


# Disasters and Emergencies

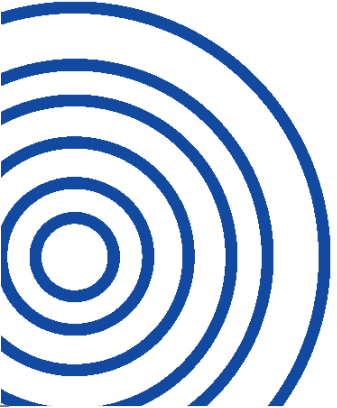
*How you can help in Bedfordshire*



# Whatever the emergency, fast action is needed



**This leaflet explains how you can help people affected by an emergency.**



In Bedfordshire the emergency services, local authorities, voluntary organisations and many others are well prepared to respond to emergencies. We have formed a partnership known as the Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum (BLLRF) and we work together to prepare for emergencies.

The local authorities in Bedfordshire manage volunteers and are strongly supported by the police, fire and rescue service, ambulance service and the NHS. You can find out more by visiting our [website www.bllrf.org.uk](http://www.bllrf.org.uk).



## How can you help?

**Volunteer:** sign up as an emergency volunteer by joining the Bedfordshire and Luton Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC). This is a local partnership of charities, community groups and volunteers who work together as part of BLLRF to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies.



# How to join the Bedfordshire emergency volunteers



**You can join the volunteers in two ways.**

- You can become a member of our own group of emergency volunteers and specialise in emergency response by contacting [volunteering@blrf.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@blrf.org.uk) or calling us on 0300 300 4145.
- You can join an organisation that is already a member of BLEVEC (using the details on the back page).

## What are the benefits of becoming an emergency volunteer?

**If you become an emergency volunteer, you will:**

- learn specialist skills
- become involved in an active emergency-response network
- get involved in the community
- meet new people and make friends
- help others and make a difference
- get a chance to influence local emergency procedures
- help us prepare for and respond to all types of emergency that may affect Bedfordshire
- be active and valued in your community
- receive your own emergency kit and gain recognition through a uniform
- help make your community more resilient.



# What types of activity will you get involved in as an emergency volunteer?

**Some of the activities of our emergency volunteers include:**

- being the first to respond in an emergency
- staffing and managing emergency centres to look after the victims of an emergency
- warning and informing the public in times of risk and danger
- helping stranded motorists
- providing emergency feeding, transport, communications and first aid
- setting up and managing disaster appeals and memorials
- managing and staffing telephone help and support lines
- working with different faith, ethnic and nationality groups in the community
- working with people with disabilities
- carrying out risk and impact assessments
- working with the families and friends of victims who have died or been injured
- working at emergency mortuary facilities
- helping with animal welfare



- helping build resilience to emergencies in their communities
- promoting and developing community emergency plans.

As you may be working with vulnerable adults and children, you may be asked to complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

# What training will you receive?



If you join our local group of emergency volunteers, you will benefit from monthly evening training, held on the second Tuesday of the month from 7.30–9.30pm. Training will cover a range of topics such as:

- flood response
- emergency management
- health and safety
- vulnerable children
- managing violence and aggression
- managing trauma.

We also hold specialist training sessions for people who want to gain qualifications in areas such as first aid and food safety.

If you join an existing BLEVEC member organisation (see the back page) you will:

- you will benefit from all the training mentioned above
- be able to take advantage of other training, development opportunities and activities offered by that organisation.



# Would your charity, community group or organisation like to join BLEVEC and help in an emergency?

If so, contact us at [volunteering@bllrf.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@bllrf.org.uk) or by calling us on 0300 300 4145. By becoming a BLEVEC member organisation, you will benefit from:

- free monthly emergency training
- free specialist training courses
- receiving a grab pack for all volunteers (includes ID card and uniform)
- the opportunity to get involved in live emergency exercises
- being able to influence local, regional and national emergency planning
- being part of a nationally recognised partnership.



To find out more about emergency planning, response and how you, your family and businesses can prepare, visit

[www.bllrf.org.uk](http://www.bllrf.org.uk)



# Other ways to help in an emergency



If you can't join us before an emergency happens, there are ways you can still help. In big emergencies that affect many people:

- **Make a donation:** this is the easiest and most effective way that people, businesses and organisations can help. In an emergency, the local council and BLEVEC members may set up a widely publicised disaster appeal that you can donate to.
- **Check our website:** the latest information on an emergency will always be available — [www.blrf.org.uk](http://www.blrf.org.uk).
- **The local resilience partnership** may organise books of condolence and memorial events that you will be able to attend.
- **Don't collect and send donated goods:** instead, convert goods into cash. A common public response to emergencies is to organise the collection and donation of goods that it thinks are urgently needed. This may cause more problems than it solves. If these are needed, our partnership will already have arranged to get them and distribute them quickly in bulk.
- **Volunteer:** the effects of an emergency are often long term. By registering an interest in volunteering you can make it much easier for the BLEVEC organisations to call on your skills and keep you up to date with events.
- **Make a regular donation:** you could make a regular donation to a BLEVEC member (see back page). This will help them to build up their funds, enabling them to respond to emergencies immediately.
- **Equipment and resources are vital:** consider offering special equipment before a disaster happens rather than on the day. If offers of special equipment like machinery or transport are made and agreed in advance, we can build them into our plans and arrange to receive them more quickly and easily if a disaster does happen.

# BLEVEC members



- ▶ Bedford Council of Faiths [www.bcof.org.uk](http://www.bcof.org.uk)
- ▶ Beds, Herts and Cambs Landrover Club [www.bhclrc.org.uk](http://www.bhclrc.org.uk)
- ▶ British Red Cross [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)
- ▶ CHUMS child bereavement service [www.chums.info](http://www.chums.info)
- ▶ Clergy (Churches Together) [www.churches-together.net](http://www.churches-together.net)
- ▶ CRUSE bereavement care [www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)
- ▶ Luton Airport Chaplaincy Emergency Response Team (CERT) [www.london-luton.co.uk](http://www.london-luton.co.uk)
- ▶ Luton Council of Faiths [www.lutonfaiths.org](http://www.lutonfaiths.org)
- ▶ MENTER [www.mentor.org.uk](http://www.mentor.org.uk)
- ▶ Midshires Search and Rescue (MSAR) [www.midshires.org.uk](http://www.midshires.org.uk)
- ▶ RAYNET [www.raynet-uk.net](http://www.raynet-uk.net)
- ▶ Rescue and Preparedness in Disasters UK (RAPID UK) [www.rapiduk.org.uk](http://www.rapiduk.org.uk)
- ▶ RSPCA [www.rspca.org.uk](http://www.rspca.org.uk)
- ▶ Salvation Army [www.salvationarmy.org.uk](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk)
- ▶ Samaritans [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)
- ▶ SERV (Service by Emergency Volunteer Riders) – [www.serv.org.uk](http://www.serv.org.uk)
- ▶ St. John Ambulance [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)
- ▶ Victim Support – Bedfordshire [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- ▶ Voluntary and Community Action [www.voluntaryworks.org.uk](http://www.voluntaryworks.org.uk)
- ▶ Woodgreen Animal Shelters [www.woodgreen.org.uk](http://www.woodgreen.org.uk)
- ▶ WRVS [www.wrvs.org.uk](http://www.wrvs.org.uk)

**Each of these organisations has specialist functions, but all get involved in any emergency response in Bedfordshire.**

