
Holcombe Parish Council

Emergency Plan 2021

V9.0 Issue

7th August 2021

Table of Contents

1. Issue Statement.....	3
2. Data Protection.....	4
3. Purpose.....	4
4. Local Risk Assessment.....	4
5. Key locations identified with Emergency Services as places of safety.....	6
6. List of community Organisations	7
7. Emergency Plan Process.....	8
7.1. Incident Identification and Emergency Plan Initiation	8
7.2. Emergency Team Preparation	10
7.3. Emergency Team Actions upon Activation	11
7.4 Guidance for teams undertaking reconnaissance	13
7.5 Post Incident Activities	13
7.6 Recurring Emergency Plan Activities	14
7.7. Emergency Contact Numbers.....	15
7.8. Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit – PLACE OF SAFETY	15
7.9. Snow & Ice Advice	16
7.10. Household Emergency Checklist	17
7.11. Household Emergency Plan	18
7.12. Incident Log Template	19
7.13. Emergency Plan - Equipment Inventory.....	20
7.14. Holcombe Parish Emergency Sector Map.....	21
8.1 St Andrews Church – Holcombe – Facilities	26
8.2 Battle Box – Emergency Equipment – St Andrews Church	27
8.3 Operational Process of St Andrews Church as a Place of Safety.....	28
8.4 Emergency Contacts- St Andrews Church.....	29
8.5 Annual Review and Training	29
9.1. Two Way Radio Guidance Notes and Procedures	30
9.2 Radio Procedure.....	31

1. Issue Statement

Issue No.	Date	Author	Notes
Issue 0.2	01/09/2017	S Robinson	Entire document reformatted following 2017 review and update
Issue 0.3	01/09/2015	R Stokes	Document reformatted from pdf version and additional sections / content added
Issue 0.4	29/08/17	R Stokes	Entire document following edits from Sue Robinson and Stephenie Chorley
Issue 1.0	04/09/17	S Robinson	Entire document edited to include feedback from full Parish Council review.
Issue 0.5	05/02/18	S Robinson	Document updated following Emergency Plan Training 03/02/18
Issue 0.6	18/12/18	S Robinson	Document updated following Emergency Plan Training ``15/12/18
Issue 0.7	18/12/19	S Robinson	Document updated following Emergency Plan Training ``30/11/19”
Issue 0.8	9/10/20	S Robinson	Document updated 9/10/20
Issue 0.9	07/08/21	S Robinson	Document updated 07/08/21

This Plan is next due for review on: **October/ November 2021**

Note:

This is the FULL version of the Emergency Plan and is not intended to be viewed on the Holcombe Parish Council website.

This document is issued only to:

- The Emergency Co-ordinator
- The Initial Response Team members

2. Data Protection

The provisions of the Data Protection Act and the Civil Contingencies Act permit the sharing of data in emergencies and to that end it follows that in planning for an emergency there is a need to protect and share data.

The following is taken from HMG publication 'Data Protection and Sharing – Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders.

Key Principles

1. Data protection legislation does not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal data; it provides a framework where personal data can be used with confidence that individual's privacy rights are respected.
2. Emergency responders' starting point should be to consider the risks and the potential harm that may arise if they do not share information.
3. Emergency responders should balance the potential damage to the individual (and where appropriate the public interest of keeping the information confidential) against the public
4. In emergencies, the public interest consideration will generally be more significant than during day-to-day business.
5. Always check whether the objective can still be achieved by passing less personal data.

3. Purpose

All local major emergencies will be dealt with by the emergency services, local authorities, utilities and voluntary agencies in a combined response. The full Emergency Plan is not intended to be a substitute for these services and on an emergency situation arising, the first response should always be to contact the emergency services by dialling 999.

Should there be a National Emergency e.g (Pandemic) the Government instructions and advice should be followed and will override the Parish Emergency Plan where appropriate.

4. Local Risk Assessment

The Holcombe Parish Council Emergency Plan has been drafted to respond to the risks outlined in the table below:

Ref.	Risks	Impact on Community	What can the Parish Emergency Group do to prepare?
1.	Severe Weather incl. flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flooding of local streets,• Damage to property	Provision of shelters if required.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blocked roads. 	
2.	Power Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss/partial loss to the village of electricity or gas. 	Information supplied via Parish website, social media, Local TV and Radio and Notice Boards. Shelters available for prolonged period
3.	Communication Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss/partial loss to the village telephone communications. 	To provide Communications for residents to contact Emergency Services only. General Information provided via Social Media, Local TV Radio. Parish website, Notice Board
4.	Major Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuation of homes / businesses Blockage of roads Loss of services 	Provision of shelter in case of evacuation. Information provided via Social Media, Local Radio/TV, Parish Notice Board
5.	Loss of Road Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charlton Road, Brewery Lane, Common Lane, Stratton Road, Holcombe Hill 	Information provided via Social Media, Local Radio/TV, Parish Notice Board
6.	Hazardous Material Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuation of homes / businesses Blockage of roads Loss of services 	Provision of Shelter should evacuation be required when responding to Emergency Service request. Information provided via Social Media, Local Radio/TV, Parish Notice Board
7.	Pollution including: Food, Land and Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuation of homes / businesses Blockage of roads Loss of services 	Assistance provided to Emergency Services as required. Information provided via Social Media, Local Radio/TV, Parish Notice Board
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
8.	Police Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All types of Police Incidents. Criminal, Missing Person, Security, Terrorism 	Assistance provided to Emergency Services as required. Information provided via Social Media, Local Radio/TV, Parish Notice Board
9	Pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Crisis 	Follow Government Guidelines. Information provided via Social Media, Local Radio/TV.

5. Key locations identified with Emergency Services as places of safety

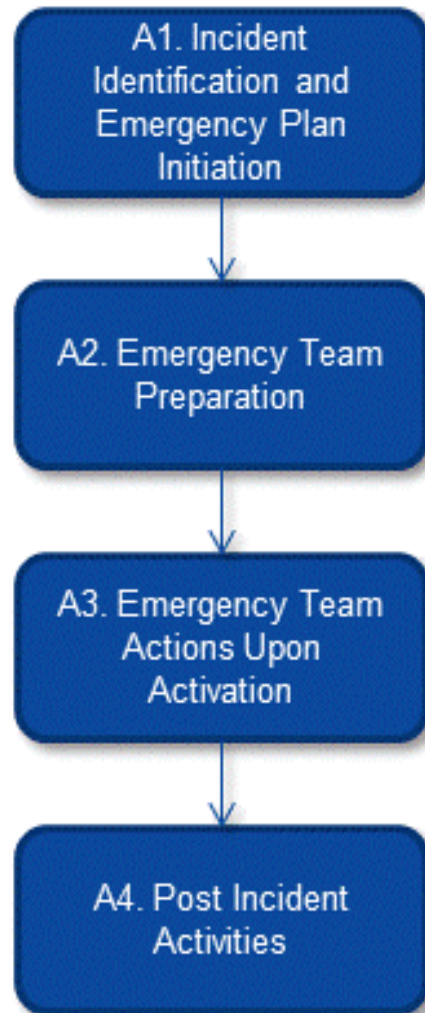
Ref.	Building	Location	Potential Emergency Use	Contact details of key holder
1.	<p>Village Hall Parish Council (Trustee) Approx 120 people Registered as a Place of Safety with Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit</p> <p>Wifi-holcombeVH Internal Phone box 01761 232299</p>	Charlton Road, BA3 5EW	This is suitable for use as a Shelter with cooking facilities. It is likely to be very cold in inclement weather if electricity fails.	Kath Simpson Tel: 01761 233172 (VH bookings) Key Box Code: 4726
2.	<p>St. Andrews Church Church owned Approx 120 people Registered as a Place of Safety with Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit</p>	Holcombe Hill BA3 5FR	This is suitable for use as a Shelter. Toilets and kitchen facilities.	Revd. Clarissa Cridland Tel: 01373 812705 Gay Curtis 01761 232140
3	<p>Village Car Park</p>	Brewery Lane	The car park may be required for the parking of emergency vehicles and personnel.	Bob Mitchell Tel.No- 0761 232710 07533840677 Gate Key Box (code changed monthly)

6. List of community Organisations

Ref.	Organisation	Name / Role of Contact	Telephone Number
1.	Mendip Country Practice Coleford	The Practice Manager	01373 812244
2.	Oakhill Surgery Oakhill	The Practice Manager	01749 840233
3.	Downside School Stratton-on-the-Fosse	Safeguarding Officer	01761 235100
4.	Bishop Henderson School Coleford	Safeguarding Officer	01363 812557
5.	Stoke St. Michael School Stoke St. Michael	Head Teacher	01749 840470
6.	Leigh on Mendip First School Radstock	School Administrator	01373 812592
7.	Kilmersdon Primary School Kilmersdon	Head Teacher	01761 432283
8.	Owl Babies Pre-School Radstock	The Principal	01373 814782
9.	St. Andrews Church	Revd. Clarissa Cridland	01373 812705
10.	Aster Group Scotts Close Holcombe	Contact Company	0333 400 8222

7. Emergency Plan Process

The Holcombe Emergency Plan process comprises four sequential stages illustrated by the schematic below:



7.1. Incident Identification and Emergency Plan Initiation

If an incident arises, the following steps should be taken:

1. If an emergency arises and it is not possible to contact the emergency services straight away (or if their response may be delayed), the Holcombe Emergency Plan should be initiated by any member of the public or Parish Emergency team first Contacting the Emergency Co-ordinator.

Role	Name	Telephone	Mobile
Parish Clerk	Vickie Watts	01749 880428	07971 516916

If the Emergency Co-ordinator is not available, contact the Parish Emergency Team Commander or their deputy if they are also unavailable (see next table below).

2. The Emergency Co-ordinator will contact Parish Emergency Team 'Commander' who will then determine if the Emergency Plan needs to be activated.

Role	Name	Telephone	Mobile
Parish Council - Chairman (Commander)	Simon Brand	01761 232624 /	07766 598817
Parish Council – Vice Chairman	Philip Gait	01761 232125	07812 441223

3. If the Commander decides that the Emergency Plan needs to be activated they will advise the Emergency Co-ordinator to contact the members of the Parish Emergency Team to initiate the local response. When contacting the team members consider the following contact methods in order:

- Landline telephone
- Mobile
- Group text message

Ref.	Role	Name	Telephone	Mobile
1.	Parish Councillor - Chairman	Simon Brand	01761 232624	07766 598817
2.	Parish Councillor –Vice Chairman	Philip Gait	01761 232125	07812441223
3.	Parish Councillor			
4.	Parish Councillor			
5.	Parish Councillor	Simon Eade		07976 412585
6.	Parish Councillor			
7.	Parish Councillor			
8.	Parish Councillor			
9.	Parish Councillor			
10.	Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit		0300 123 2224	
11.	St. Andrews Church, Holcombe	Revd. Clarissa Cridland	01373 812706	

7.2. Emergency Team Preparation

Following the initiation of the Emergency Plan described in the previous stage and prior to deploying upon activation of the Team please consider the following points:

Pre-Deployment Guidance for members of the Parish Emergency Team -

1. Tell your family where you are going and the reason. Arrange to update them later if necessary.
2. Ensure you dress appropriately, including stout footwear and clothing appropriate for the next 12 hours. Take a waterproof jacket. During Pandemic take facemasks and sanitizers.
3. Carry your mobile phone and charger, set the ringer to its highest level.
4. Carry a notepad and two pens - one will always fail when you need it most.
5. Consider taking food and water for up to 12 hours. This will reduce the support you will require during the incident and increase your effectiveness. Include any medication you may need in that time.
6. Carry your personal copy of the Parish Emergency Plan and associated guidance notes.
7. Be honest about your own capabilities. If asked to do something you are doubtful about, speak up. It is better to avoid an adverse situation than try to recover from it.

7.3. Emergency Team Actions upon Activation

Once the individual Emergency Team members have prepared (as described above), the following steps should then be followed:

1. All members of the Parish Emergency Team should gather at the Primary Assembly Point:

Village Hall
Charlton lane
Holcombe, BA3 5EW

or, if the Village Hall is inaccessible, they should gather at:

St. Andrews Church
Holcombe Hill
Holcombe, BA3 5FR

2. The Parish Emergency Team will assess the situation and an appointed member of the team will contact the appropriate emergency services
3. The Parish Emergency Team will assess prior to the emergency services arrival whether such local resources are required (and should be contacted).
4. If appropriate, and using local knowledge, members of the Parish Emergency Team will make contact with vulnerable individuals in the village (for example the disabled, elderly, housebound and parents with young children).
5. During the emergency, anyone involved in coordinating a response should keep a log of all requests for assistance and action taken, each log item being signed and dated. See the form in the appendices of this document.
6. If it is agreed that the Village Hall or St.Andrews Church is to be a Place of Safety. Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit **must** be informed. Tel. No. 0300 123 2224

7.3 Actions upon team activation cont:-

1. Team activated by appointed person, team called out by previously arranged protocol.
2. Rendezvous (RV) point assumed to be the village hall. First person to arrive activates heating and lighting as necessary. Set up tables to form admin area.
3. Battle box opened and initial register of attending team members taken. Incident controller and admin support don orange hi-vis vests, team members don yellow vests.

4. Incident log started. Details of time, date, reason for team activation and incident details as currently known entered.

5. Display pre-prepared signage and maps. Nominate mobile phone number as point of contact for partner agencies - consider nominating back up number, ideally on a different network. Advise SCC Civil Contingencies Unit and the Police (101) of team activation. Consider advising neighbouring Parish Councils that Holcombe has activated its team - this allows for mutual aid arrangements to be put on a 'standby' footing. If available (and appropriate) tune FM radio to BBC Somerset. Obtain latest weather forecast. Update log.

6. Team briefing. Cover details of incident, scale of incident including number of persons involved and potential time scales, anticipated role of the team, involvement of emergency services and County Council and any further relevant information known at the time. Update log.

7. Safety briefing. Cover personal safety, emergency arrangements including evacuation and emergency rendezvous point and first aid. Update log.

8. Further actions dependent upon incident type.

Consider:-

- Setting up hall for use as a Reception Centre and a Place of Safety. Ensure basic refreshments available and Washrooms /toilets are well stocked. A register of those attending the reception centre should be kept.
- Setting up hall for use as a multi agency control facility - layout will differ, for instance Commanders will appreciate a central workspace where briefings can be conducted face to face and where maps and papers can be displayed on large tables.
- Update parish website/ facebook to reflect activation of Parish Emergency Plan Assembling teams of two for reconnaissance. Ensuring one pair remains available to act as an emergency search unit.
- Identify which of the pre-determined parish zones require action and deploy teams as appropriate.
- Once reconnaissance complete, compile overall tactical picture including extent of damage, casualty /displaced person numbers, roads clear and blocked, extent of utilities failures.
- Controller to be prepared to present reconnaissance information to the Emergency Services /other agencies and re-brief the team.
- Be prepared for members of the public to turn up at the hall. Nominate someone to manage enquires and differentiate between the curious and those in need of assistance.
- Be aware of interest from the Press and be ready to respond to enquiries

7.4 Guidance for teams undertaking reconnaissance

1. Ensure PPE is worn.
2. Deploy in not less than teams of two. Ensure you have a mobile phone /radio and that the Controller has your number and you have theirs. Carry a notepad and pen.
3. Don't deviate from your assigned area. If you are overdue returning from your task and a search is launched you may not be found quickly if you have deviated from your assigned area.
4. Look for and record the location of damage to buildings, trees and utilities. Exercise caution around damaged structures. Report injured persons immediately and assist if necessary but always within your competence level.
5. Note roads that are obstructed or passable with care.
6. Do not approach or touch fallen cables. Note location and report back.
7. Gather any relevant information from the public that you encounter. Deploy only if you are wearing appropriate clothing and are physically able to complete the assigned task. All messages are to go through the Controller unless an emergency response is required. If so, call 999, assist if you are able and ensure the Controller is advised.

7.5 Post Incident Activities

Once the incident has been resolved, the following steps will need to be taken:

1. Hold an immediate de-brief ('Hot') to evaluate how the response went, to capture lessons learnt for the future and to ensure that the Incident Log has been properly updated.
2. Ensure that all the Emergency Plan equipment is returned to storage and that it is still in working order
3. After a suitable period following the emergency, hold a second de-brief ('Cold') to re-evaluate the response and reflect on the Emergency Team's performance

7.6 Recurring Emergency Plan Activities

In order to keep the plan up-to-date and to ensure its effectiveness the following three activities need to be scheduled (annually) by the Parish Council:

- **Review and Update of the Emergency Plan (this document)** – to ensure that the content is up-to-date and relevant. This activity may require additional budget allocation, procurement activity or re-allocation of ownership
- **Emergency Team Training** – to ensure the effectiveness of individual Emergency Team members and that our process and protocols are fit for purpose (recommended 3 hours of training per person per year. Next training proposed November 2021)
- **Emergency Equipment Inspection, Maintenance and Renewal** - to ensure that the emergency equipment is still operational. The outcome of this activity may require repairs to be made or the purchase of new equipment (check equipment yearly prior to training)

7.7. Emergency Contact Numbers

Ref.	Name / Role	Daytime Contact Telephone Number	24 Hour Contact Telephone Number
1.	Emergency Services		999
2.	Police Station - Radstock		101
3.	Police Station – Shepton Mallet		101
4.	Police Station - Frome		101
5.	Emergency Dept - Bath RUH		0300 123 2224
6.	Minor Injury Unit - Paulton	01761 412315	24hrs
7.	Minor Injury Unit - Shepton Mallet	01749 342931	08:00 – 20:30
8.	Minor Injury Unit - Frome	01373 454740	08:00 – 23:30
9.	Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit		0300 123 2224
10.	Environment Agency		0370 850 6506
11.	National Grid - Gas		0800 111 999
12.	National Grid – Electricity		0800 40 40 90
13.	Wessex Water		0345 6004600
14.	Bristol Water		0345 7023797
15.	Highways Agency		0300 1235000
16.	BT (Openreach)		0800 023 2023

7.8. Somerset Civil Contingencies Unit – PLACE OF SAFETY

If a Place of Safety is used to support people affected by an emergency in the village The Commander and other members of the Emergency Team should be aware of a few points.

- The Somerset Local Authorities must have been informed and agreed that the Village Hall is opened as a Place of Safety.
- If the authorities are not informed all activities will be covered by our own liability insurer. If the Somerset Local Authorities request the opening of a Place of Safety or have agreed to support an opened venue then the Somerset Local Authorities Insurance will cover.
- Somerset Local Authorities will look to support the opening of any Place of Safety if possible. They will reimburse reasonable costs of opening of the venue if Somerset Local Authorities have agreed on the extra resources required.
- Registered Places of Safety Holcombe Village:-.

Holcombe Village Hall

St. Andrews Church, Holcombe (see appendices9)

7.9. Snow & Ice Advice

You can clear snow and ice from pavements yourself. It's unlikely that you'll be sued or held responsible if someone is injured on a path or pavement if you've cleared it carefully.

How to clear snow and ice


When you clear snow and ice:

- do it early in the day - it's easier to move fresh, loose snow
- don't use water - it might freeze and turn to black ice
- use salt if possible - it will melt the ice or snow and stop it from refreezing overnight
- (but don't use the salt from salting bins as this is used to keep roads clear)
- You can use ash and sand if you don't have enough salt - it will provide grip underfoot
- pay extra attention when clearing steps and steep pathways - using more salt may help

7.10. Household Emergency Checklist

HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO GET BY



Your Household

Address:

.....

.....

Names and phone numbers:

.....

.....

Important phone numbers:

.....

.....

Police, Fire, Ambulance: dial 999

District Council:

Other:

Your Getaway Kit

Everybody in your house should have a small bag for a getaway kit, ready for evacuation, in addition to essential emergency items, this kit should include:

Family Documents

- Birth and marriage certificates
- Driver's licenses and passports
- Insurance certificates
- Family photographs

Personal Items

- Towels, soap, toothbrush and sanitary items
- A change of clothes

Emergency Survival Items

If you prefer to keep your emergency kit items in the house for everyday use, make sure you know where to find them, if an emergency occurs.

Food and Water - enough for 3 days or more

- Bottled water (at least 3 litres per person per day)
- Water for washing and cooking
- Non perishable food (canned or dried)
- Can opener
- An alternative source of cooking

Check and replace food regularly

Other Emergency Items

- Essential medicines
- Waterproof torches and batteries
- AM/FM radio – wind up or with spare batteries
- First aid kit essential medicines
- Toilet paper
- Pet supplies
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Wind and rainproof clothing
- Strong shoes for outdoors
- Sun protection

Supplies for babies and small children

- Food, formula and drink
- Change of clothing and nappies
- Favourite toy or activity


Other supplies

- Hearing and sight aids
- Mobility aids
- Asthma and respiratory aids
- Special food needs

For more information visit www.somerset.gov.uk/

GO IN, STAY IN, TUNE IN

7.11. Household Emergency Plan




HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY PLAN

COMPLETE THIS PLAN WITH ALL MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD

<p>1. If we cannot get home or contact each other, we will meet or leave a message at:</p> <p>2. The person responsible for collecting the children from school is: Name:..... Contact details:..... Name (back up):..... Contact details:.....</p> <p>3. The person responsible for checking the emergency items is:</p> <p>4. The radio station to tune to for information is:</p> <p>5. In an emergency we will, GO IN, STAY IN, TUNE IN, unless advised otherwise. We will need to be prepared to look after ourselves for up to 3 days or more. In an emergency we will: Stop, Think and Respond Get our Emergency Survival items Listen to the radio for advice and information</p>	<p>6. If we have to evacuate our home we will: Take our Getaway Kit and Essential Emergency items Turn off water, electricity and gas</p> <p>7. Neighbours that may need our help or can help us: Name:..... Address:..... Phone:..... Name:..... Address:..... Phone:..... Name:..... Address:..... Phone:.....</p> <p>8. A plan of our house showing places to shelter e.g. flooding, exits, assembly area and where to turn off water, electricity and gas:</p>
--	--

PLAN OF OUR HOUSE



7.12. Incident Log Template

Nature of Incident	Location	Date.	Sheet no.
---------------------------	-----------------	--------------	------------------

No.	Time	Name(s) Involved	Request for assistance / action taken	Completed (Signature & Date)

Completed by:

7.13. Emergency Plan - Equipment Inventory

(Held with Parish Clerk for insurance purposes)

Ref.	Item	Description	Units	Quantity	Purchase Cost	Supplier	Date of Purchase	Expiration Date (if applicable)	Notes
1.									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
8.									
9.									
10.									
11.									

7.14. Holcombe Parish Emergency Sector Map



My Mendip

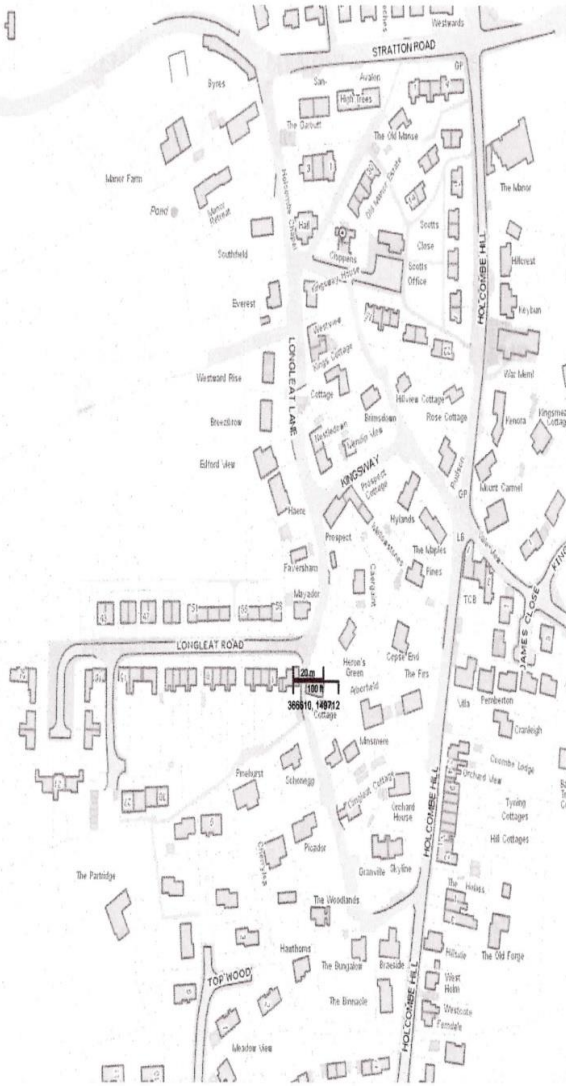
SECTOR 1



<http://maps.mendip.gov.uk/mymendip.aspx>

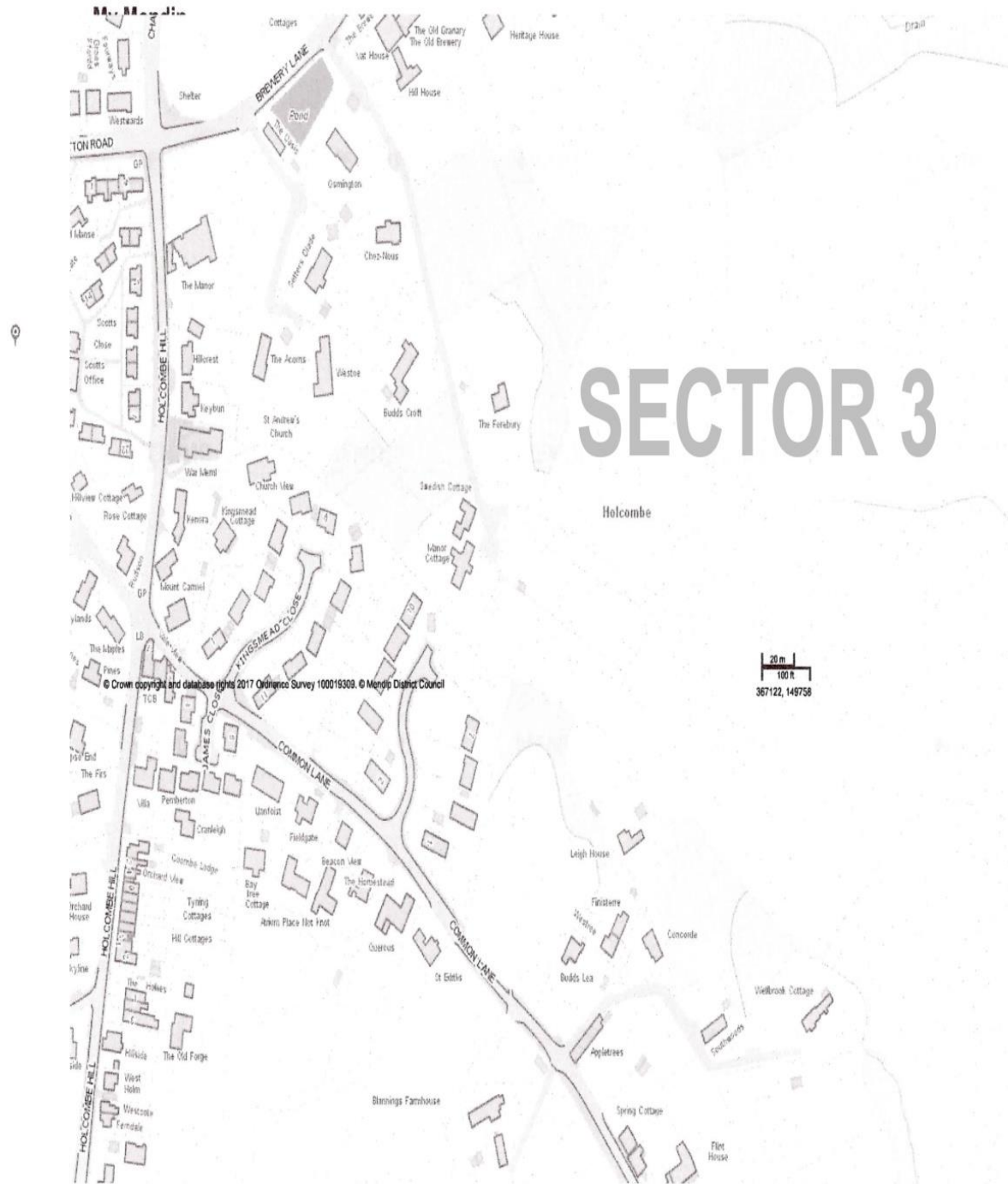
SECTOR 2

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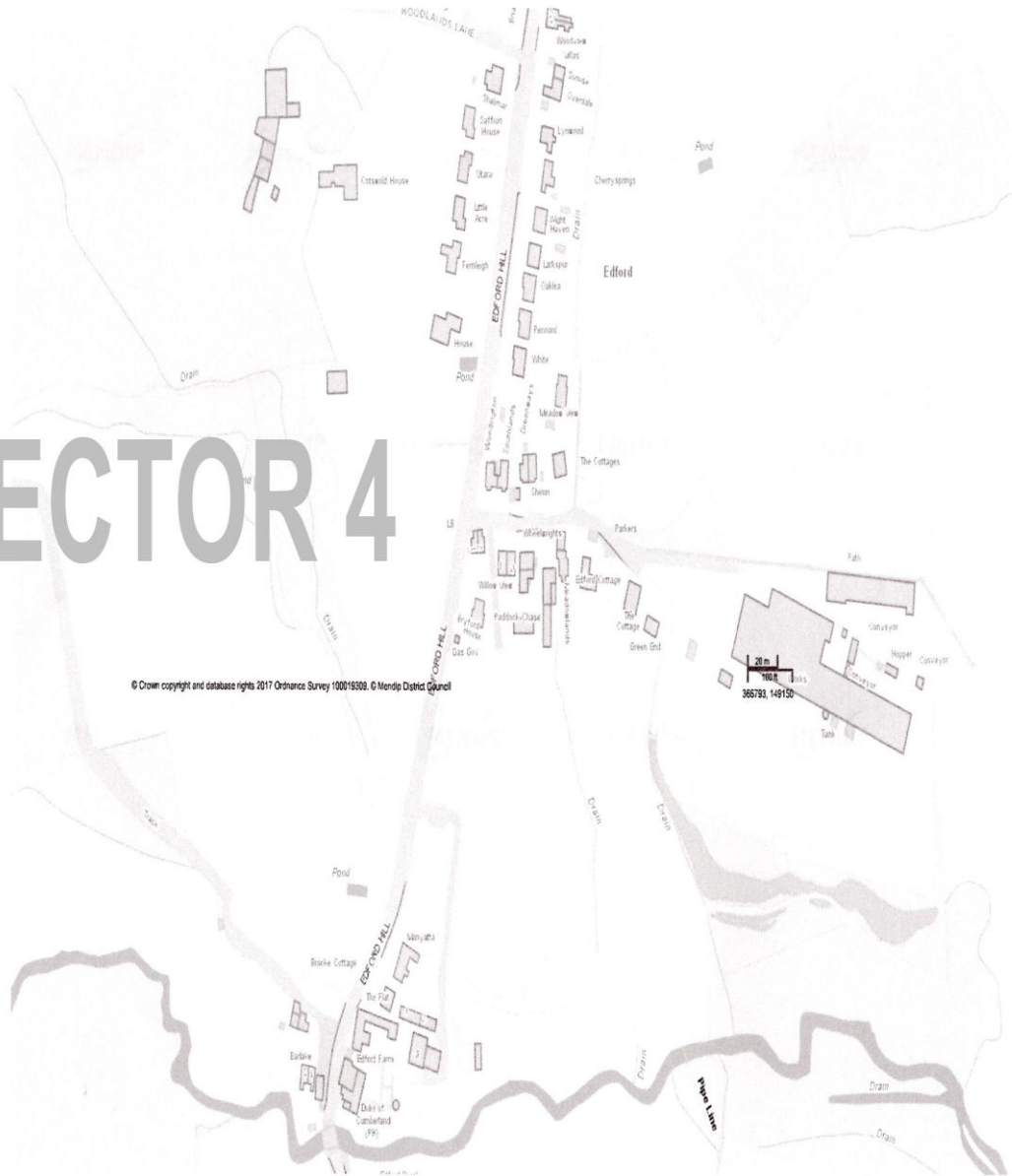
<http://maps.mendip.gov.uk/mymendip.aspx>

1/1



<http://maps.mendip.gov.uk/mymendip.aspx>

SECTOR 4



8. Appendices

St Andrews Church – Holcombe – BA3 5FR - A Place of Safety

A Place of Safety

St Andrews Church, Holcombe has been designated and registered as a Place of Safety site, should there be a need to provide emergency shelter to those who have to leave their homes in an emergency. If for whatever reason the Parish Hall is unavailable as the primary site (damage etc), or additional Place of Safety is required, St Andrews Church could be utilised. St Andrews Church will undertake to make the 100 Room available to the Parish Emergency Team as an alternative command point if required. The proposed duration that St Andrews Church would operate would be no more than 12 hours.

8.1 St Andrews Church – Holcombe – Facilities

Facilities		
Accommodate 120 persons approx	120	Numbers sustainable for a short period of time
Reception Area	Y	
Electricity	Y	
Gas	Y	Central heating
Hot and Cold Water	Y	Kitchen
Toilets	Y	One Toilet
Kitchen Equipment	Y	Small kitchen capable of providing drinks and handling a supply of prepared food.
First Aid	Y	Held at the Church
Eating Area	Y	
Quiet Area	Y	The Church could be set aside into areas depending on the size and nature of the emergency
Area for children	Y	Dependant on numbers and room arrangements
Parking	N	Parking only on Holcombe Hill
Phone	N	
Disabled Facilities		Access into Church no problem

8.2 Battle Box – Emergency Equipment – St Andrews Church

The Emergency 'Battle Box' for St. Andrews Church as a Place of Safety is stored securely in the church. The 'Battle Box' remains the property and responsibility of the Parish Council.

(Held with Parish Clerk for insurance purposes)

Ref.	Item	Description	Units	Quantity	Purchase Cost	Supplier	Date of Purchase	Expiration Date (if applicable)	Notes
1.									
2.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
8.									
9.									
10.									
11.									

8.3 Operational Process of St Andrews Church as a Place of Safety.

- If an incident arises and the Emergency Team feel that St Andrews Church should be opened as a Place of Safety it would be the responsibility of the Church Officers to open the Church. If no Church Officers are available the Church will not open.
- The running of the facility will primarily be with the Church Officers and their appointed persons.
- The Parish Council will allocate a member of the Parish Emergency Team, equipped with radio communication to St Andrews to act as Liaison Officer.
- During the Emergency St Andrews will provide shelter, light refreshments (tea/coffee/biscuits), support and welfare to those persons using the facilities. This will be supported by the Parish Emergency Team
- The areas of the Church used as a community Place of Safety will be decided by the Church Officers based on their knowledge of the building.
- St. Andrews will post appropriate signage outside the Church.
- St Andrews will maintain an appropriate registration list of residents attending the Church as the Place of Safety.
- St Andrews will undertake to make the 100 Room available to the Parish Emergency Team as an alternate Command Point in event that the Village Hall becomes untenable due to utilities failure or other adverse event.
- Upon conclusion of the Emergency, both the Parish Emergency Team and St Andrew's will undertake to participate in a debrief to establish future learning points.

8.4 Emergency Contacts- St Andrews Church

Role	Name	Telephone	Mobile
St Andrews Church	Revd, Clarissa Cridland	01373 812706	
Gay Curtis	Church Secretary	01761 232 140	
Anne-Marie Cartwright	Churchwarden	01761 569914	
Ann Gardiner-Bryan	Churchwarden	01761 233461	

8.5 Annual Review and

Training

The Parish Council will provide appropriate familiarisation training to Church Officers on an annual basis usually in November each year.

9. Appendices

9.1. Two Way Radio Guidance Notes and Procedures

Speech on two-way radios is NEVER secure and users should exercise discretion on the amount of detail passed over the air. It is always possible that someone is listening in on your transmissions and you should guard against passing information of a sensitive or personal nature unless absolutely necessary.

The radios operate on rechargeable battery packs that can be charged either in the radios or by themselves simply by reconfiguring the charging units. The charging time is 14 hours. This is clearly impracticable in an emergency so Alkaline AAA batteries will be kept in the battle box for immediate use. The rechargeable batteries will be used for planned village events and will be placed on charge during an emergency to supplement the AAA batteries.

The battery compartment is in the rear of the radios and is opened by loosening the silver coloured screw at the base and sliding off the cover. A 20 pence piece is ideal for this purpose.

The radios have 8 channels and 121 privacy codes per channel. Initially, the default channel 1, privacy code 2 is displayed on the radio's screen. These can be changed by using the SEL (Selection) button and then by using the up and down arrows on the front of the radio. Confirm your selection by pushing the PTT (Push To Talk) switch on the left side of the radio.

It is recommended that channel changes are only made at the direction of the Controller to avoid confusion and that all radios are changed simultaneously.

All the radios have been labelled with their own unique callsign. This callsign will remain with the radio and permits the Controller to identify the user immediately. During any incident, the name of the person the radio has been issued to will be noted in the Log against the callsign.

The callsigns are as follows:-

Holcombe Control – this will be the Controllers radio and his/her personal callsign.

The following radios can be issued to team members:-

Holcombe Zero One Holcombe Zero Four

Holcombe Zero Two Holcombe Zero Five.

Holcombe Zero Three

9.2 Radio Procedure.

Good radio procedure relies on discipline and brevity. Radios are not mobile phones and a different approach is required. Radio conversations are clipped, brief and accurate with the aim of passing information efficiently. To this end, a set of standard phrases are used to avoid confusion. It is also important that radio users are permanently listening for their call sign to be used. There is little point in having radios if nobody is listening to them!

An example of a Holcombe radio message might be:-

“Holcombe Zero Five from Holcombe Control, Do you receive? Over”

“Holcombe Zero Five receiving, go ahead Control, Over”

“Holcombe Zero Five, request you proceed to Boundary Close and investigate report of fallen tree, please note damage and exact location and report by radio, Over”

“Holcombe Zero Five, all noted, now en route, Over”

“Thank you Holcombe Zero Five, Control Out”

In this radio exchange you'll note how the Controller uses Holcombe Zero Five's call sign throughout the message to avoid confusion and how Zero Five prefixes their information with their call sign. You'll also notice the use of 'Over' at the end of each party's speech until the end of the exchange where the Controller closes the conversation with Zero Five by using 'Out'. It is acceptable to drop the 'Holcombe' from the callsign but only after it has been used at least once by both parties. This supports brevity whilst ensuring clarity.

The Controller is the only person to close radio conversations by the use of 'Out'. This indicates to the other callsigns that the Controller is available to speak to them if necessary. 'Over and Out' as used in films is a contradiction in terms, inaccurate and is not to be used.

We'll now look at Holcombe Zero Fives' report to the Controller after attending the fallen tree in Boundary Close.

"Holcombe Control from Holcombe Zero Five, do you receive? Over"

"Holcombe Control receiving, go ahead Holcombe Zero Five, Over"

"From Zero Five, fallen tree in Boundary Close presents no dangers, minor damage to guttering of one property only with householder dealing. Over"

"Thank you Zero Five, no further taskings for you at this time, return to base, Control Out."

By this method, information is passed efficiently and with the minimum of effort.

When the Parish Emergency Team is deployed, it is likely radio communications will all go through the Controller. However, if individual call signs need to pass information directly between themselves then approval should be sought from the Controller for this to happen. If approved, the Controller will listen in on the exchange and note any relevant points for the Log.

During any radio exchange between two parties, other call signs should remain silent. The only exception is an emergency when there is an immediate risk to those involved.

To break into an ongoing exchange the following method should be used. In this example we'll use the previous exchange between Control and Holcombe Zero Five as a baseline.

"Holcombe Zero Five from Holcombe Control, do you receive? Over"

“Holcombe Zero Five receiving, go.....”

“HOLCOMBE ZERO TWO PRIORITY MESSAGE!”

“This is Holcombe Control, all callsigns standby, Holcombe Zero Two calling Priority pass message, Over”

“HOLCOMBE ZERO TWO, HAVE FOUND COLLAPSED MALE IN COMMON LANE, UNRESPONSIVE BUT BREATHING, REQUEST ASSISTANCE AND AMBULANCE. OVER”

“From Control, ambulance being called now, we are dispatching assistance to your location. Standby for further details. BREAK.”

The use of the word ‘BREAK’ indicates to Zero Two that the Controller needs to speak to another callsign before coming back to him. Zero Two will wait to be contacted unless he needs to call ‘Priority’ once more.

“Holcombe Zero Three from Holcombe Control do you receive, Over?”

“Holcombe Zero Three receiving, go ahead Control, Over”

“From Control, proceed to Common Lane to assist Zero Two with collapsed male, ambulance en route. Please provide update at earliest opportunity. Over”

“From Zero Three, all noted, en route, update to follow, Over”

“From Control, thank you Zero Three. BREAK, Holcombe Zero Two did you copy my last to Zero Three? Over”

“From Zero Two, all noted, will advise. Over”

“From Control, thank you Zero Two. Control Out.”

Perhaps a slightly dramatic example but it illustrates the utility of radio communications and the flexibility they provide if used properly.

And Finally.....

A few tips to get the most out of the radios:-

Always use the lanyard supplied with the radio, it keeps your hands free.

Position the radio approx six to eight inches from your mouth and wait one second before speaking after depressing the Push To Talk (PTT) switch on the left of the radio body. This ensures the start of your message isn't lost.

Conduct a radio check with all radios before deployment and confirm with the Controller that you can be heard. Each radio should be checked to ensure the channel and privacy code is correct and a test call made to the Controller to check volume and reception. The radio check should be recorded in the Log.

If you need to spell words, please use the NATO Phonetic alphabet as listed below. This is a recognised and well understood way of avoiding confusion.

A – Alpha	H - Hotel	O - Oscar	V - Victor
B – Bravo	I – India	P – Papa	W - Whiskey
C – Charlie	J – Juliet	Q - Quebec	X – X-Ray
D – Delta	K – Kilo	R – Romo	Y - Yankee
E- Echo	L - Lima	S – Sierra	Z - Zulu
F - Foxtrot	M - Mike	T – Tango	
G - Golf	N – November	U - Uniform	