

Emergency Management Plan

For Major Emergencies and
Business Continuity Disruptions

Severe Weather - Heatwave Plan

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Glossary

BECC	Borough Emergency Control Centre
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Room
DH	Department of Health
LFB	London Fire Brigade
LLACC	London Local Authorities Coordination Centre
LLAG	London Local Authority Gold
UKHSA	UK Health Security Agency
SLT	Senior Leadership Team

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Why this plan is needed and context

In Northern France in August 2003, unprecedentedly high day and night-time temperatures for a period of three weeks resulted in 15,000 excess deaths. The vast majority of these were among older people. In England that year, there were over 2,000 excess deaths over the 10-day heatwave period which lasted from 4-13 August 2003, compared to the previous five years over the same period.¹

In a significant heatwave in 2006 it was estimated that there were about 680 excess deaths in England compared to similar periods in previous years. In 2009 there were approximately 300 excess summer deaths in England during a heatwave compared to similar periods in previous years. Excess deaths are not just deaths of those who would have died anyway in the next few weeks or months due to illness or old age. There is strong evidence that these summer deaths are indeed 'extra' and are the result of heat-related conditions.²

The latest [UK State of the Climate](#) report shows we are experiencing higher maximum temperatures and longer warm spells. The hottest day of the year for the most recent decade (2008-2017) has increased by 0.8°C above the 1961-1990 average*. Warm spells have also more than doubled in length – increasing from 5.3 days in 1961-90 to over 13 days in the most recent decade (2008-2017). South East England has seen some of the most significant changes, with warm spells increasing from around 6 days in length (during 1961-1990) to over 18 days per year on average during the most recent decade: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/understanding-climate/uk-extreme-events-heatwaves>

The year-to-date mortality rate for deaths registered from 1 January to 30 September 2018 was 974 deaths per 100,000 population, which was statistically significantly higher than the mortality rate in the same period of 2017. The exceptionally hot weather experienced on 26 & 27 July 2018 coincided with a sharp increase in the daily death count, which substantially exceeded the five-year average on those days

The rise in mortality as a result of very warm weather follows very sharply – within one or two days of the temperature rising. This means that by the time a heatwave starts, the window of opportunity of effective action is very short indeed. Advanced planning is therefore essential.

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) annually publishes a Heatwave Plan for England which aims to protect health and reduce harm from severe heat and heatwaves. The Plan is supported by advice and guidance about supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave, and guidance for managers and staff in older people and children's settings.

¹ Heatwave Plan for England, UKHSA

² *ibid.*

A copy of the plan and its associated supporting documents can be found via this link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england>

This plan is relevant to the Council's Emergency Response & Recovery Plan and compliments the UKHSA Plan. It focuses on the Council's response to a receipt of Heat-Health Alerts from UKHSA and the Met Office, and the actions to be taken at that time.

Council departments and services, and contracted service providers are responsible for identifying their routine actions in respect of the risk of heatwave as set out in the UKHSA Heatwave Plan for England.

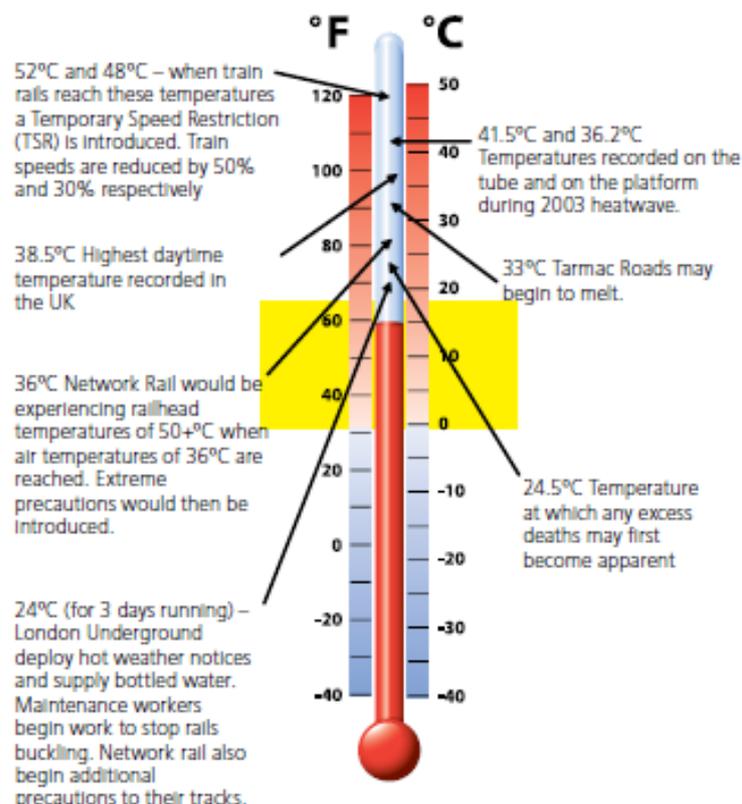
1.2 Definition of a Heatwave in London

Although excess seasonal deaths start to occur at approximately 25°C, for practical purposes the Heatwave Plan for England bases its Heat-Health Alert system upon temperature thresholds where the odds ratio is above 1.15 - 1.2 (a 15 to 20% increased risk).

A heatwave in London is reached when the threshold average temperatures defined by the Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service is forecast to reach **32°C** during the day and **18°C** overnight. However, a significant proportion of excess summer deaths occur before the Health-Heatwave Alert is triggered.

This illustration summarises the key trigger temperatures during a heatwave.³

³ Heatwave Plan for England, UKSHA



1.3 Aim of this Plan

To detail the arrangements required for responding to a Heat-Health Alert (Levels 2, 3 and 4) received from the Met Office and from UKHSA

1.4 Objectives of this Plan

- To translate national and regional planning assumptions to the borough/local level.
- To clarify organisational roles and responsibilities.
- To steer departments and contracted service providers to the national guidance on heatwave mitigation measures that should be put in place to protect at-risk groups that include older people, the very young and people with pre-existing medical conditions as well as those whose health, housing or economic circumstances put them at greater risk of harm from very hot weather.
- To set-out the coordination arrangements that will be used following receipt of a Level 2, 3 or 4 alert.

1.5 Planning Assumptions

This Plan is predicated around responding to and mitigating the impact of a heatwave in London.

- The rise in mortality as a result of very warm weather follows very sharply – within one or two days of the temperature rising.⁴
- Mitigation measures described in the Heatwave Plan for England will, if swiftly implemented, reduce the rise in mortality.
- The Council's business continuity plans will be required to support Council services in Level 3 or 4 alerts.

1.6 Responsibilities for this Plan

It is the responsibility of the Council's Emergency Planning Team to write and maintain this plan and to ensure that the contents are drawn to the attention of those senior officers who might need to implement and use it in the event of a major emergency.

It is the responsibility of all departments to be aware of their roles for mitigating the risk of heatwave, and to ensure staff are adequately prepared and protected if working in a heatwave.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Public Health to seek assurance that plans are in place to protect all residents in the borough. This assurance role will include liaising with the local NHS.

1.7 Training and Exercising

Executive Directors, and Duty Silvers will be briefed about this Plan by the Emergency Planning Team.

The Council's Emergency Response & Recovery Plan is regularly exercised, and from time to time the exercise scenarios will include heatwave.

1.8 Plan Maintenance Schedule

This Plan shall be reviewed annually, following and taking into account the results of any exercise, following any update of the UKHSA Heatwave Plan for England or following an activation of this Plan.

1.9 Related Procedures and Other Documents

1.9.1 London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

- Emergency Response & Recovery Plan Part 1
- Tactics & Contacts (OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE) – Part 2
- Borough Risk Register
- Excess Deaths Plan

⁴ Heatwave Plan for England, UKHSA

- Designated Disaster Mortuary Plan (Fulham Mortuary is the designated disaster mortuary for the West London Coronial area)

1.9.2 London Resilience Partnership

The London Resilience Partnership has various plans and protocols showing how London would deal with the impacts of different incidents. Confidential plans are accessible by the Emergency Planning Team. The latest versions of the publicly available plans are available for download and include the following which are of particular relevance to a mass fatality incident in London:

- [Severe Weather and Natural Hazards Framework](#)
- [Strategic Coordination Protocol](#)
- [LESPL procedure manual](#)
- [London Excess Deaths Plan](#)

1.9.3 National

- UKHSA Heatwave Plan for England
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england>
- Advice for health and social care professionals: supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave:
[Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for health and social care professionals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Advice for care home managers and staff: supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave
[Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for care home managers and staff - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: guidance for teachers and professionals
[Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Looking after yourself and others during hot weather
<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/summerhealth/documents/looking%20after%20yourself%20and%20others%20during%20hot%20weather2010.pdf>

2. THE HEAT-HEALTH ALERT SERVICE

2.1 Heat-Health Alerts

Heatwave preparedness activities span across the year. Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, Housing and Planning departments particularly should be engaging in a range of activities to guard against the increasing impacts of climate change, and to be prepared for the summer heatwave season.

Summary of Alert Levels and Actions	
Level 0 Long-term planning All year	Year-round joint working to reduce the impact of climate change and ensure maximum adaptation to reduce harm from heatwaves. This involves influencing urban planning to keep housing, workplaces, transport systems and the built environment cool and energy efficient.
Level 1 Heatwave and Summer Preparedness programme 1 June – 15 September	Summer preparedness runs from 1 June to 15 September each year when a Level 1 alert will be issued. During the summer months, social and healthcare services need to ensure that awareness and background preparedness are maintained by implementing the measures set out in the UKHSA Heatwave Plan for England.
Level 2 Heatwave is forecast	This is triggered as soon as the Met Office forecasts that there is a 60 per cent chance of temperatures being high enough on at least two consecutive days to have significant effects on health.
Level 3 Heatwave Action	This is triggered as soon as the Met Office confirms that threshold temperatures have been reached in any one region or more. This stage requires specific actions targeted at high-risk groups.
Level 4 Major Incident – Emergency Response	National Emergency. This is reached when a heatwave is so severe and/pr prolonged that its effects extend outside health and social care, such as power or water shortages, and/or where the integrity of health and social care systems is threatened. At this level, illness and death may occur among the fit and healthy, and not just in high-risk group and will require a multi-sector response at national and regional levels.

2.2 Action Tables

The UKHSA Heatwave Plan for England contains the following action tables⁵:

- Commissioners of health and social care (all settings) and local authority Directors of Public Health.
- Providers – health and social care staff in all settings (community, hospitals and care homes).
- Community and voluntary sector individuals.
- National Level: NHS England, UKHSA, DH, Met Office, Other Government Departments.

These tables summarise the actions to be taken by different organisations and groups in order to respond to the alert levels (including Level 0: Long-term planning, all year), be it preparing for, or responding to, and actual episode of severe hot weather.

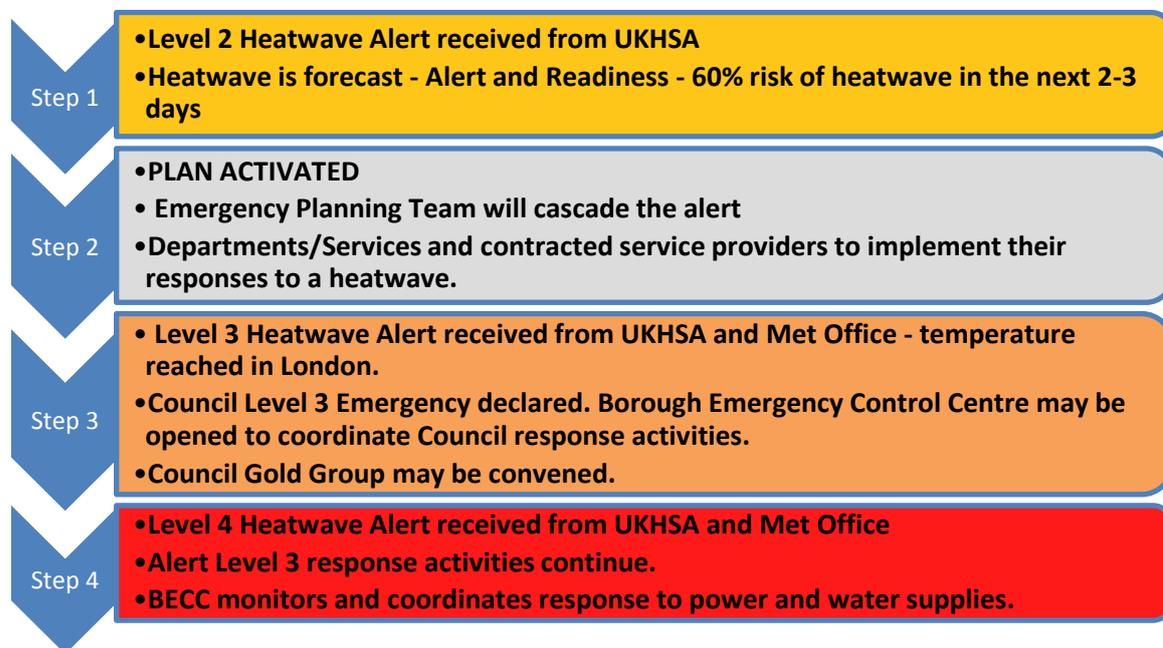
All Council departments/services, including contracted service providers, are required to consider the action tables appropriate to their operations and implement the necessary measures to protect residents, visitors and staff against the impact of a heatwave.

Refer to Section 1.9.3 of this plan for details of UKHSA guidance documents specific to particular sectors.

⁵ Heatwave Plan for England, Chapter 3

3. ACTIVATION OF THIS PLAN

3.1 Steps to Decision to Activate this Plan



1. The Heat-Health Alert system operates between 1 June and 15 September, based on Met Office forecasts and data. There may be little time between a Level 2 warning being issued and the arrival of heatwave temperatures.
2. The Emergency Planning Team will ensure that all Council departments are aware of a Level 2 alert being received. It will be necessary for departments to cascade the warning and mitigation measures to all relevant staff and to contracted service providers.
3. As temperatures in London will now be at the Heatwave level, the BECC may be opened to coordinate the Council's response. Departments and service providers may need to alter usual working patterns to allow staff to work at cooler parts of the day.
4. A Level 4 heatwave is likely to impact on power and water supplies, and on transport (roads, rail, tube and bus). Business continuity plans may be needed to address staff shortages, delays in deliveries, etc. The opening of 'cooling centres' may be considered.

4. RESPONSE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 All Council Departments and Service Providers

Heat-Health Alerts	Actions
<p>Level 0 All year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Departments to inform managers of the Heatwave Plan for England and of sector-specific guidance (see 1.9.3 above). <input type="checkbox"/> Managers to be responsible for identifying routine actions and mitigation measures that should be put in place (see the tables in Chapter 3 of the Heatwave Plan for England). <input type="checkbox"/> Departments to provide assurance statements to the Emergency Planning Team.
<p>Level 1 Heatwave and Summer Preparedness Programme 1 June – 15 September</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of weather forecasts and periods when temperatures are forecast to rise towards heatwave levels. <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor the Met Office National Weather Warning Service forecasts. <input type="checkbox"/> All to review Service Business Continuity Plans to ensure that core/critical services may continue to be provided in the event of a heatwave.
<p>Level 2 Heatwave is forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cascade alerts (received from Met Office and cascaded to departments by the Emergency Planning Team) to all services and teams within the departments. <input type="checkbox"/> The council's website will provide relevant information and useful web links.
<p>Level 3 Heatwave Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All departments to ensure that mitigation measures for their services are fully in place. <input type="checkbox"/> The H&F Health Partners Group will be convened who will arrange to contact vulnerable residents in the borough making sure they are not at risk. Should they identify individuals or groups at risk they will deal with the co-ordinated response. <input type="checkbox"/> The council's intranet and internet will display information relating to the current situation. Links to documentation produced by UKHSA giving advice and guidance will also be added to the website by the council's communications team. (Contact details are held in the H&F Tactics & Contacts document in the Incident Management Resources shared folder). The council's contact centre and out of hours team will also be provided with this information and regular heatwave up-dates. <input type="checkbox"/> Service business continuity plans to be implemented if there are staffing shortfalls or delivery failures. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider altering the working arrangements or hours of

	<p>staff working outside or in non-air conditioned buildings. This could include working in the early morning or late evening, thus avoiding the main heat of the day, more home working to avoid travel, reducing meetings and thus reducing travel, limiting the hours worked outside, provision of sun-protection for outside workers.</p>
<p>Level 4 Major Incident – Emergency Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Actions as per Level 3. Level 3 actions will be stopped when temperature cools to Level 1<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate and Service business continuity plans to be invoked in the face of anticipated severe dislocation of service provision in the face of power and water shortages, disruptions to road, rail, tube and bus services, and staff shortages.

4.2 Additional Roles for Adult Social Care and Children’s Services

Adult Social Care and Children’s Services have additional roles specifically relating to mitigation measures for elderly people, young children and people with health vulnerabilities. See the Heatwave Plan for England – Chapter 3 – Action Tables for details of actions that should be considered and, if appropriate to local services, implemented.

Heat-Health Alerts	Actions
Level 0 All year	<input type="checkbox"/> Managers of social care and children’s settings, and housing generally, to be aware of the specific heatwave mitigation measures suggested in the Heatwave Plan for England and associated guidance, and to implement mitigation wherever possible. <input type="checkbox"/> Senior managers to seek and obtain assurance of compliance within the department.
Level 1 Heatwave and Summer Preparedness Programme 1 June – 15 September	<input type="checkbox"/> Managers of services to at-risk groups that include older people, the very young and people with pre-existing medical conditions as well as those whose health, housing or economic circumstances put them at greater risk of harm from very hot weather, to routinely monitor weather forecasts, and be aware of rising temperatures. <input type="checkbox"/> Senior managers to collate distribution lists of managers for receipt of the twice-weekly (Mon and Fri) Heatwave Warning’s issued by the Met Office 1 June – 15 September. <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor the Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service forecasts.
Level 2 Heatwave is forecast	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement the mitigation measures set out in the Heatwave Plan for England Action Tables – particularly important for at-risk groups in older people’s and children’s settings.
Level 3 Heatwave Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement the mitigation measures set out in the Heatwave Plan for England Action Tables – particularly important for at-risk groups in older people’s and children’s settings.
Level 4 Major Incident – Emergency Response	<input type="checkbox"/> Disruption to power and/or water supplies may lead to closure of care centres and schools. <input type="checkbox"/> Some schools may need to close classrooms where conditions are too hot.

4.3 Emergency Planning Team and Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC)

Heat-Health Alerts	Actions
Level 0 All year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Planning team promote the Heatwave Plan for England to departments and key services.
Level 1 Heatwave and Summer Preparedness Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor the twice-weekly (Mon and Fri) Heatwave Warning's issued by the Met Office 1 June – 15 September. <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor the Met Office National Weather Warning Service forecasts.
Level 2 Heatwave is forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Activate the Heatwave Plan at Level 2 (BECC in 'warm state', staffed by the Emergency Planning Team, ready for full activation if heatwave escalates to Level 3). <input type="checkbox"/> Cascade alerts to all departments.
Level 3 Heatwave Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Declare a Level 3 emergency and fully activate the BECC <input type="checkbox"/> Cascade alerts to all departments. <input type="checkbox"/> Convene the H&F Health Partners Group <input type="checkbox"/> Commission an Impact Assessment for both Council services and residents, businesses and visitors. <input type="checkbox"/> Inform the Chief Executive, and provide a briefing for the Strategic (Gold) Group. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a link between the Council and London Local Authority Gold (via the London Local Authorities Coordination Centre). <input type="checkbox"/> Consider activation of the council's Excess Deaths Plan if numbers of excess deaths in the borough are forecast to reach the threshold.
Level 4 Major Incident – Emergency Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> National (COBR) and regional (LLAG/LLACC) coordination arrangements will be in play – BECC will provide the Council's link to these tiers. <input type="checkbox"/> Council Gold Group will be convened to consider the strategic implications of this level of disruption. <input type="checkbox"/> Business Continuity/Service Resilience Management Group will be convened to support the BECC.

4.4 Communications – external and internal

Heat-Health Alerts	Actions
<p>Level 0 All year</p>	<p>Generic heatwave advice is available from the Council's website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No further action required at Level 0.
<p>Level 1 Heatwave and Summer Preparedness Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Departments should draw attention of their staff to any heatwave mitigation roles they may have. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff with heatwave mitigation and/or response roles should be informed of the updated UKHSA Heatwave Plan for England and associated guidance documents.
<p>Level 2 Heatwave is forecast</p>	<p>UKHSA will broadcast official UKHSA warnings alongside national and regional weather forecasts. Examples of public health core messages are in Annex 2 of the Heatwave Plan for England.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consideration should be given to signposting Council website viewers to the UKHSA and NHS England heatwave websites. <input type="checkbox"/> Consideration should be given to generic information messages to staff via the intranet.
<p>Level 3 Heatwave Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Social Care and Children's Services departments should consider communications to receivers of services about potential interruptions to those services because of the heatwave. <input type="checkbox"/> Messages to staff about precautions when travelling and, particularly, when working outside should be given. This may be via the Intranet, via departmental comms routes, and by direct communication with individuals, as appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> The council's intranet and internet will display information relating to the current situation. Links to documentation produced by UKHSA giving advice and guidance will also be added. <input type="checkbox"/> There may be requests to share messages from other members of the Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Resilience Forum.
<p>Level 4 Major Incident – Emergency Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Borough Emergency Control Centre will be in operation. Comms messages (both external and internal) will be determined by existing protocols within their emergency plan. There may be requests to share messages from other members of the Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Resilience Forum.

4.5 Mass Gatherings

The Heatwave Plan for England contains a quick heat-health checklist (Annex 3) that can be used when planning large-scale public events (mass gatherings) – repeated here. This will be of particular relevance to the Council’s Special Events Team, and to any team that is holding or working with an organisation that is holding an outdoors event.

Heat-Health Risk	Actions to consider
Increased exposure to heat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide temporary shaded areas at event locations (umbrellas, tents) <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce the need to queue (efficient check-in, additional staffing, or staggered ticket entry) <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a water spray/mist area/spraying (showers, garden hose) <input type="checkbox"/> Make available a map of local public air-conditioned spaces where people can have respite from the heat (consider extending opening hours of these venues) <input type="checkbox"/> Divert strenuous activities for cooler days or cooler periods of the day and provide an alternative, less strenuous program for hot days
Communication barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare advice for tourists and distribute around hotels, money exchanges and transport hubs <input type="checkbox"/> Produce and distribute heat-health advice printed onto free fans or caps (can be used to fan/protect against sun while containing information on protecting against and recognising heat-related illnesses, and provide emergency phone number in case of identified heat-related illness) <input type="checkbox"/> Inform your audience and/or your members about the health risks and possible preventive measures through digital screens/speakers/announcements
Reduced access to water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute water bottles or temporary water dispensers <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure an adequate supply of drinking water – on hot days it is advisable to provide free drinking water
Severe heat emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consider moving date, location or cancel event in extreme heat alert (especially at a Level 4 alert) <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure adequate immediate relief for people in emergency and ensure their transport to first aid/health unit
Medical needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remember that people with asthma, heart disease and /or other additional chronic conditions are additionally health sensitive to ozone and/or heat <input type="checkbox"/> Keep in mind that alcohol and some (prescription) drugs can worsen effect of heat <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure adequately trained personnel who notify authorities as soon as there are incidences of heat illness observed
Food needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide water-rich foods such as salads, yogurt and ensure that food is kept cool to prevent contamination

4.6 Advice for Staff (including contracted staff; also see distributed UKHSA comms)

General Advice

The following tips may seem obvious but they are easily overlooked in a busy working day:

- Stay tuned to the weather forecast on the TV or radio, and look at the Met Office London Weather Forecast.
- Drink lots of cool drinks.
- Stay in the shade wherever possible, and try to keep out of the sun between 11am and 3 pm.
- Apply sunscreen of a least SPF15 with UVA protection.
- Wear UV sunglasses, preferably wraparound, to reduce UV exposure to the eyes.
- Wear light, loose-fitting cotton clothes, a hat and light scarf.
- Carry water with you if travelling on public transport (it is best to drink 15 minutes before travelling).
- Look out for others, especially vulnerable groups such as older people, young children or animals.
- Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals.

Fasting and Ramadan

- Many members of the Muslim community may be fasting during the period of Ramadan. If a heatwave occurs during Ramadan it is important to balance food and fluid intake between fasts and specially to drink enough water.
- The Muslim Council of Britain and the NHS publish lots of useful information for those likely to be affected during this period.

Check on vulnerable family members or neighbours

People who are elderly or who have serious medical conditions, particularly heart or breathing conditions, are more vulnerable to serious ill effects in a heatwave. You can help by visiting, perhaps more frequently, and encouraging them to:

- Drink water or fruit juice regularly.
- Wear loose cotton clothing.
- Identify the coolest room in the house, so they can go there to keep cool.
- Keep rooms cool by closing curtains.
- Close windows and curtains while the room is cooler than outside and, if it is safe, open windows at night when the air is cooler.
- Avoid going outside in the hottest part of the day (11am to 3pm).
- If they do need to travel, to carry water with them. It is best to drink 15 minutes before travelling.
- Spend time in the shade and avoid strenuous activity.
- Splash their faces and backs of necks with cool water.

- People with heart problems, breathing difficulties or serious illnesses may find their symptoms become worse in hot weather, so make sure they have enough medicines in stock and take extra care to keep cool.
- Take sensible precautions to prevent sunburn, particularly in children.