EMERGENCY

Be prepared …

In an emergency, would your business survive?

INNER CORDON

A Guide to
Business Continuity Planning

Find out more about
Business Continuity Planning

Contact:
Enfield Emergency Planning Team –
Helping your business to stay in business

be safe
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ENFIELD
Council
www.enfield.gov.uk

**LONDON
PREPARED**
Resilience Through Planning

Business Continuity Management for Small to Medium sized Businesses (SME)

Be Prepared!

Business Continuity Management (BCM) is about identifying critical activities i.e. those parts of your organisation that you can't afford to lose, such as information, stock, premises, staff and planning how to maintain these, if an incident occurs.

Any incident, large or small, whether it is natural, accidental or deliberate, can cause major disruptions to your organisation. But if you plan now, rather than waiting for it to happen, you will be able to get back to business in the quickest possible time. Delays could mean you lose valuable business to your competitors, or that your customers lose confidence in you.

This Affects You!

Whether you are a market trader, a voluntary organisation a small/medium business or a global institution you need to be able to continue with your critical activities, whatever happens.

You also need to make sure that your key suppliers and partners have effective BCM arrangements in place to ensure that an incident affecting them doesn't impact on you.

Why do you need a Business Continuity Plan?

- 1 in 5 businesses will suffer a serious disruption every year
- 80% of businesses affected by a major incident close within 18 months.
- 90% of businesses that lose data from a disaster are forced to shut within two years.
- 58% of UK organisations were disrupted by the September 11th disaster. One in eight was seriously affected.

Experience has shown that organisations with business continuity arrangements in place are more likely to stay in business and recover quickly in the event of an emergency than those who do not.

It is not just the major emergencies that disrupt organisations; a wide range of day to day disruptions can threaten the smooth running, or even the very existence, of a business.

Fire, Flood, IT Breakdown, Power Failure, Transport Disruption, Staff Shortages – the list is endless and can be out of your control.

Developing Business Continuity arrangements and documenting your procedures in a plan, will assist you in managing your risks to ensure that, at all times, your organisation can continue operating to at least a predetermined minimum level. This will enable you to continue service delivery during and beyond an emergency.

How do I develop a Business Continuity Plan?

Although developing a plan requires careful preparation and planning, it is not difficult and need not be expensive, the time spent however, is a worthwhile investment which will ensure the safety and protection of your staff and increase the likelihood of your business surviving a crisis or business interruption.

Business Continuity Planning is:

- Understanding your organisation and where it is vulnerable.
- Identifying critical activities, staff and infrastructure
- Deciding what you can do to increase your resilience
- Documenting what to do and who is going to do it
- Testing your plan/procedures and discussing simple scenarios
- Reviewing plans regularly and checking details are up to date and that staff are aware of any changes.

Where to begin

There are several steps involved when pulling together a Business Continuity Plan, they are:

Step one – Define your disasters and assess your risks

It is vital to remember that a disaster could happen to any company – no matter the business size, be it a multinational company or a small business. Before looking at risks in individual areas of the business, it is important to determine what would constitute a disaster. In simple terms, a disaster is an incident that has serious consequences for the business.

Common disasters could include:

- Fire/Flood
- Computer/Telecoms failure
- Bomb/Terrorism threat
- Denial of access to your premises
- Legal/regulatory action
- Utilities failure
- Key Equipment failure
- Burglary/Vandalism
- IT/Communications failure
- Staff issues such as sickness/resignation/maternity leave
- Key supplier failure

It is critical that you understand the disruptions that would be disastrous to the running of your business when writing your plan. Take the time to identify all the risks your business faces and then rank them in order of likelihood and importance.

Step two – Identify your Critical Functions

Thoroughly assessing the disasters that could threaten your business will give you a clear idea of the business areas that are most important to secure. Usually, these will be in the areas on which your business relies the most and which are exposed to the greatest degree of risk. This is the most important part of your plan. You need to go through each of the following areas and take a practical approach to tackle each of the threats that your business may face.

Follow the same process for each:
- Assign ownership of the function
- Identify threats and resources available
- Develop contingency plans and procedures to deal with them.

Premises and equipment:

Your premises are essential to your business and are often taken for granted but have you considered the impact that damage to or the destruction of your premises would have on your business?

The same applies to critical machinery and equipment, if an essential piece of equipment or machinery was stolen or vandalised how would it affect your business.

Ask yourself the following:
- Would you be able to inform your employees and customers of the disruption to your business?
- Would you be able to operate during the time that your premises were out of action?
- Would you be able to make alternative arrangements to ensure that your regular customers were kept happy?
- How long would your customers be prepared to wait for you to resume your operation?

What can go wrong:
- Unable to access data in your workplace to inform your employees and customers of the disruption to your business
- Not able to operate during the time that your premises were out of action
- Customers and suppliers unable to contact you
- Damage to equipment and data
- Unable to access specialist equipment

What you can plan for:
- Keep contact details of staff, customers and suppliers on a memory stick off site.
- Predetermine an alternative location to work from
- Make staff aware of the alternative place of work should access be denied
- Consider working from home.
- Back up equipment
- Sub contract if necessary

Some situations are relatively easy to deal with. Regularly maintained fire and security systems, maintaining a data back-up system off site and a spare mobile phone (with credit) are just a few simple steps to take that go a long way to safeguarding your business and assist in recovery following a crisis.

Staff:

Losing key people and injury to staff are risks that are often overlooked; ultimately the success of any business is determined by the skill of its people.

Ask yourself the following:
- If a key member of staff went to work for your biggest competitor, how much of an affect would that have on your business?
- If your employees lottery syndicate came up and most of the staff left immediately, would you be able to survive?
- If there was a pandemic and a majority of your staff were off sick or at home looking after dependants – what affect would it have on your business?

What can go wrong:
- Unanswered calls/queries resulting in loss of customers
- Customer care levels decrease
- Loss or corruption of data
- Key individual with business knowledge leaves.

What you can plan for:
- Cross train staff so you do not have a single point of failure
- Reallocate staff to cover critical functions
- Ensure that more than one person can operate/access a system.

Every business has people without whom its operation would be severely disrupted.

Employers Liability Insurance is a legal requirement in the United Kingdom, make sure that your employees and your business is protected.

Regularly assess workplace risks, ensure that all employees are aware of workplace hazards and the safety guidelines and procedures in place and that they are followed.

Identify key people in your business that are vital to the immediate operation of your business and look after them.

Make sure that specialist skills are not just held by one person, arrange training to allow others to step in at short notice.

Telecommunications/IT:

Most businesses rely on computers to some extent, whilst some will only use them for processes such as accounting or email communications, others will base their whole business on them, telephones are equally important. What would happen if your computer or telephone systems failed?

Ask yourself the following:
- Would your business still be able to operate?
- Would you be able to contact your customers/suppliers?
- Would you still have access to important data stored electronically?
- If your computer was stolen, could sensitive information fall into the hands of a competitor?
- What alternatives could you arrange and how long would it take?
- What can you do to make sure that you can access vital information even if your computer is stolen or destroyed?

What can go wrong:
- Unable to access accounts/customer details/supplier information
- Can't pay wages
- Loss or corruption of data
- Loss of orders
- Passwords to common systems unknown
- Cease to trade

What you can plan for
- Take regular back ups
- Store back ups off site
- Paper back up systems
- Procedures in place for staff
- Install a firewall and virus protection
- Make arrangements to transfer calls to a third party if lines fail

Your Environment:

Incidents in recent years have illustrated all too clearly the affect that natural disasters can have on a business, flooding in Gloucestershire and Cumbria affected thousands of businesses some of which never recovered.

Ask yourself the following:
- Are your business premises in an area which could be liable to flooding?
- Is there an alternative location from which you could operate temporarily?
- How long would it take you to recover from a serious flood?
- How would you continue to provide a service to your customers and continue to pay your employees at the same time?

What can go wrong:
- Damage to building
- Damage to equipment/stock
- Loss of access
- Loss of electricity/communications
- Transport links disrupted.

What you can plan for:
- If in a flood risk area sign up to the Environment Agency Floodline
- Monitor weather and flood reports
- Move critical equipment/stock from areas likely to flood
- Consider back up generator.

Emergency Pack:

You may consider it worthwhile putting an emergency pack together which could contain such items as a copy of the plan, a spare mobile phone and charger, torch etc. some businesses have found it invaluable in the early stages.

Step Three – Writing your Plan

To assist you in writing your Business Continuity Plan a template has been included in this guide, it can be tailored to suit individual businesses by removing or adding parts as necessary. Use it as a starting point.

Carefully written, your plan will ensure that you are prepared for the worst identified situations that could keep your business from operating. It does not need to be a complex document, it need only contain the most critical business processes, the most important thing is to safeguard those processes that will keep you in business whilst things get back to normal.

You may like to consider meeting with other businesses to discuss a system where each can provide mutual assistance to others in the event of a crisis.

Step Four – Publish your Plan

- Once you have written your plan:
- Ensure that all those involved are aware of their responsibilities and what is expected of them.
- Ensure that those who have specific tasks have the resources to allow them to complete them.
- Make sure that all those involved understand the plan and the part that others play in implementing it.
- Ensure that a copy of your plan is kept off site and that those with specific responsibilities have a copy.

Suppliers:

- Do your suppliers have a Business Continuity Plan?
- Can they continue to supply in a crisis?
- What happens to your customers if your supplier is unable to operate?
- Think about alternative suppliers.

Step Five – Put your Plan to the Test

Once the plan has been agreed and written, carry out a simulated test to ensure that it works, this will also expose any flaws and ensure that those involved understand their roles and responsibilities.

Remember – it is no use waiting for a crisis to see if your plan works!

Step Six – Update the Plan Regularly

Carry out periodic reviews of the plan to ensure that only relevant and accurate information is contained in it and ensure that your key staff are aware of any changes made.

Start Now!

The essential safety net for any organisation is a Business Continuity Plan. Investing the time and energy in the short term will benefit your business in the long run.

The message is simple – it's never too early to take steps to assess your business risks and set the internal recovery procedure. Make your plan as detailed as your business needs it to be and take the time to communicate this with your team. Regularly review the plan in tune with the changing needs of your company. A well thought out Business Continuity Plan will adapt to any incident or crisis within your company. This guide is written to help you do exactly what your business needs, to be ready to recover at any time

Remember

The London Borough of Enfield's Emergency Planning Team can offer free advice and guidance to businesses on business continuity planning. If you require assistance please contact us on the details below.

For free advice and guidance
Contact – London Borough of Enfield
Emergency Planning Team:
Tel: 020 8379 1000
Email: emergency.planning@enfield.gov.uk
Web: www.enfield.gov.uk/emergencyplanning

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN
(Company details)

Immediate Action

This business plan is based on the worst case scenario i.e. the destruction of the building; it can easily be adapted for less severe situations in which case, it may not be necessary to complete all the initial tasks below:

1. Alert key members of staff
2. Agree with key staff the activities needed and implement recovery plan
3. Advise other staff of when and where to report
4. Notify key contacts (Suppliers/Customers)
5. Establish the immediate business needs
6. Maintain a log of all decisions/events/actions taken.
7. Consider working arrangements for staff
8. Notify insurers
9. Alert IT contact (if necessary)

INSURANCE DETAILS

Insurance	Policy Number	Company	Contact Number
Buildings			
Contents			
Indemnity			

Date _____

KEY STAFF CONTACT NUMBERS

NAME	HOME	MOBILE	OTHER

PLAN DISTRIBUTION LIST

COPY NUMBER	NAME	LOCATION

BUSINESS CONTACT LIST

This list contains details of important business contact where it is necessary for personal contact to be made; it will include key customers and key suppliers.

COMPANY	CONTACT NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER
Client 1		
Client 2		
Client 3		
Supplier 1		
Supplier 2		
Supplier 3		

ACTION PLAN

This plan contains a list of tasks that are essential to the successful recovery of the business.

TASK	DETAIL	INSTRUCTIONS/CONTACT NUMBERS	COMPLETED

ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIERS

COMPANY	CONTACT	CONTACT NUMBERS

KEY BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

(In order of priority)

1.
2.
3.
4.

OFF-SITE RECOVERY LOCATION

Location	Contact Name	Contact Numbers

BACK UP INFORMATION/EQUIPMENT

Back up computer records/data Location:	
Critical paper records/information Location:	
Emergency Pack Location:	

CASCADE

This list ensures that all key members of staff are contacted and made aware of the incident; Make sure that a record of all those contacted and those not contacted is kept.

_____ will contact:

Name	Numbers

_____ will contact:

Name	Numbers

INITIAL RECOVERY LOG

Maintaining this log will provide a record of all events, actions/decisions taken, it should include the names of those instructed, timings and actions taken.

Date	Time	Information/decisions/instructions/actions	Initials

Further Advice and Guidance

is available from the following:

The Business Continuity Institute	www.thebci.org
London First	www.london-first.gov.uk
London Prepared	www.londonprepared.gov.uk
UK Resilience	www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience.aspx
UK security Service	www.mi5.gov.uk

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