

**Ms Sally Louden
Chief Executive
Argyll & Bute Council
Kilmory
Lochgilphead
Argyll
PA31 8RT**

**21 Queens Point
Shandon
Helensburgh
G84 8QZ**

**01436 820906
07901 515208**

jack.rudram@btopenworld.com

15 December 2012

Dear Ms Louden,

Community Council Involvement in Emergency Planning

Ref: A Guide to Helping your Community Prepare an Emergency Plan. (Received Oct 2012)

I write on behalf of Rhu and Shandon Community Council (R&S CC) following a discussion at our meeting on 12 December 2012 about the referenced document.

For emergency planning to be successful, it has to be developed in advance, individuals require to be trained, there has to be a way of mobilising a response, plans require to be practised, modified and, above all, updated. Contacts, resources, telephone numbers etc have to be constantly reviewed and kept accurate. In a community such as Rhu and Shandon, where there is a reasonably high turnover of residents, such continuous maintenance of an emergency plan would require considerable effort.

The emphasis in the reference is all on volunteer led and resourced plans, albeit interfacing with, and subservient to, the professional Emergency Services. The CC is a body of volunteers who are already heavily committed to helping their community. Few have any professional experience of emergency planning for a civilian community, and most are reluctant to take on the responsibility of developing and maintaining the kind of plans envisioned in the reference. The Emergency Services employ trained and qualified professionals to develop and maintain emergency response capability and also are formal organisations with the clear command and control structure required for successful emergency management. It is strongly believed that these professionals should be providing the lead in developing emergency plans where it is deemed to be necessary and desirable to mobilise the community. They also have the skills and resources to maintain and refresh those plans. R&S CC will be happy to liaise with the professional services in commenting upon and assisting with such plans, with preparation led by the professionals.

That said, the R&S CC would be willing to assist the professional services, either as a body or as individuals, should an emergency arise where their input was beneficial. In particular, we believe

that close neighbours are the most likely to be aware of vulnerable individuals and will be very happy to assist them in an emergency, without a need for formal plans.

In conclusion, the proposal by A&BC to have Community Council that volunteers develop and maintain emergency plans is a role which the volunteer members of R&S CC are not prepared to take on. We believe this role lies squarely within the responsibilities of Argyll & Bute Regional Council. This is the domain of the professionals and emergency planning must be led by the trained and skilled professionals of the emergency services.

Yours sincerely

Jack Rudram
Convenor, Rhu & Shandon Community Council

Copied to:

Members of the Rhu & Shandon Community Council by email
Councillor George Freeman by email
Councillor Robert McIntyre by email
Councillor Maurice Corrie by email