

Emergency Donations

Before, during and after an emergency, community action is often characterised by donations of money, time and goods. In most cases this provides valuable support however some examples of inappropriate donations have restricted the response.

The Somerset Local Authorities do not directly manage donations of any kind, however working closely with our partners, charities and businesses we help to ensure the right support gets where it's needed most.

The following information outlines the best ways in which the public can offer meaningful and appropriate support to those affected by an emergency.

- **Donating Money.** Any sum of money is by far the best donation to make as it's quick, easy to manage and can be used to best meet the needs of those affected.

There will often be a variety of funds established by different organisations to provide support in various ways so it's important to understand how funds will be used. If unsure, donations can be made to a recommended organisation identified by the local authorities during the response.

- **Donating Time.** Due to the dangers and complexities of emergency response, members of the public must be affiliated with a responding agency or local organisation in order to directly support those affected.

Most responders do not recruit volunteers during an emergency therefore those wishing to help should volunteer before an incident occurs. They may then gain the training required to act safely and appropriately alongside partner agencies.

- **Donating Goods.** Donations such as blankets, clothing and food are extremely difficult to manage on a large scale due to the requirement for storage and examination before they can be safely distributed. As these tasks use valuable time, money and resources, donating goods is not supported by any responding agency. Items left in public places will be removed without guarantee they will reach those affected.

Local organisations such as food banks, shelters, charities and faith groups may accept donations however they should always be contacted in advance.

Private Sector Organisations: Those offering unused goods should contact the Somerset Local Authorities' Civil Contingencies Unit in the first instance to discuss the needs of the community and the items available.

For more information visit www.somersetprepared.org.uk or contact the Somerset Local Authorities' Civil Contingencies Unit on 0300 123 2224