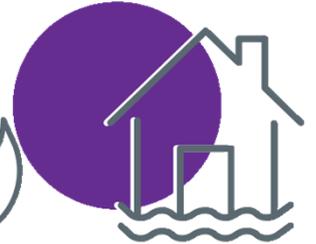
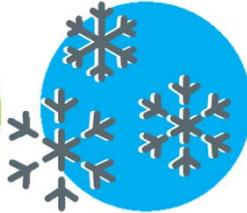




READY
FOR ANYTHING

Volunteer Handbook





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What is Ready For Anything?

An initiative whereby the residents of North Yorkshire can sign up to join our team of fantastic volunteers who provide practical support during incidents, to both the emergency responders and the people involved.

From evacuations, flooding, to supporting the most vulnerable during a global pandemic, RFA volunteers step up and help the response effort.

It is run on behalf of the multi-agency North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum, where having registered volunteers is of great assistance for an emergency response, by coordinating and mobilising individuals who want to help.

There is no obligation to offer a regular commitment or respond to each incident. Any time you can give is of huge value and greatly appreciated.



Who are our volunteers?

There is no typical volunteer!

Ready For Anything welcomes any adult from across North Yorkshire and the neighbouring area who wants to sign up. Our volunteers come from all walks of life with great variation in age and life experience.

The common factor that unites us all is the desire to make a difference and step up to the challenge of helping the emergency response both during and after a large incident.

More information and resources can be found by visiting our website:

www.emergencynorthyorks.gov.uk/readyforanything

Spread the word amongst your friends and colleagues!

North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum

A body of emergency responding agencies set up as part of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Covering North Yorkshire and York, we work together to identify local risks and mitigate them. Below are just some of those involved:



Public Health
England

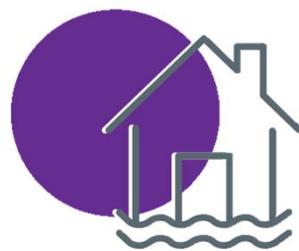


Major Incident Response Team

The Major Incident Response Team (MIRT) is a small team of highly trained, specialist volunteers and looked after by their manager Alex Sutcliffe. Nationally recognised, they were asked to support after the Grenfell tragedy.

They have two main roles:

Community resilience – MIRT run any rest centres that are set up to care for anyone displaced after a major incident. RFA volunteers are most likely to work with MIRT in rest centres to support them in what can be a busy, challenging environment.

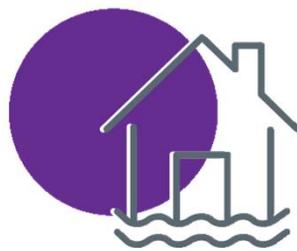


Emotional resilience – MIRT are trained to offer emotional support to those affected by incidents. This can be in the immediate aftermath and also in the months afterwards and for as long as their support is needed.



Contact during an emergency

If an emergency needs Ready For Anything volunteers to assist with the response, then a text message will be sent out to those volunteers who are nearest. This will state what the incident is, where it is and what support we need.



If you are able to help then reply to the text and confirm with “RFA YES”. We will then send out another text with further details to those involved.

We are looking to provide 24/7/365 support to emergency responders.

If you are unavailable then there’s no need to respond.

The Ready For Anything number is:

07950 080309

Save this number in your phone contacts so you know who is contacting you.



Deployment

We will then send an email which will include more details such as where to meet and when, parking instructions, welfare and who the coordinator is.

Try to bring your Ready For Anything lanyard with you, or some other form of identification. Also bring your fluorescent tabard – but don't worry, we will have spares if you forget.



On arrival, report to the coordinator. You will have to register so we know exactly how many volunteers are present.

A briefing will be given to provide a summary of the incident and what is required, along with risk assessments and welfare arrangements.

At the end of your task you will return to the coordinator, be debriefed and thanked for your help.



Roles

Roles may vary depending on the incident and support required. However here are examples of our common roles:

Provision of refreshments – There isn't much that can't be solved without a good cup of Yorkshire tea. Volunteers may be asked to help out supplying refreshments to evacuees or the emergency services.

Rest Centre support – Assist in a centre for those evacuated by supporting attendees, providing information and reassurance.

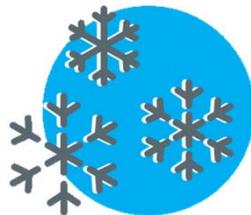


Clean up duties – It may not be the most glamorous job, but following an incident help will be required to clear up and get things back to normal.

Logistical support – Movement of equipment, sorting of donations and administrative support.

Warn & inform – Volunteers may be asked to help out with delivering information to communities. This may include door knocking or leaflet dropping to inform residents or offer support.

Transport provision – Assisting with the transport of donated goods and supplies to where they are needed (N.b. see FAQs with regards to insurance).



Good neighbour support – Before, during and after an incident we will encourage volunteers to look in on their neighbours. E.g. do they need any medication or shopping? Could you help clear snow from their path?

Missing person support – High profile vulnerable/missing persons – where required and appropriate, in support of the police and mountain rescue teams in vulnerable and/or missing persons searches.



Debrief

Either at the end of the incident, or the end of your task, there will be a get-together with your coordinator.

This will be to keep you up to date with the latest information, but also to find out if you have any points you want to raise and any issues you have had.

This is known as a “hot debrief”.



For large incidents there can be a second meeting of all the responding agencies, which can be weeks afterwards. This is another opportunity to look at the response, and identify what went well and what can be learned.

This is known as a “cold debrief”.



Communications

Being a Ready For Anything volunteer means that you are part of the emergency response community.

As part of Ready For Anything, you will receive newsletters to keep you up to date with what has occurred across North Yorkshire and any training details via email.



We may ask if you would be willing to write briefly about your experience so that other volunteers can benefit and learn from your involvement.

Once an incident is over we will make sure you are kept informed of any developments, and that you are copied in to any reports in the media.



Training & Exercise

As a Ready For Anything volunteer, you will be invited to attend training sessions and multi-agency exercises:

Introductory training – An invaluable introduction to how North Yorkshire deals with emergencies and how Ready For Anything volunteers are a valued part of that response.

Ongoing training – Sessions held by one of the emergency responder agencies.

Volunteer coordinator training – An opportunity for those volunteers who would like to take on more of a team leader role.

Local Resilience Forum exercises – volunteers are invited to observe and take part in these events.



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Previous Incidents

Ready For Anything has already been involved in some major incidents:

Richmondshire flash flooding (August 2019) –

Following the highest recorded concentrated rainfall in England, Richmondshire was hit by severe flash floods. In particular Reeth, Arkengarthdale, Leyburn and Bellerby. RFA volunteers were deployed to these areas to help in the community hubs with donation logistics, door knock welfare checks, giving reassurance and deliver much needed food and cleaning supplies.

COVID 19 Pandemic (2020) – RFA are assisting with welfare checks on shielded vulnerable people, delivering information, community reassurance and assisting the emergency response over many months.



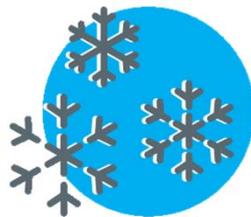
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FAQs

How often will I be contacted? – You will receive periodic emails where we will tell you about any recent incidents and upcoming training sessions. For actual incidents, it may be infrequent texts, but we can't always predict when emergencies will occur!

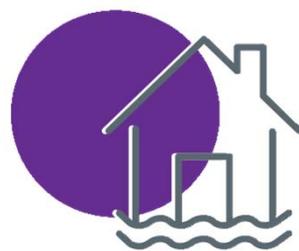
What training do we get? – There will be an induction session offered to all volunteers, and then there will be annual training events and offers to participate in live multi-agency exercises.



Why do we have to have a mobile phone? – We need a primary method of communication with volunteers for incident notification and to be able to keep in contact with volunteers who have been deployed.

Do we need special equipment? – Just bring your lanyard and fluorescent tabard (provided at the initial training session), warm clothing and maybe some food / drink. You do not need to provide anything else. All other necessary equipment will be provided.

Are we covered by insurance? – All of our volunteers are covered by the North Yorkshire County Council employer & public liability insurance. However, for driving to and from an incident, and if you want to transport any equipment with your car then we recommend that you check with your insurance company first to see if you are covered to do so.



Do we need to be DBS checked? – No. This is not a requirement due to the nature of the roles.

Do we get expenses e.g. mileage? – Unfortunately we are not able to offer expenses. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers for offering their time for free, but will often provide you with a cuppa and a biscuit!

What if I am not available? – There is no obligation to be available for every call for help. We are very grateful for any time that volunteers can give.

How do I respond to your initial text for help? – If you ARE available then please reply to the text from us as follows:

“We need your help! There’s currently an incident in ... and we need some help. Please text back RFA YES if you’re available. More details will then follow.”

“RFA YES”.

If you are NOT able to help then do not reply to the text and we will assume you are not available.



What if I want to leave Ready for Anything? – You can leave our volunteer list at any time. Simply email us at readyforanything@northyorks.gov.uk and tell us that you no longer want to be a volunteer. We will delete all your personal details from our database and you will no longer hear from us.

Notes

Email us at readyforanything@northyorks.gov.uk
www.emergencynorthyorks.gov.uk/readyforanything