



North Somerset Council's Community Emergency Shelter Scheme FAQ's to assist Emergency Responders

The Scheme

North Somerset Council's Community Emergency Shelter Scheme provides a directory of safe places should residents be evacuated from their homes or businesses following an emergency, such as flooding or a gas leak.

The registered venues may be used by the council to provide temporary emergency shelter until a more permanent solution can be found.

Venues participating in the scheme display a promotional 'Community Emergency Shelter' sticker.

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of residents, the Emergency Services should telephone North Somerset Council on 01934 426706 or, out of hours, on 01934 622669 so that the Duty Emergency Management Officer can arrange for a suitable premises to be made available.

FAQ's

Q: What facilities will a Community Emergency Shelter provide?

A. As a minimum a Community Emergency Shelter Venue will be a place that offers evacuees a place of shelter that is warm and dry and has the following essentials:

- Electricity and lighting
- Seating
- Kitchen facilities
- Toilets

Q: What about accessibility?

A. Most of the venues are accessible and have baby changing facilities; some may have a hearing loop.

Q: How will the Emergency Services know if the Venue is part of the scheme?

A. The venue will display a 'Community Emergency Shelter' Sticker in a prominent position i.e. front window of their venue. Venue details will also be added to the councils 'In my Community' map, and will be searchable as a 'Community Emergency Shelter'.

Q: What types of venues are involved in the scheme?

A. Community venues may include village halls, religious establishments, community centres, sports venues, social clubs, youth clubs, music halls and any other facility that meets the basic requirements.

Q: How can I find the nearest Community Emergency Shelter venue?

A. Venues that have agreed to become a Community Emergency Shelter can be found on the council's website in the 'In my Community' mapping facility. Simply select the 'Community Emergency Shelter' layer and all participating venues will be displayed.

Q: How do the Emergency Services use a North Somerset Community Emergency Shelter?

A. Emergency Services should telephone North Somerset Council on 01934 426706, or out of hours on 01934 622669, to advise of the need to open an emergency shelter. The Duty Emergency Management Officer will contact the Emergency Services to advise when the Community Emergency Shelter is ready to receive evacuees.

Q: What if the nearest Community Emergency Shelter Venue is not available?

A. The Duty Emergency Management Officer will contact other nearby venues until a place is found.

Q: Is there a minimum number of evacuees required before the council would seek to open a "Community Emergency Shelter"?

A. No there is no specific number of people needed to open a Community Emergency Shelter.

Q: How will the public know that a venue has been opened as a Community Emergency Shelter?

Messages will be cascaded to the public by officers that are on scene, usually the Police. Where time and resources allow, the council will also update its website and social media accounts.

Q: How will evacuees get to the venue?

A. Depending on the choice of venue, evacuees may make their way on foot, own transport or with assistance from the council, partner agencies and voluntary groups.

Q: How long will Community Emergency Shelters be in operation for?

A. This is dependent on the nature and scale of the incident. Community Emergency Shelters would be in use until the community can safely return to their homes/ place of work/ or until alternative accommodation can be found. Ideally, a Community Emergency Shelter should not be required beyond 24-48 hours.

Q: Who will staff the venue in an emergency?

A. Initially the community may be required to look after themselves until council officers or volunteers tasked by North Somerset Council are able to reach the venue.

Any queries please contact:

Emergency Management Unit: emu@n-somerset.gov.uk

Tel. 01934 426706

Out of Hours Tel. 01934 622669