and HGV stacking were widely unknown. The service supported the Chief Executive in writing a letter to the Chair of the LRF asking for focus on the issue and support from all relevant multi-agencies. Following this a task and finish group was established, chaired by NMWTRA. NWC-REPS organised with Welsh Government (WG) and multiple agencies to investigate what the government's role was in such a scenario and what work was being done to mitigate the risk. Work is progressing and it is expected a plan will be in place before the end of the year.

Avian Flu

An avian flu outbreak severely affected seabird colonies on Anglesey in August 2023. More than 1,200 dead birds were collected. The local authority's main waste contractor did not have the relevant permissions or training to collect ABP CAT 1 Material. A temporary contract was drawn with a contractor who could collect the birds. NWC-REPS attended meetings and liaised with Pembrokeshire County Council who had been dealing with similar numbers. This allowed for shared learning and best practice. NWC-REPS also attended the WG weekly meeting named 'Seabird'. It also engaged with Bangor University for any information or patterns regarding the diseases of birds on Puffin Island and the Skerries.

Business Continuity

The new business continuity template has now been populated by all council services. The service has supported the Council exercising the plans by developing and facilitating bespoke sessions. As part of the exercises, all staff participating will

be recorded as completing the exercises on a training matrix. Also, any feedback regarding how well staff feel incident response is enacted, or what can be improved, is captured during the exercise, and fed back to the plan author to consider going forward. The service also asks what potential further training or exercising is required by services.

- The service now engages with the council's SAG which assists the on-call duty officer.
- The service is supporting the council regarding PSPG, specifically Martyn's law.
- The service presented a brief to members on the role of the service and emergency planning.
- The service continues to support the council with the COVID-19 Inquiry.
- The service's e-learning courses continue to brief staff on its roles and responsibilities regarding emergency planning and incident response.

Planned work for financial year 24/25

- Continuing support for business continuity.
- Consideration for a bespoke 'Council Incident Plan' regarding both bridges closing.
- Identifying loggists per service and supporting them with training and exercising.
- Provide support regarding the introduction of Martyn's Law and preparedness of the local authority.
- Work on the actions and challenges raised by the Mighty Oak exercise (loss of power)
- Identify any training requirements following the business continuity exercising.
- Embed an annual cycle of exercising business continuity arrangements.

Gwynedd Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Gwynedd's emergency management team and subgroups have been established and regular meetings are diarised. These meetings provide updates regarding each sub-groups progress on internal work and plans, with support, leadership and guidance provided from the Strategic Panel.

NWC-REPS supported Gwynedd with incidents, including an RAF Chinook Helicopter with mechanical difficulties that landed in a field in Arthog in July 2023, Palm oil spill on Barmouth's shoreline, house fire in Hirael Bangor, multiple wildfires in the region, severe weather, bridge maintenance and several calls for assistance from NWP regarding cannabis farms.

Following the implementation of Gwynedd's new gold rota, NWC-REPS developed and facilitated a desktop exercise in October 2023 based on the scenario of a house fire in Caernarfon. The aim was to explore the processes in place and how they can be improved further.

Sites were identified to assist Welsh Water in opening emergency water stations for the public in the event of water loss.

Planned work for 2024 to 2025

The Business Continuity Plan template has been agreed. NWC-REPS will support services with populating the document before embedding and exercising the plans.

Rest Centre box contents and locations are being updated and the Rest Centre Contacts have been updated and verified Rest Centre exercises will be undertaken in all authorities.

NWC-REPS attends Fairbourne for a meeting twice a year. Work is ongoing with the Fairbourne Operations Group to develop and embed an evacuation plan for this site due to current and future flood risks.



Wrexham County Borough Council

Work carried out during 2023 to 2024

Support from NWC-REPS at SAG Meetings - Attending monthly SAG meetings and injecting as appropriate from an Emergency Planning perspective. SAG meetings for Wrexham Football Club are supported.

Staff from Wrexham CBC have adopted the new template for Service Continuity Plans (SCPs) - transferring the necessary information from the old plans into the new template is ongoing. Follow up meetings with each representative have been undertaken to explain the new plans. Work has started on a Service Continuity Exercise to be carried out once plans are complete - working alongside staff in WCBC to devise an appropriate exercise that can be used to test all SCPs.

Coal Tip meetings with Welsh Government are ongoing - This is allowing NWC-REPS to see what is happening in other parts of Wales and to identify best practice. A template for Coal Tip Plans has been identified and this is now being populated before the draft is shared with colleagues in Wrexham.

EMRT Sub-Groups are meeting quarterly with the support of NWC-REPS. Structures for response and recovery are embedded and EMRT meet on a regular basis.

NWC-REPS supported Wrexham with response to the following incidents:

- **A525 Lorry Fire in June 2023** - Attending multi agency meetings and liaising between WCBC and other organisations as requested.
- **Potential Student accommodation evacuation in October 2023** - Liaising with Humanitarian Assistance Team to stand up a Rest Centre and stand down as requested by NWP.
- **The fire at Bryn Business Centre in February 2024** - Duty Officer assisted with liaison between NWFRS and WCBC.

Wrexham Public Space Preparedness Group - attending meetings and supporting as required.

Planned work for 2023 to 2024

Service Continuity Exercises - Once all new plans have been signed off by services, exercises will take place to test them. Work is ongoing with the Chair of the Service Continuity Team to ensure that lessons learned are embedded into the plans.

Develop and roll out micro exercises for the Emergency Management Response Team and all sub-groups to ensure the structures response is tested and robust - Arrange with the Chair of EMRT to run a test exercise which can be used within all the subgroups to test the EMRT structure.

Rest Centre staff training following recruitment drive - Tabletop discussions for Rest Centre Staff to explain the processes within the Rest Centre and their role within in view of Rest Centre locations to ensure coverage throughout the Borough - implement an annual review to ensure that the venues are fit for purpose and available for use as rest centres.

Review and revise all necessary plans to ensure all risks are mitigated in WCBC. Following completion, ensure all staff are aware of any changes and exercised where necessary.



Denbighshire County Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

During 2023, the council undertook a major re-structure of its senior leadership team and corporate services. This saw several changes to Chairs and Deputy Chairs in the Strategic Emergency Management Team. Comprehensive training has been provided to the new Chairs and Deputies.

Due to the severity of flooding in October during Storm Babet, NWC-REPS facilitated a debrief which has since been presented to SEMT and recommendations have been embedded to further improve our response to an incident.

Due to staff turnover, the pool for loggists has reduced and was no longer robust. The Corporate Emergency Information Team have identified a new pool of loggists which has provided more robust continuity.

Following the rest centre desktop exercise, DCC identified the need for a live rest centre exercise to further test their plan. NWC-REPS facilitated a live rest centre exercise on the 15th February 2024 at Rhyl Leisure Centre. The response to the injects was led by Denbighshire's Humanitarian Assistance Team. Over 50 participants took part over the course of the day. The exercise was well received and a debrief report concluded Denbighshire's good practice and provided recommendations to improve further.

Planned work for 2024 to 2025

- Ensure the Business Continuity Plan template is rolled out in all services and exercised when appropriate.
- Ongoing development for the new Chairs and Deputies in the SEMT structure
- Exercise the Strategic Emergency Management Team and all sub-groups to ensure a cohesive response and identify any further training and development.



Flintshire County Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Supporting, advising, and offering Civil Contingencies advice for the Council on the Asylum Seeker Settlement Team within Flintshire.

NWC-REPS have facilitated several COMAH site familiarisation visits, including Great Bear distribution and FMC Agro in Deeside. The visits were well received.

FCC arranged a Dŵr Cymru Emergency Distribution exercise on the 29th June 2023. This allowed FCC to exercise their response and ensure their arrangements in the event of loss of water are robust.

NWC-REPS have supported Flintshire during several weather events including:

- 1) Storm Larissa (9th-12th March 2023)
- 2) Storm Babet (19th - 21st October 2023)
- 3) Amber snow weather warning (February 2024)

NWC-REPS facilitated debriefs which were presented to EMRT and lessons learnt have now been embedded to ensure a robust response.

Planned work for financial year 2024 to 2025

- Humanitarian Assistance Team planning for a follow-up exercise in August 2024 following the Rest Centre Exercise in November 2022.
- Review of FCC Rest Centre support staff and 'Training Needs Analysis'.
- Operational team members attending COMAH site training at sites in Flintshire.
- Business Continuity Group will be reviewing the Service Continuity Plans 2023.
- Drafting of the FCC Cyber Incident Response and Recovery Plan.



- There is a need for a review on Rest Centre locations, this was recognised from the debriefs following Storm Babet and Ffynongroyw Flooding.
- A new training package for Rest Centre Managers is being created, following benchmarking of other local authority Emergency Planning Teams training.
- Collation of Information is ongoing of the HAVG for data mapping on JIGSO.

COMAH, PIPELINE and NUCLEAR WORK

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

COMAH Planning and Exercising

- Coordination and delivery of the multi-agency emergency planning and exercise schedules, for Great Bear Distribution and FMC Agro Ltd, to ensure local authority compliance with COMAH 2015. Delivery of these schedules also included the revision and reissue of the FCC External Emergency Plans for the sites.
- Representation of the service at the
 - Regional COMAH Competent Authority meeting to discuss regulatory compliance.
 - National Local Authority COMAH Good Practice Group

MAHP/Pipeline Safety Regulations Planning and Exercising

Working with existing and proposed high-pressure pipeline operators, to ensure regulatory compliance for all six North Wales local authorities:

- Liaison with Uniper UK and ENI LBOC to agree the changes required to the FCC Major Accident Hazard Pipeline plans relating to their changing high pressure gas pipeline infrastructure.
- Ongoing monitoring and review of National Planning Inspectorate casework relating to the Hynet Carbon Capture Pipeline Infrastructure, a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP).

Nuclear/REPPiR Planning and Exercising

Monitoring and reviewing nuclear related emergency planning legislation, in order to support the local authorities maintain regulatory compliance:

- Drafting of a regional local authority nuclear response guidance framework, to ensure compliance with the Radiation Emergency



Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPiR), 2019 (Regulation 22).

- Ongoing representation of NWC-REPS at the site stakeholder groups for the decommissioning nuclear power stations at Wylfa & Trawsfynydd
- Ongoing representation of NWC-REPS at the national:
 - Local Authority Nuclear Working Group
 - Nuclear Legacy Advice Forum working group.

COMAH Planning and Exercising

- Coordination and delivery of the multi-agency emergency planning and exercise schedule for Synthite Ltd, including revision and reissue of the FCC multi-agency External Emergency Plan for the site.
- Revision and reissue of the FCC & WCBC multi-agency plans for FMC Agro Ltd, Great Bear and Kronospan Ltd.

MAHP/ Pipeline Safety Regulations Planning and Exercising

- Revision of the Uniper UK, ENI LBOC, National Gas & Wales & West Utilities Major Accident Hazard Pipeline Plans (MAHP) for all six local authorities.
- Coordination and delivery of a MAHP awareness event for the six local authorities.
- Coordination and delivery of multi-agency emergency exercises with Uniper UK and National Gas.
- Coordination of multi-agency feasibility work with ENI LBOC to establish if the development of the Hynet Carbon Dioxide pipeline in Flintshire, will require a Major Accident Hazard Pipeline; operational carbon dioxide infrastructure has a major accident hazard likelihood, but the Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR 1996) currently do not include a statutory requirement for emergency plans relating to the transport of pressurised CO₂.

Nuclear/REPPiR Planning & Exercising:

- Finalisation of a regional local authority nuclear response guidance framework, to ensure compliance with the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPiR), 2019 (Regulations 19 & 22).

Regional Multi-Agency Working Groups:

- Emergency Water Distribution Working Group - contribution to finalisation of DCWW's and Hafren Dyfrdwy's emergency water distribution plans (work led by DCWW's & Hafren Dyfrdwy).



- Menai Straits Simultaneous Bridge Closure Group - contribution to the development of a multi-agency framework for this risk with Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils (work led by NMWTRA).
- Wildfire Planning & Exercising Working Group - contribution to the delivery of a wildfire exercise and revision of the existing multi-agency wildfire plan (work led by NWFRS).
- Maritime Response Working Group (Pleasure Vessel Sinking Risk) - contribution to the development of multi-agency maritime response plan for this risk with the coastal local authorities (work led by HM Coastguard).
- Battery Technology Risk Working Group (Electric Vehicle accident mitigation / national grid level Battery Energy Storage System installations) - contribution to this emerging area of multi-agency risk planning, for all six local authorities (work led by NWFRS).

Targets for 2024/2025

Training Database

The database will provide a comprehensive and up to date history of training and exercising completed by all those involved in the Emergency Planning throughout the North Wales region. The database is nearing completion, but the final stages have unfortunately been delayed due to priorities by the IT Business Solutions team. Review of the Learning and Development Strategy.

We have supported North Wales Police in developing a Modern-Day Slavery Reception Centre Plan. A desktop exercise to ensure embedding and testing will be developed.

Recovery Exercise

Following the review of the Recovery Plan we will look to test the plan with a desktop exercise.

A suite of business continuity scenarios following the completion and embedding of the Business Continuity Plans have been developed by the Emergency Planning team and are ready to be delivered.

Plans

North Wales Local Resilience Forum Recovery Plan

This plan has been under review and is now available in draft to be seen by the six local authorities for consultation and feedback. Once agreed the plan will be tested with a desk top exercise.

North Wales Resilience Forum Coastal Pollution Plan

As coastal pollution is listed as a risk on the risk register, a draft coastal pollution plan is currently being developed by NWC-REPS. This has also been added to the agenda for the Environment Group.

Business Continuity and the Voluntary Sector

A guide has been created by NWC-REPS to support small and medium sized businesses to develop a response to prepare for and manage disruptive events that could impact on their day-to-day business. This guide will be available on local authority internet web pages and will be placed on the HAVG agenda to be cascaded through their business links.

Human Aspects of an Emergency Response

This document has been developed and is a checklist to consider how to plan and respond to the human aspects of major incidents and emergencies. Human aspects consider people - survivors, families, friends, displaced such as refugees, communities, and responders. Providing multi-agency, timely and appropriate humanitarian assistance helps people recover quicker and can mitigate longer term impacts.

Future priorities

To support and guide the six North Wales local authorities regarding the implementation of Martyn's Law. This law, currently pending UK wide legislation will improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK by mandating, for the first time, those responsible for certain premises and events to consider the terrorist risk and how they would respond to an attack.

Employee Induction

A new team member booklet has been developed to ensure new starters have a consistent induction.

