



Community Planning Aberdeen

Progress Report	Project End Report: 13.3 Community Led Resilience planning in vulnerable areas
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Governance Group	CPA Board – 29 February 2024

Purpose of the Report
This report presents the results of the LOIP Improvement Project Aim 13.3 which aimed to have Community led resilience plans in place for areas most vulnerable to flooding by 2023, leading to resilience plans in place across all areas of Aberdeen by 2026.

Summary of Key Information
<p>1 BACKGROUND</p> <p>1.1 The fundamental rationale for this project is to achieve community resilience – the sustained ability of a community to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations. Events caused by severe weather, particularly flooding is the focus of this improvement project because it addresses current problems whilst opening the door to conversations about resilience more generally.</p> <p>1.2 The underlying aim of the project is to reduce the number of people and businesses displaced from their homes and facilities due to severe weather, to minimise effects on health and well-being and to reduce the costs of damages.</p> <p>1.3 The proposition to this improvement project is that we can create a community ‘call to action’ by raising awareness, identifying and developing community champions and supporting the development of resilience plans. The focus of these resilience plans will be how the community can work together to prevent, mitigate and respond to environmental events, particularly flooding.</p> <p>1.4 In developing and implementing a community resilience plan, a community can come together and overcome any disaster, while rebuilding physically and economically. Our improvement approach involves facilitating the setting up of community groups in each area and equipping them with a framework, resources and access to expertise that can help develop capacity and cohesion</p> <p>1.5 Having a community that can work together in an emergency situation reduces the risk to people and properties. It means that local people are more prepared whilst awaiting emergency response (such as evacuation). Again this was identified in the feedback for “Aberdeen Adapts” where communities are well placed to observe and report emerging local issues. So our efforts give us scope to help avoid and prevent issues as well as preparing and responding. Prevention, preparedness and</p>

action ready creates a resilience that is likely to improve outcomes for health and well-being.

1.6 A community that is well prepared against environmental and emergency situations will help to avoid/reduce costs of damages to property and premises and ultimately insurance costs.

1.7 There are wider benefits of community resilience, particularly efforts to promote social inclusion and helping to identify and support most vulnerable members of the community.

2 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AIM

2.1 Against this background, on September 2021 the CPA Board approved the [project charter](#) for the initiation of an improvement project which aimed to 13.3 Community led resilience plans in place for areas most vulnerable to flooding by 2023, leading to resilience plans in place across all areas of Aberdeen by 2026.

3 WHAT CHANGES DID WE MAKE?

3.1 The multi agency project team tested the following changes:

1. Identify community champions for resilience, through engagement with networks and community councils and initially a database collected of people agreeing to become part of the Emergency Response and Resilience team across the city, with funding that can be allocated to each community centre for purchase of resilience items i.e. torches, loud hailers, space blankets etc
2. Social media/local messaging/engagement efforts to make the case for change and encourage community interest and participation in community resilience planning. Production of a campaign for social media.
3. Engaging with the community to provide education and training on dealing with severe weather events and flooding to ensure greater awareness and resilience.
4. Targeting vulnerable groups and those with less capacity to adapt aiming to involve them in resilience planning particular to their needs (e.g. elderly people, people on low incomes, or with poor housing quality and limited mobility). This will be done via the creation of Persons at Risk Database (PARD) for Aberdeen City (eta Oct 2022) – share information on personal resilience and local resilience plans i.e. the effect on the individual
5. Production of suite of pdf leaflets on resilience for Businesses (Flooding, Winter Preparedness complete and shared with City Centre businesses via Aberdeen Inspired)

4 HAVE OUR CHANGES RESULTED IN IMPROVEMENT?

4.1 Although the original aim has not been met a lot of productive work has been instigated and we will benefit from it in the future. There has been positive achievements with a third group established in the city in Bridge of Don and also as you will read further on new interest being show from other areas of the city.

4.2 Feedback from the new Bridge of Don Group has been positive as per quote below:

“We are delighted with the privilege to partner with the council and other agencies located in north of the city to provide community support as part of the community resilience volunteer group and be there for people when they need us”. **Spokesperson for The King's Church Aberdeen**

- 4.3 The impact of the changes tested so far are described below:
- 4.4 Previously two such Groups - Cults, Milltimber and Bielside and Culter. in December 2022, we supported a third group to establish itself in Bridge of Don and Danestone. We worked with interested local people to find participants, create a plan and put in place activation arrangements. This group is made up of members of the Community Council, Rotary club, Mens' Shed and a Church in the area. Such groups offer anyone with any ability of any age to take part.
- 4.5 In late 2023 we engaged with and made presentations to community council groups from Seaton and Rosehill & Stockethill as well as the Fittie community development trust all of who have expressed interest in setting up resilience groups and plans in their area to which we will support them over the coming months. As a result Rosehill & Stockethill have also taken part in winter 2023 in a joint venture with NHS Grampian and ACC where salt and pavement gritters have been supplied with the aim to reduce slips trips falls and hospital admissions. Seaton and Fittie were provided with community resilience leaflets and delivered these to residents to help them in preparation for winter.
- 4.6 In time for winter 2022/23, officers delivered emergency "grab boxes" around the city, including useful items such as hi vis vests, torches and wind up radios, first aid kits etc. These were delivered to every community centre, including our support centres, and they also include various leaflets on winter gritting routes, how to prepare in case of storms or floods and information on starting a group. For winter 2023/24 more leaflet drops will be made into our communities. The project secured funding from SSEN and others specifically for community resilience to enable distribution across the city to all community centres of emergency grab boxes for example.
- 4.7 47 Community Resilience Boxes issued winter 2022/2023
 Community Centres x 20
 Learning Centres x 16
 Bridge of Don and Danestone Community Resilience Group x 2
 Culter community Resilience Group x 2 extra hi vis
 Cults Miltimber Bielside community Resilience Group x 1
 VSA x 1
 Cyrenians x 1
 Sheddocksly community centre x 1
 Northfield comm x 1
 Balnagask comm x 1
 Blackwood homes and care x 1
- 4.8 In 2022/23 we developed and produced a design and style for City resilience information – produced a suite of printed & pdf leaflets that were delivered to GP surgeries Community centres, Libraries, specific areas of vulnerability . These were partnered with social media campaign, press releases on community and individual resilience along with enhanced web activity on council website re winter preparedness.
- 4.9 We secured SSEN funding in 2023/24 enabled the following to be purchased and will be delivered in 2024
- **Provision of battery packs**
 Provision of battery generator packs; to support the most vulnerable individuals who need to use power reliant medical equipment within their own property during a power outage. AHSCP will own the battery generator packs and loan these out to vulnerable individuals whose reliance of the medical equipment is critical. When the care package changes and

the medical equipment is no longer required, the battery generator pack would be returned to AHSCP. This proposal supports the most vulnerable individuals to remain in their homes during a power outage and supports their independent living. This would possibly reduce the individual needing additional support from the wider health system during such an emergency. FYI the city and AHSCP have identified 20 vulnerable children and 26 adults that rely on powered equipment.

- 3 Power packs for 3 existing Community Resilience volunteer Groups to assist the overall ACC response to a power outage emergency – will be given to the CRVGs to manage equipment directly and ongoing
- Culter
- Cults Milltimber and Bielside
- Bridge of Don & Danestone

4.10 Emergency **Grab box provision given to all ACC Support Centres (better known as Rest Centres) x 6 Sports Village & Get Active Sports Aberdeen; Jesmond, Beacon Peterculter, Kincorth, Sheddocksley**

Example box contents: small power banks for mobile devices, wind up torches and radios, head torches, table lanterns battery, load hangers, first aid kits, stationary, space blankets, hi vis vests, free standing portable emergency lights.

4.11 During some of the storms of 2023 i.e. storm Babet the council emergency response team engaged in discussions with existing groups in Culter, Cults and Bridge of Don in preparation for incoming storms. This was to ensure availability of their groups and facilities; such as rest centre in case they were required to be called upon. This preparation allowed the Culter CRVG to quickly open up their community rest centre when it was required due to local flooding.

Community Resilience Conference

4.12 A Community Resilience Conference for the Grampian Area was held in October 2023 with approximately 100 attendees. The conference is aimed at community groups wishing to start or improve their resilience activities /arrangements. Jointly hosted by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire council. Objectives where:-

- Promotion of the individual, household, family and community resilience
- Increased understanding of roles and responsibilities of the Category 1 responders
- Increased understanding of how community groups fit into emergency response
- Demonstration of the types of resilience activities community groups
- Encouraging networking between groups

All the established and some of the new interested groups attended the conference.

Business Resilience

4.13 In 2023 engagement with the cities business community made good progress where the message of how to be resilient as a business was discussed; tools, advice and guidance given. Initially this was facilitated by Aberdeen Inspired and the Belmont Street area businesses took part in the session (approx. 7) we will look to capitalise on this momentum over 2024 using other existing business groups such as Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce etc.

5 HOW HAVE OUR COMMUNITIES/PROTECTED GROUPS PARTICIPATED IN THE PROJECT AND THE IMPACT OF THIS

5.1 As detailed above, the community have been at the heart of the project with communities empowered and engaged with at all stages. Recognising that one plan will not fit all,

engaging directly with communities to develop their respective plans and for those areas where plans are in place to support other communities to develop their own respective plans.

5.2 The project has also taken steps as described above to engage with and empower communities to support their respective areas in severe weather through the provision of grit etc.

6 HOW WILL WE MONITOR AND SUSTAIN THESE IMPROVEMENTS?

6.1 Maintain regular contact, attend community council meetings and carry out presentations, continue with and expand on the social media campaigns for winter 2024/5. Look at training and exercising opportunities for community groups to take part in. Build on the community resilience conference for year two after creating solid foundations last October.

6.2 Data will continue to be gathered and reported via the Sustainable City Group and the Outcomes Framework.

7 OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCALE UP AND SPREAD

7.1 Opportunities have been hampered due to lack of dedicated resource to deliver this aim. However work has progressed; a brand and social media campaign was created and activated last winter and in use now, we have achieved interest from targeted and new areas in the city who wish to explore becoming a resilience group. There is opportunities through a revised aim included in the refreshed LOIP to enable the changes tested to be scaled up and for plans to be in place in all areas most vulnerable to flooding but also in raising awareness of the resources and support available for all areas in responding to severe weather incidents.

7.2 Specifically, the project aims to scale up:

- Community Resilience Conference audience and participant reach to be enhanced year on year
- Spread the information to broader resilience rather than solely flood
- Encourage creation of Community Resilience Volunteer Group at the last 3 vulnerable areas to flooding in the city over the next 12/ 24 months
- Roll out to existing and new / prospective groups relevant equipment as and where appropriate from the SSEN funding source. i.e. Fittie might be flood gates, air vent covers, sandless sandbags for houses, Stockethill and Rosehill might be pavement gritters, emergency grab boxes, leaflets etc
- Awareness of business resilience in the city utilising the Aberdeen Inspired network and other business groups such as Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce etc.
- Awareness of personal and household resilience

Recommendations for Action

It is recommended that the CPA Board:

1. Agree that whilst the aim has not been achieved there have been the positive outcomes to date with 3 plans in place; and
2. Agree that increasing community resilience remains a priority and note that the Sustainable City Group was developing a revised aim as part of the refreshed LOIP to build on the improvements to date with new innovative improvements, as well as taking forward the opportunities for scale up and spread as detailed.

Opportunities and Risks

Include a summary of the **key opportunities**

- Community Resilience Conference audience and participant reach to be enhanced year on year
- To make the aim wider and more about general resilience not just Flooding and create a more manageable aim
- Encourage creation of Community Resilience Volunteer Group at the last 3 vulnerable areas to flooding in the city over the next 12/ 24 months
- Roll out to existing and new / prospective groups relevant equipment as and where appropriate from the SSEN funding source. i.e. Fittie might be flood gates, air vent covers, sandless sandbags for houses, Stockethill and Rosehill might be pavement gritters, emergency grab boxes, leaflets etc
- Utilise existing community councils and other established volunteer groups
- Increase awareness of business resilience in the city utilising the Aberdeen Inspired network
- Increase awareness of personal and household resilience
- Creation of touchpoint log (process measure) annually to record no of presentations given, meetings with existing or prospective groups,

Risks

- Lack of physical and financial resource
- Lack of engagement from community groups and city citizens
- Not having a manageable realistic and deliverable aim

Consultation

Sustainable City Group

Background Papers

The following papers were used in the preparation of this report.

13.3 Project charter

LOIP

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