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scottish community development centre

Rebooting Resilience

Learning event report

Introduction & Background

SCDC's **Rebooting Resilience programme** is a new programme which aims to explore what resilience looks like in our communities, how we can build on existing good practice and improve how communities and local agencies can work together to develop strong, resilient communities. The programme will be working at a national level through webinars and development of materials as well as more intensively in 2 geographical sites in Scotland, looking to explore what resilience looks like in our communities and ensuring that the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic are not lost. The support within each area will be to examine what worked during COVID and to explore local responses in the future.

This event was the first of two webinars for the programme, with the second one being at the end to share learning.

Purpose and Outline of the Session

The webinar session was held to start the conversation to explore what resilience looks like around the country, and what different groups and individuals were experiencing as we move out of the pandemic, listening to their experiences of the kinds of events that trigger resilience responses such as weather, flooding and disasters.

The webinar was designed to have inputs from the more traditional civil contingencies response role, and one from a community perspective, and then an opportunity for further discussion in breakout rooms using Jamboards to record them.

Kerry Jardine, from the Resilient Communities Team at the Scottish Government set the scene and explained why this project is happening, and why resilience is such an important area of work and planning for our communities.

Presenter session 1 – Community Food Larder, Grampian Opportunities, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire

Tricia McLean, Manager of Grampian Opportunities (GO) presented a film showing the impact of the pandemic on the community in Inverurie, and how GO had mobilised to ensure food provision was available locally for people who were being affected by the COVID-19 lockdowns, loss of jobs, changes in income, lack of affordable food locally and who were socially isolated.

The film, which was made by volunteers at GO, showed the difference the food larder is making, hearing stories from volunteers and people who access the service.

Tricia said the three important things are "People, Place and Purpose" to enable people to be resilient. Tricia also spoke about the importance of linking with other organisations locally – whether they are private sector, public sector or other community groups.

Presenter Session 2 – John Beresford, Senior Resilience Co-ordinator, East of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership

John presented information on the more traditional "Civil contingencies" resilience response, giving an overview of what would trigger a response, and what that would look like in reality. John shared information on the make-up and geography of the Regional Resilience Partnerships (RRP), and gave some examples of times they had to respond – like Storm Arwen, the Falkirk Gas outage, the Beast from the East and the Loch Katrine Land slip. John also spoke of how events like the Manchester Evening News Arena bomb raised the level of alert here and how that impacted the RRP.

A recording of the two inputs is available here.

Breakouts

We then broke into smaller breakout groups to talk about what resilience looks like in our experience, looking at the questions

- What does “resilience” mean to you?
- What do resilient places have and what do they need?

Summary / Jamboards

What does “resilience” mean to you?

There were some clear areas of agreement through the Jamboard group discussion (Jamboards are attached below, with comments clustered into areas of commonality).

People, **Place** and **Purpose** came out of both the presenter sessions and the discussion groups.

It was clear that people saw resilience as important within their communities, not just in the ability to recover from the impact of events, but to allow growth and development.

The role of plans, networks and knowledge was core to the understanding of what supports resilient communities – “If we don’t know about them, how can they know about us?” The different networks were important – with people saying they got to know their neighbours much better during the period of disruption, and also seeing how helpful and kind our local businesses are within communities with many going above and beyond to assist with the recovery. The role of networks extended into relationships with local authorities, Police, NHS, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the local Third Sector Interface and other community groups as well.

There is an important role for having knowledge of the right tech to have in place – generators for community venues to keep people cosy and fed, but also smarter tech like charging banks for mobiles as we all keep so much information on them now.

The skills to get generators working was raised as an issue for some communities.

Communication and the practicalities also came out of the discussions very strongly. Having established methods of communication – using Facebook, WhatsApp and other local messaging to share information was clearly an essential to ensure the community can contact each other, but to share warnings, be prepared messages and other important news. The local radio stations carrying the information was useful as well – particularly during the red warning during recent winter storms with some participants saying it would have been useful for them to continue with information until communication networks had been restored rather than when the red warning finished.

The practicalities were covered in discussions around insurance, funding, access to training, support for becoming a constituted group and establishing legitimacy are all issues faced by groups responding locally.

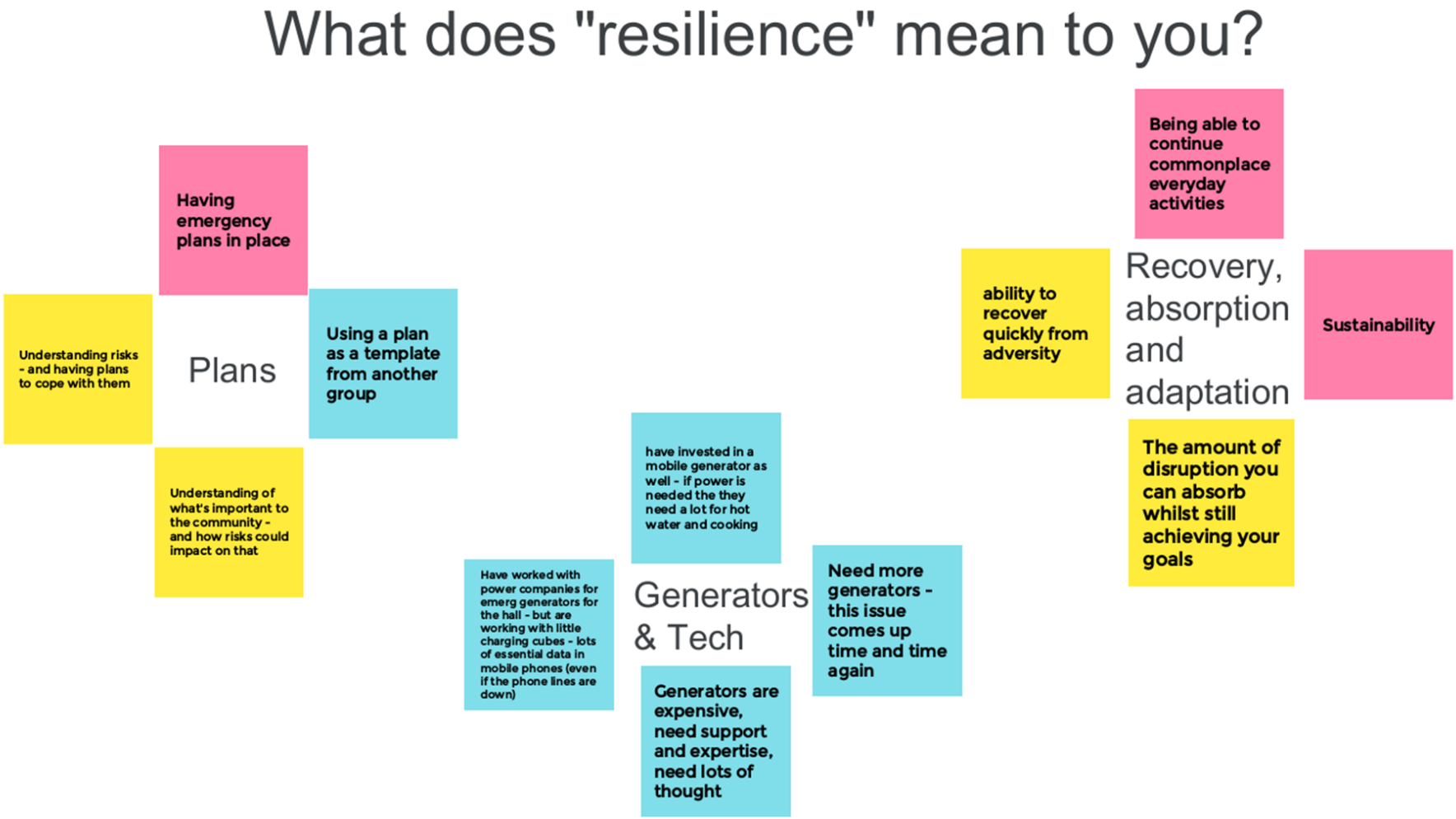
What's coming next

We will be working in two areas – one urban, one rural to further test what resilience looks like in communities and what can be done to support it. We'll be looking at how do we make the best connections between community groups and the Local Resilience Partnerships, and the Regional Resilience Partnerships to make suggestions going forward to enable communities to be more connected, more supported and more resilient.

We will be hosting another webinar later in the year to share our learning.

If you'd like to keep in touch, and have information about the next webinar, please sign up at www.scdc.org.uk.

Jamboards


What does "resilience" mean to you?
Having emergency plans in place
Understanding risks - and having plans to cope with them
Plans
Using a plan as a template from another group
Understanding of what's important to the community - and how risks could impact on that
Being able to continue commonplace everyday activities
ability to recover quickly from adversity
Recovery, absorption and adaptation
Sustainability
The amount of disruption you can absorb whilst still achieving your goals
have invested in a mobile generator as well - if power is needed the they need a lot for hot water and cooking
Have worked with power companies for emerg generators for the hall - but are working with little charging cubes - lots of essential data in mobile phones (even if the phone lines are down)
Generators & Tech
Need more generators - this issue comes up time and time again
Generators are expensive, need support and expertise, need lots of thought

What does "resilience" mean to you?

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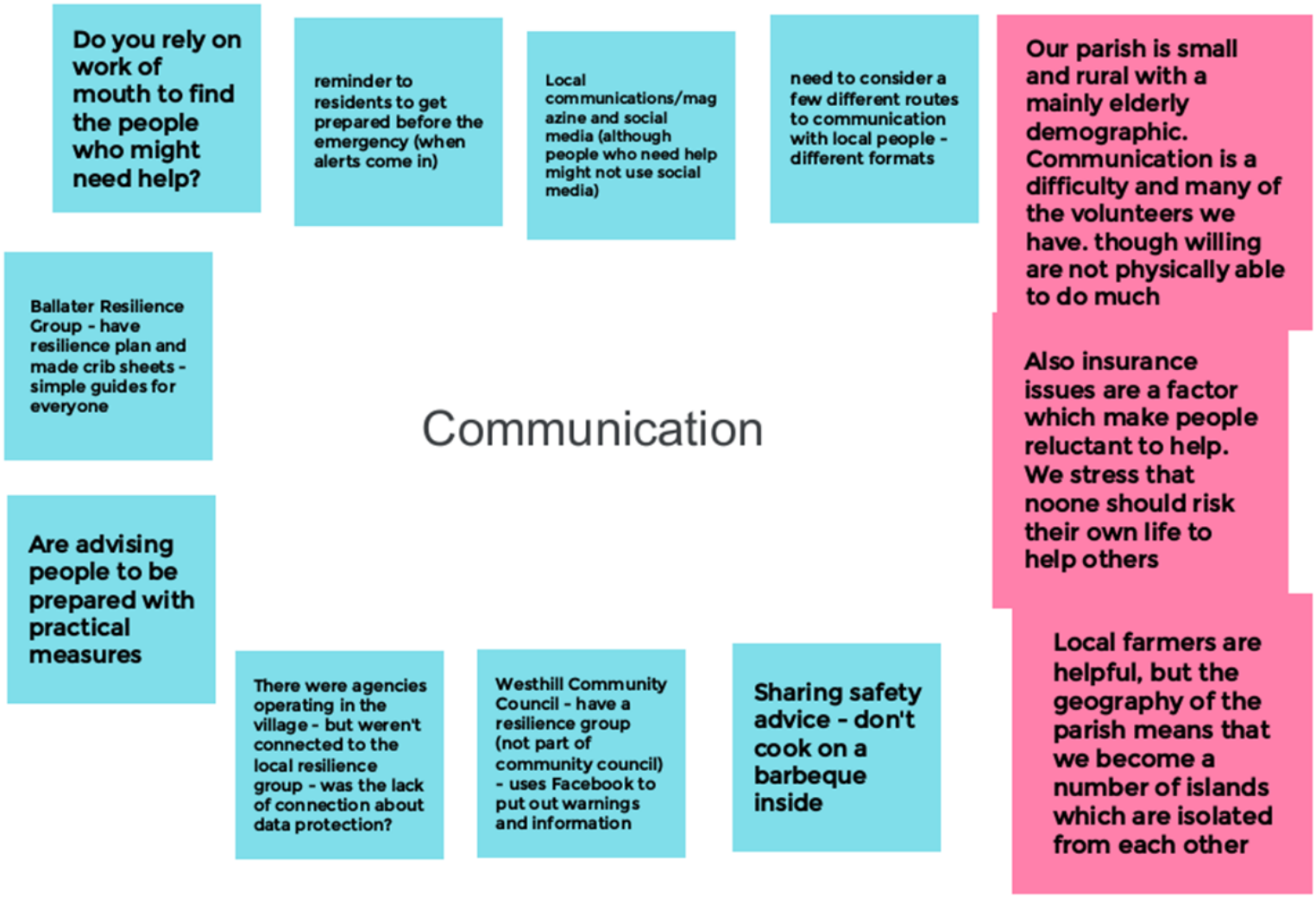

What do resilient places have?

What do resilient places need?

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