HYPER

Hampshire Young Peoples Emergency Response

Overview

An idea formed in 2018 that young people could be involved in responding to emergencies after a Scout Group in the New Forest helped stranded drivers from heavy snowfalls in March 2018 by opening up their Scout HQ as a rest centre.

A small working group chaired by the Emergency Planning Manager at Eastleigh Borough Council with leaders from Hampshire Scouts , the Police and Fire Cadets developed the idea and a policy which was approved by the Local Resileince Forum with full support of the Chief Constable as Chair in 2019. The policy outlined the aim of the project "To enable the management, support, and deployment of uniformed young people over the age of 13 to achieve a safe and coordinated emergency response through to recovery".

The validity of the idea was supported through a visit to a Teen CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) project in Texas, USA in 2019 which demonstrated that young people can play their part in responding to emergencies and support their communities in times of disaster.



What we did

Training

We decided to train the leaders as the young people change every few years; developing and delivering the training to over 30 leaders and then the next step was to put things into action.

The training programme covers emergency response procedures, what happens at scene and how to undertake a risk assessment of tasks allocated to the youth volunteers.
The overall outcome is that leaders will have an understanding of how HYPER it fits into the wider response to an incident.

Exercising

In autumn of 2019 we held our first exercise with 30 young people in three teams undertaking a series of challenges such as search and rescue missing perosn, conducting house to house enquiries pre evacuation and developing thinking skills about what you might need in a household emergency grab bag. The project was delayed by Covid and so we eventually launched in the summer of 2022.

Scan the QR code to see a short video of the day.

Putting everything into practice

Just before Christmas 2022 there was a loss of water supply to 24,000 homes for 3 days. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) working in partnership with Southern Water set up bottled water stations for residents. We stood HYPER up and the leaders and young people responded with quickly to deploy and help hand out the supplies. Two groups of Explorer Scouts and one Police Cadet team helped in Eastleigh and Winchester working shifts alongside other adult volunteers from organisations such as the Red Cross. The process of activation, deployment and active engagement in their response



phase worked brilliantly and we were very proud of the young people who gave their time willingly with such enthusiasm in the days before Christmas to help their communities.

Following positive community and internal LRF feedback we were engaged again in the following February half term to help run three bottled water stations across south west Hampshire.

Development

HYPER is now an established part of the LRF's Voluntary and Community Sector response capability and is represented at the VCS working group. The range of tasks which can be assigned to HYPER are similar to those which spontaneous volunteers would be asked to undertake. We are actively looking to expand the membership with talks underway with the military cadets. The HYPER concept has been widely shared across the UK.

Summary

Members of youth organisations can provide an important resource when mobilised.

If they are properly and safely led, they can be made ready for deployment soon after the incident, providing valuable support to emergency services and local authorities during the recovery phase. The young people can be tasked and supervised at the scene by their own leaders and can give the incident commander vital resources which do not require their direct line management.

For more information contact: **Melvin.hartley@eastleigh.gov.uk**

Author: Melvin Hartley
Easteligh Borough Council and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum

EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Scouts

Hampshire & Isle of Wight FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Hampshire Constabulary Volunteer Police Cadets