

Transcript of Climate Resilient Community video

Our climate is changing and we are all seeing the effects in the extreme weather events over the last decade. In the future, it is predicted that we will experience these extreme events more frequently and consequently, as a community we will need to be prepared to look after ourselves and each other.

Analysis of average temperature change in Europe over time clearly indicates a rapid rise since the industrial revolution began around 150 years ago. To mitigate this warming, communities in Cheshire and elsewhere have been encouraged to reduce their “Carbon footprint” and the activities of some of these were outlined in a previous video “The Climate for Community Change”.

Increasingly, communities are being encouraged to become more resilient to support vulnerable individuals as part of a first line help during emergencies. During widespread and extreme weather events, the support services become overwhelmed and therefore communities can help by preparing resources ahead of potential events.

Chris Samuel is the Team manager of the Joint Cheshire Emergency Planning Team who goes on to explain the importance of integrating all resources at every level towards planning Community resilience for the future.

This important and vital preparation can range from help and support through volunteers, who can provide door to door assistance, to the identification of buildings as places of refuge thus incorporating a response at the local level with the more well established “blue light” and other services.

Community leaders and support services met in Warrington in early 2012 to discuss several relevant issues and to help kick start the process leading to the adoption of a plan template and toolkit to help groups identify vulnerable people and places that are at risk from our changing climate, as well as the consequential damage we are seeing today.

An early meeting in Lymm identified geographical areas at risk and a discussion took place to identify their existing resources as well as potential for future development.

Another village "Ashton Hayes", featured in the previous video, has also been developing its Climate Resilience plan over the last few months, not only through the parish Council but also with agencies such as the "Snow Angels" (Pause)

This has involved a number of meetings, to produce their plan to provide essential information about who to contact, resources within the village and different responses to different weather events. To date This includes community meetings to help with advice on heating, meals, gritting of pathways and the establishment of informal group meetings within the community.

Cathy Boyd and Jane Colville have been recruiting and training volunteers to help in the Snow Angel programme. Aimed mainly at the elderly and more vulnerable in the community, they can provide an immediate response to those who otherwise would be isolated and cut off from their basic needs. Even talking through the stress of their situation can be of paramount importance for boosting morale.

With local information gathering, communities are now actively engaged in planning for the future.
(Show meeting in progress)

With this knowledge these groups provide invaluable and trusted community support during the initial effects of extreme weather conditions; whilst monitoring on going developments to update the various agencies involved.

We are only just beginning to feel the effects of Climate Change. Whatever we do by way of mitigation now and in the future some change will be inevitable, due the greenhouse gases that are already present in the atmosphere. These will lead to further warming and more energetic and therefore more destructive weather events. We need to be aware of the potential changes and be prepared at the community level for what these changes will bring.