

Community Resilience to Extreme Weather

1st Annual Assembly

Queen Anne Court, Room 180

Greenwich University, London

3rd April, 2009

Overview

The floods of 2007 led to the UK's largest peacetime emergency since World War II. The impact of climate change means that the probability of similar flood events is expected to increase. Extreme weather is not only limited to flooding, but can also lead to other hazards, for example, heatwaves, storms, subsidence and water-shortage.

With a changing climate and the predictions that there will be wetter winters, warmer summers and greater frequencies of extreme weather, how can local communities interpret these headline warnings and understand the likely real impacts to them and, consequently, prepare themselves appropriately?

The project 'Community Resilience to Extreme Weather' (CREW) has been established to gain a better understanding of the effects of future climate change on extreme weather events, and to develop a set of tools for improving local-community resilience.

Research focus

CREW is focussing on understanding the probability of current and future extreme weather events and their likely socio-economic impacts. Initiatives, such as the Stern Review, provide high-level socio-economic impacts but do not provide the sub-regional or local estimates pertinent to the individual. Therefore, the CREW consortium is investigating impacts at the local level (on householders, SMEs and local policy/decision maker). The research is also investigating the opportunities and limitations for local communities' adaptive capacity.

CREW, using five South East London boroughs as case studies, is also looking at the decision making processes across communities including impediments and drivers of change. A web-based portal will provide a facility for presenting probable extreme weather events for a range of scenarios, and for presenting and evaluating coping mechanisms.

Key Objectives

The project has been established to:

- gain a better understanding of the impacts of extreme weather events (current and future) at the local scale
- understand the opportunities and barriers to making local communities more resilient to EWEs
- develop a set of tools for informing local communities about likely impacts and offer information on improving resilience



Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council



www.extreme-weather-impacts.net

Structure of the day

The day will open with an introduction to the CREW project and a presentation of its progress at the end of year one (of three). Whilst providing an opportunity to learn about the CREW project and its progress, and to network with professionals from a broad range of organisations dealing with community resilience and extreme weather-related issues, the main purpose of the day is to present three broad topics for debate and give you the opportunity to feedback. We will be posing a number of questions that will form the basis for debate in the afternoon.

The afternoon session will begin by initially breaking into three groups, each group focussing one of the topics described below. The assembly will then reconvene and a representative spokesperson from each group will report back on the key issues arising. The floor will be opened for feedback, further comment and wider debate.

1. Web-based tools for mapping and evaluating impacts of future extreme weather events (EWEs)

This breakout session will present the current vision for the web tools and the types of outputs it could offer. You will learn about the intended design structure and formats for delivery of information such as maps of the probability of flooding, heatwaves, subsidence, etc., as well as other printable PDF documents with tables and statistical reporting.

The purpose of this breakout session is to give you the chance to contribute feedback or any new ideas you might have for the web tools. We want to develop the tools going forward with potential end users like you in mind. So, we will use this breakout session to gather your ideas for steering the ongoing development. We will present the revised, first working tools at the next Assembly. The session will be facilitated by Dr Stephen Hallett

2. Technical solutions for improving local-community resilience

This breakout session will focus on technical interventions for coping with extreme weather. It will build on the presentation in the morning and present the preliminary results on our efforts to rank the effectiveness of technologies and methods, with greater emphasis on passive and low energy technologies.

Delegates will be invited to provide feedback both on the ranking process as well as the preliminary results. Given that the work is on-going with 2/3 of the project still to be carried out, the comments received could significantly influence its direction and research methods adopted. The session will be facilitated by Dr Chris Goodier.

3. Opportunities and limitations for uptake of community coping strategies

This breakout session will focus on issues relating to factors that make a community either resilient or vulnerable to extreme weather. It will present for discussion some of the issues uncovered to-date that relate to how householders, SMEs and local policy/decision makers are responding or preparing themselves for current and future extreme weather events.

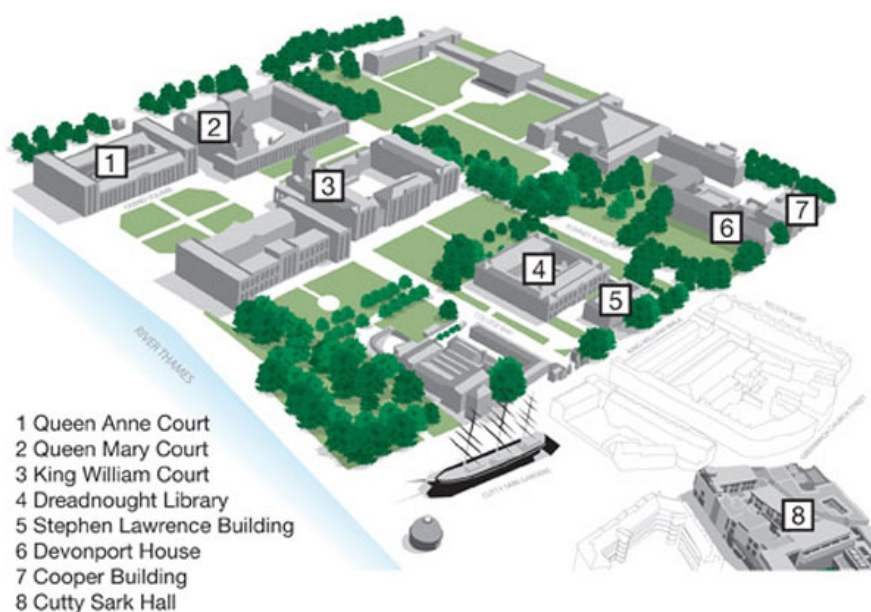
The ongoing work underpinning this workshop is studying the complex relationships between those three broad community groups in order to understand the impact of those interrelationships on community resilience. The session will be facilitated by Dr Duncan Thomas.

Outline Agenda, 3rd April

11.00 – 11.30	Coffee and registration
11:30 – 12.30	Introduction and presentation of the CREW project
12:30 – 13:30	Networking (buffet) lunch
13:30 – 14.20	Thematic breakout sessions
14.30 – 15.15	Plenary feedback and debate
15:15 – 15.30	Closing remarks

Where is it?

University of Greenwich
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For specific travel information go to
<http://www.gre.ac.uk/about/travel/greenwich>

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