

Teams join to publish 28-page booklet for tackling unexpected

Guide to coping in emergencies is out

By John Corser

A new guide to help Staffordshire people be prepared for a major emergency has been launched. The 28-page guide is called *Preparing for the Unexpected in Staffordshire*.

It has been put together by Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit, which is based in Stafford. It is to help people in the event of having to be evacuated from their home or workplace. *Preparing for the Unexpected in Staffordshire* contains contact numbers and advice on what to do in a major emergency. It is being distributed around the county.

It can also be downloaded from: www.staffordshireprepared.gov.uk

The free guide also provides a list of basic necessities people are encouraged to keep in a bag in an easily accessible place. Items that could prove useful if people need to be evacuated such as foil blankets, waterproof candles and matches, wind-up torch, sleeping bags, first aid kit and toiletries.

Andy Marshall, director of Civil Contingencies for Staffordshire, said: "In a crisis situation, for example if you had to be evacuated from your home, you might not have a lot of warning so the more that you can prepare ahead of time the better."

"The guide helps you do this."

Neighbours

He said they also wanted people to note down details of their immediate neighbours to help the emergency services in responding to a major incident.

The unit, which has been running since 2006 from its base next to Stafford Fire Station at Beaconside, is funded by the Staffordshire Resilience Forum, a partnership made up of local councils, hospitals, emergency services and the voluntary sector.

They continually work on a range of plans for a variety of unexpected major emergencies, such as severe weather, flooding, widespread fires, pandemic flu and illnesses.

The 11-strong team of expert civil contingencies planners have a central control room into which the emergency services can feed information and pictures as a major emergency develops.

Police, fire service, ambulance service and Staffordshire Search and Rescue Team incident units are ready to work together under the unit's guidance.



Back from left, ambulance officer Adrian Crowe, Pc Paul Betteley, Steve Berry, front David Wright and Kyle Brookes at the launch of the Unexpected Guide