

Digest
#03
January 2024

ResilienTogether is one of 25 Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP) projects funded by DEFRA. These aim to demonstrate how practical innovative actions can work to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion. These digests highlight learning from ResilienTogether. They document learning captured during the project which can be used by schemes and organisations across the country.

Public & Private Sector Collaboration

Consultant Work Package Technical Support: the role of JBA Consulting in ResilienTogether



ResilienTogether

ResilienTogether is building a Smart Catchment. Through use of innovative technologies and techniques, it aims to reduce flood risk to people and places, enhance the water environment and improve community resilience in the Pix Brook catchment in the face of climate change.

The project is achieving this through a close-knit partnership of risk management authorities and stakeholders that work together to deliver six inter-related work packages (Figure 1). This digest highlights the collaborative approach Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and partners are taking to working with specialists from JBA Consulting to achieve project aims and deliver innovation.

Challenge

The aims of ResilienTogether span numerous technical disciplines, many of which require specialist knowledge not held by project partners. To facilitate informed and timely task planning and delivery, Work Package Chairs required an unimpeded and flexible approach to access technical specialists.

Our solution

As an environmental, engineering and risk management consultancy, JBA employs a range of specialists in all the fields that ResilienTogether are innovating in. JBA also has access to a diverse network of contacts and subcontractors.

Prior to ResilienTogether commencing, CBC entered into the Regeneration and Business Consultancy Framework (CBC-0986), which enabled direct award and mini-competition for services by Providers.

To create low barriers to specialist services and expertise, JBA offered two service packages:

- Project Management Support - to enter the project at concept level and advise on strategy and decision making toward by setting technical goals and supporting day-to-day running of the project.
- Work Package (WP) Technical Support - to deliver technical tasks and advise on how to approach achieving project goals within each working group.

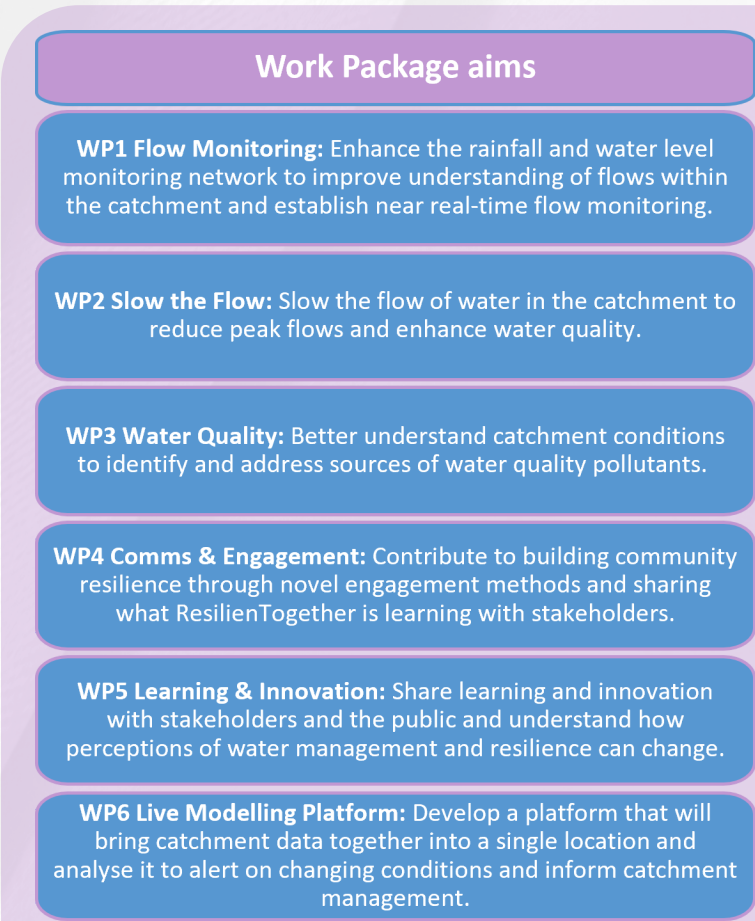


Figure 1. ResilienTogether Work Package aims

This structure enables JBA to see over the whole project and reflexively align JBA's service delivery with evolving needs and opportunities.

For example, where demand for visualising data centrally occurred across working groups, JBA's PM support highlighted this need to the project team, and identified and arranged a technical solution to be delivered through the WP Technical Support service (Figure 2).

Each work package has an assigned technical specialist who directly liaises with the WP Chair and working group. This liaison provides a representation of research findings in collaborative decision making, helping to ensure the project is evidence led and practical limitations are considered early on.

The technical specialists direct teams of JBA staff to deliver scoped tasks and recommend next steps. They also report to the JBA PM Support Lead to ensure joined up working and facilitate central reporting.

Benefits

1. Sharing expertise

Risk Management Authorities and consultants often have different skillsets and delivery approaches. Collaborative working enables a knowledge and skills exchange, to the benefit of both parties. By working directly with partners, JBA's technical specialists can transfer skills, identify opportunities and risks, and offer their experience to help inform the development of methodologies to achieve goals.

2. Flexible delivery

The flexibility embedded in ResilienTogether's arrangement with JBA enables both parties to react to emerging opportunities and challenges. Plans and approaches will change, and being agile to this is essential to project delivery. Such change can facilitate innovation and should be accommodated.

3. Capturing learning and innovation

Being embedded across the project, JBA are uniquely placed to recognise and capture learning and innovations. Innovations occur in product designs, engagement approaches and many more areas that are not always visible to managers and directors. By linking technical delivery with project management, learning is captured and shared.

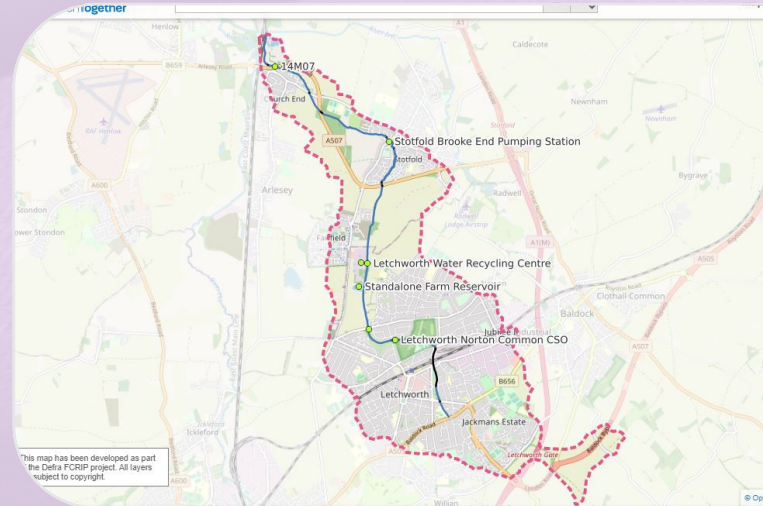


Figure 2. ResilienTogether QGIS Cloud

Some examples of service delivery through JBA's WP Technical Support team are:

Slow the Flow Options Discovery

- Opportunity mapping and workshops to identify options, leading directly into concept design
- Multi-disciplinary team delivering SuDS design, Natural Flood Management and channel re-naturalisation.

Comms and Engagement planning and content

- Foster creativity and innovation through experienced engagement specialist.
- Linking engagement specialist with water quality and flood risk specialists to prepare accessible scientific content for the ResilienTogether website.

River data analysis and flood reporting

- Analysis of level and rain gauge data to investigate quality and suitability for converting to flow.
- Reactive reporting on river conditions and impact of September 2023 flood event in the Pix Brook catchment.

Toby Jones

Senior Analyst at JBA Consulting

"Providing PM Support on ResilienTogether from Outline Business Case through to delivery has given me a perspective where I can see both strategic direction and operational needs.

By directly working with the project partnership and JBA's specialists, I can ensure that communication is shared in both directions and task scopes deliver toward the long term strategy of the project."