

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

It's an old saying that: "to fail to prepare is to prepare to fail", and this is so true when considering if your business or service would be able to continue in the event of a major disruption.

The events at Buncefield following the Oil Depot explosion in December 2005 have reminded us all that major disruption can happen. But even a minor event, such as a localised loss of power, flood or staff sickness can lead to severe disruption for a small business or voluntary organisation.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 has placed new duties on Local Authorities to promote Business Continuity in their local areas. Business Continuity is the process which a business or organisation undertakes to ensure its resilience to disruption or disaster. Usually this will be achieved by the production of a Business Continuity Plan which will specify how the business or organisation will be managed during a disruption or emergency.

To prepare for a disruption or disaster will help you to ensure that key customers, your brand's reputation and key suppliers are maintained, as well as ensuring that your business or organisation can survive.

Existing Plans

Winchester City Council has two principal groups of plans. The first is an Emergency Response Plan which it uses to support the emergency services (for example Police, and Fire and Rescue) in the event of a major incident. The Council also has its own Business Continuity Plans so that it can carry out its emergency response duties should severe disruption occur to its own premises and also plans to carry on providing its key services.

How much will it cost?

A simple plan might take a modest amount of time to prepare, but should not be a major expense.

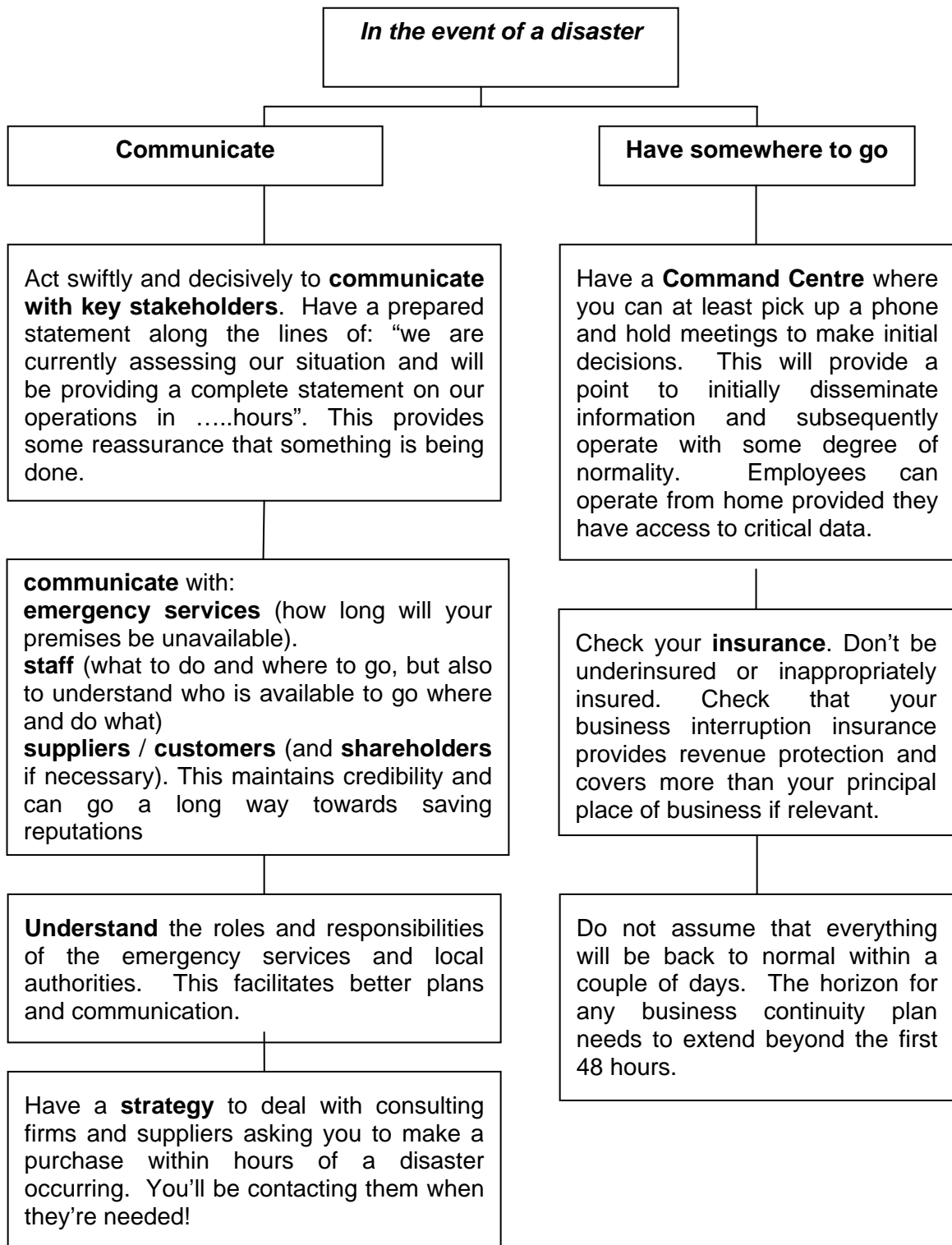
If your business or organisation is heavily dependent on specialised technology, or is in a vulnerable physical location, then the expense is likely to be higher. However, many of the basic essentials of business continuity are very simple and cheap.

Guidance on preparing your own plans can be found at www.londonprepared.gov.uk, which includes: "The Ten Minute Assessment and the Basic Five Step Guide to Preparing a Business Continuity Plan for various size businesses".

If you wish to take external guidance in preparing plans, the Business Continuity Institute can provide advice. Please contact the Business Continuity Institute: www.thebci.org

If a disaster happens

Despite your best preparation and inherent resilience you may still be unfortunate enough to encounter a crisis situation. If this does occur there are a few simple steps that can get you on your feet as quickly as possible.



What needs to be considered in preparing a Plan?

There are a number of action points that you might wish to consider in preparing a Plan. Try to keep your Plan simple so that it can be easily understood and implemented, particularly by those that will need to play a role.

These points might include:

List of all organisations and individuals	Staff	Suppliers	Customers	Utilities	Professional Associations	Insurers
Details and contact information. One copy to be kept off the premises and to have 24 hour availability						

Computer Systems and Databases etc	Back these up regularly and keep a copy in at least one other safe location. Change passwords regularly
Premises	Make properly secure to cut the risk of theft or damage
Fire	Make a fire evacuation plan and ensure that fire protection measures are in place
Flood	Make a flood protection plan and ensure that flood protection measures are in place
Suppliers	Have alternatives in mind if you are dependent on a single source.

Further details are available at the sources of advice and Information as detailed below.

Sources of Advice and Information

David Shaw – Emergency Planning, Winchester City Council
Email dshaw@winchester.gov.uk – Tel 01962 848221

Kate Crawford – Economic Development Officer, Winchester City Council
Email kcrawford@winchester.gov.uk - Tel 01962 848563

Emergency Planning Unit – Hampshire County Council
[Business Continuity](#)

The Ten Minute Assessment and the Basic Five Step Guide to Preparing a Business Continuity Plan for various size businesses. - www.londonprepared.gov.uk.

Booklets – Expecting the Unexpected, and Secure in the Knowledge are available on www.london-first.co.uk

Flood planning guide – Environment Agency
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Information on fire prevention, precautions and statutory obligations
www.hantsfire.gov.uk

Crime prevention
www.hampshire.police.uk

Business Continuity Institute
www.thebci.org

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