

Resilient Kurilpa: Rising above the waters

A community response to flood recovery

Project Overview

Resilient Kurilpa is a voluntary network that emerged from the community's response to the February 2022 floods that swept through Brisbane and affected thousands of residents in Kurilpa, including Highgate Hill, South Brisbane, West End, and Hill End.

The floodwaters didn't just inundate the streets and homes of Kurilpa; they also triggered a wave of solidarity and actions that would help strengthen the community's flood resilience into the future.

The Resilient Kurilpa network was built on a framework of collaborative partnerships between residents and representatives from local volunteer groups including the West End Community Association, Kurilpa Futures, West End Traders Association, and our neighbourhood centres at Community Plus.

Despite having no initial funding, the network began by engaging the community in various meetings to map out people's needs and urgent project areas following the 2022 flood.

Community Plus played a key role in sustaining longer-term collaboration among Resilient Kurilpa members by supporting them to secure government funding. This enabled Resilient Kurilpa members to continue building partnerships with local experts, including engineers and designers, body corporates, tenancy solicitors, insurance experts, and mental health providers, to collaboratively deliver their identified projects.

These projects enhance the community's capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from future floods by leveraging shared knowledge, advocacy, and support for practical planning.

Key Outcomes

Some of Resilient Kurilpa's most impressive achievements include:

- Securing Government Funding
- State policy change advocacy
- The [Resilient Kurilpa website](#)
- [Local Insights Blog](#)
- The online [Kurilpa Flood Library](#) and card deck
- The [Apartment Toolkit](#), including a Flood Mitigation Plan template and tools
- Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness training
- [A Flooded Intersections Map](#) to assist resident evacuations
- Community education and engagement
- [Guidance for residents on flood insurance](#)
- [Recorded community webinars and events](#) addressing targeted needs and interests such as renters' rights and apartment flood planning.



Photo: Residents share flood planning knowledge at community meeting facilitated by Resilient Kurilpa in October 2022.

Community-Led Considerations

Resilient Kurilpa's approach to building flood resilience emphasises open knowledge sharing about flood risks, and practical actions residents can take to mitigate future impacts to themselves and their buildings.

The following key learnings showcase our community-led approaches to flood resilience, as a model for other community groups and neighbourhood centres to consider and adapt to their circumstances.

Build a network by forming and maintaining local relationships between residents, community groups and leaders. Develop a shared understanding of goals and objectives at the beginning. But stay open to the possible strategic pathways to achieve these. Draw on your network to form partnerships with experts where needed.

Identify local knowledge and lived experiences by listening to what the community already knows and what they need. Identify effective existing practices and resources to leverage, as well as gaps to address through projects.

Engage with each other and the community in ways that respond to identified community needs and projects. Meet people 'where they are' by supporting groups at different phases of their recovery and mitigation journey.

Plan project meetings, events and communications around practical goals to avoid burn out from volunteers and disengagement from community.

Direct individual strengths toward the community's interests by enabling diverse and existing skillsets to collaboratively inform the development and delivery of projects that benefit the broader community's needs. For example, in Resilient Kurilpa, a retired engineer and body corporate chair have delivered apartment flood planning resources, community development experts have facilitated engagements, ex-public servants conducted government advocacy, a finance expert delivered flood insurance education, and a communication designer developed the website and Kurilpa Flood Library.

Enable ongoing community learning and planning through various formats, and at various paces. Find practical ways for community knowledge and resources to be easily accessed by diverse groups, through in-person engagements and online materials that people can view at any time. Planning for flood disasters is a long-term project that relies on knowledge being preserved for new residents and future generations.

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This case study supports the delivery of the *Queensland Neighbourhood Centres Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2023-2026*. The full strategy is available for download from the NCQ website: ncq.org.au

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Australian Government



Queensland Government



Neighbourhood Centres Queensland acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of Country; we pay our respects to their Elders, Ancestors, land and seas. Sovereignty has never been ceded. It always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.