

Case study

#11

October 2024

ResilienTogether is a Defra-funded project that aims to build a Smart Catchment to enhance flood resilience. Our Innovation Case Studies showcase new and creative approaches to building a smarter, more resilient catchment.

## Standalone Farm Water Play

A tactile water play area themed around the local watercourse, the Pix Brook, to engage children in a hands-on learning experience.



Figure 1. Water Play at Standalone Farm



Figure 2. Waterplay dams and pump

## ResilienTogether

ResilienTogether is creating a Smart Catchment, through innovative technologies and techniques, to reduce flood risk to people and places, enhance the water environment in the Pix Brook catchment and improve community resilience.

The project is achieving this through a close-knit partnership that collaborate to deliver six inter-related work packages. This case study relates to the Communications and Engagement Work Package, which aims to build community resilience through novel engagement approaches.

## Challenge

In an increasingly digital world, interaction with our local environment and our appreciation of its value is diminishing. This can lead to our watercourses being treated poorly, with fly tipping and pollution caused by negligent behaviour being all too common.

Connecting children with nature at an early age helps to build a lifelong relationship and raises the awareness of the local challenges with flooding and water conservation with the local community.

Such education has to be fun and interactive to attract children and their families. It also needs to be located at the heart of the community and built to last to help embed its messages for the long term.

## Innovative Solution

In Partnership with Standalone Farm, Letchworth, ResilienTogether have co-funded the development of a new Water Play Area themed around its local watercourse, the Pix Brook, to engage children in a hands-on learning experience. It offers pumps, water channels and dam gates to provide a fun, sensory area.



Figure 3. Water pump in the Water Play Area

Acknowledgement: This Innovation Case Study was written in conjunction with Standalone Farm and the Letchworth Heritage Foundation.

**STANDALONE FARM**

**LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY**





Figure 4. Interacting with the Water Play Area

The thoughtfully designed features offer a step-by-step approach to learning, making complex topics accessible and enjoyable for young minds. By incorporating elements that mimic real-world flooding scenarios, children can actively explore and understand the potential consequences of water-related hazards. This interactive experience fosters a deeper connection to the environment and encourages responsible behaviour.

By incorporating educational elements into the Water Play Area, awareness about flood risk and the importance of good water quality is being raised. This will inspire young people to champion the environment and share what they have learnt.

The Water Play Area forms part of Oscar the Otter's Riverside Ramble, also funded by ResilienTogether, which is an interactive and educational nature trail. Both of these initiatives play an important role in education around flood risk, water quality, and nature.

You can read more about the trail in 'Innovation Case Study 10: Oscar the Otter's Riverside Ramble'.

## Jason Valentine

Venues Manager, Letchworth  
Garden City Heritage Foundation



*"We are delighted to be part of the ResilienTogether project. By working collaboratively, we have effectively showcased generating broader awareness and support of environmental issues within the community."*

*"We'll continue to work together to ensure the success of this important initiative."*

## Benefits

### 1. Long-term engagement

The Water Play area is not a one off event. It is owned and maintained by a charity, maximising its legacy and exposure.

### 2. Hands-on experience

By interacting with the water play features, children can actively explore and understand the potential consequences of flooding in a safe and controlled environment.

### 3. Age appropriate learning

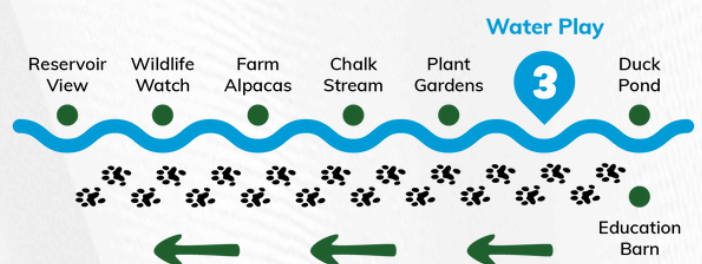
The design of the water play area is suitable for children of various ages, allowing for age-appropriate learning experiences.

### 4. Information boards

While the children are exploring hands-on learning, there is information for the adults too, promoting learning across the generations.

### 5. At the heart of the community

Standalone Farm serves as an educational centre for the local community. Therefore, the addition of the Water Play Area enhances the attraction and educational value for families.



## Use Our Learning

We encourage and offer our learning to be adapted and used across the country by Lead Local Flood Authorities and other organisations who are seeking to create an engaging, educational experience that connects the public with their natural surroundings.

If you want to hear more, please contact [ResilienTogether.project@Centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ResilienTogether.project@Centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) or visit our website <https://resilientogether.org.uk/>