

spring

THE AGENT FOR CHANGE

**DESIGN EFFECTIVENESS AWARD 2020
CLIENT: ANGLIAN WATER
CAMPAIGN: FUTURE OF WATER
FOR PUBLICATION**

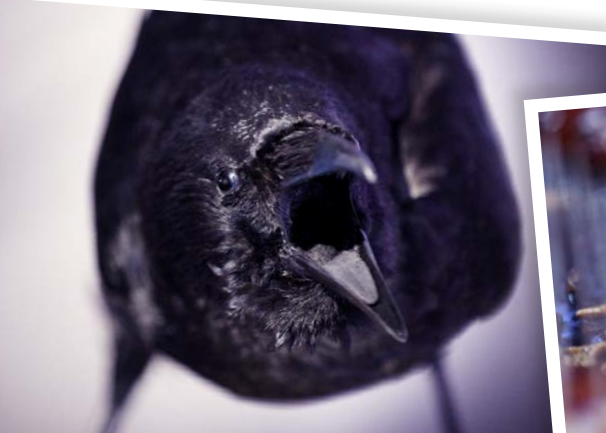
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The East of England faces a number of significant risks to its future water supply, which could have a catastrophic impact on the area's communities, economy, and environment if left unchecked. Water Resources East (WRE) was formed to take an in-depth look at water challenges UK wide, now and in the future, and how they would impact on the 31,000-square kilometres it covers.

Spring was appointed to design an event to promote stakeholder engagement and participation in WRE at an event on 9th July 2018. By designing a controversial window into a dystopian future which is destined to become our reality if action is not taken, we were able to immerse stakeholders in the WRE brand and shock them into action. The experience showcased five current collaborative, multi-sector projects in the water sector designed to create a more sustainable future.

The design was used to demonstrate and initiate the need for more commitment and investment from current and new partners to secure the future of WRE. It achieved 59 pledges from stakeholders, enabling WRE to set up independently of Anglian Water with the financial support of 10 organisations and the practical support of over 40. This also provided job security for its employees.

Spring's concept raised awareness and educated potential partners about the work that WRE is doing to help communities and businesses alongside safeguarding the future supply of water. WRE was able to launch its Twitter and LinkedIn accounts off the back of the event creating a jump in reach and engagement via social media alongside coverage in major trade press. Through its increased profile WRE is now influencing and informing national policy with the National Infrastructure Commission, Defra (Departments for environment, farming, and rural affairs), and the Environment Agency, creating a national framework for water resource management.



Investing for
communities
Lake District
National Park

WATER RESTRICTIONS
EFFECTIVE 1 FEB 2018

NEWS YOUR REGION

East Anglian food prices reach record levels due to drought

It in East Anglia has sent prices of staples such as maize and sorghum soaring. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Tuesday, warning that a rise in food prices could lead to renewed hunger in the region.



NOW
WE CAN
DEFEAT DAY ZERO

NOW
WE CAN
DEFEAT DAY ZERO

THE WATERPORT
NEWS

Water drill risks poisoning the wells

City's desperate measure could turn into an eco-disaster

THE AGENCY FOR CHANGE



CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

WRE was formed in 2014 to take an in-depth look at water challenges UK wide and in Eastern England specifically, now and in the future, and how they would impact on the 31,000-square kilometres it covers, from the Humber estuary in the north to the Thames in the south.

The East faces a number of significant risks to its future water supply, which could have a catastrophic impact on the area's communities, economy, and environment if left unchecked. This includes an estimated population growth to 74 million by 2039, increasing public water supply demand to between 2,000 – 4,000 megalitres a day, equivalent to 2,000 Olympic sized swimming pools. Increased temperatures from climate change will result in 30% less surface water in rivers and a decrease in environmental health through rigorous land use and unsustainable water abstraction rates.

WRE sits independently in collaboration with Anglian Water, with the mandate to work alongside regulators, companies, retailers and individuals in the water, agriculture, power and environmental sector to jointly own the strategy for water resilience in the Eastern England.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES (OUTPUTS)

1. Design an event to promote stakeholder engagement and participation in WRE on 9th July 2018
2. Highlight collaborative, multi-sector projects in the water sector designed to create a more sustainable future
3. Raise awareness and educate stakeholders about the work that WRE is doing to help communities and businesses alongside safeguarding the future supply for all water use sectors

BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

OUTTAKES

1. Secure 75% of WRE stakeholders in a room and engaged with WRE through the event
2. Encourage 30% of stakeholders to commit to the one/two things they can do to improve the situation

OUTCOME

3. Generate enough external funding for WRE to allow it to operate as its own entity

INSIGHT

Spring's insight was that stakeholders needed to engage in this wholeheartedly to drive active involvement and to influence the wider agenda, including at the highest levels of policymaking.

WRE's stakeholders have at one point engaged or committed to the project, but over time 'Water Resilience' risks being something that's talked about but not acted upon. Our creative needed to force the community which has the biggest opportunity to create change to engage with WRE and commit to how they are going to contribute to the delivery of the water resilience strategy.

To do this, Spring had to create something highly interactive and inescapable that would shock people out of their complacency. We were 100% willing to use progressive design thinking and delivery to make people uncomfortable; to twist the expectation of 'a presentation and some canapés' in a way that would take them by surprise, make them squirm with discomfort and spark a fundamental difference in their thinking.

Our solution was 'The Future of Water'. This was a creative theme for a spectacular event that would demand attention and action. Through every one of four zones, we used design thinking to unlock psychological impacts, create desired responses and reactions. We also delivered multiple suites of graphically designed elements to unlock contrasting sensations: welcome and bounty, deprivation and fear, information and engagement, preservation and prosperity.

It catapulted guests into a dystopia depicting the stark reality of the future if no action is taken. It was designed around the mega-trends affecting the UK: climate change, food energy water nexus, circular economy and population growth through two alternative outcomes:

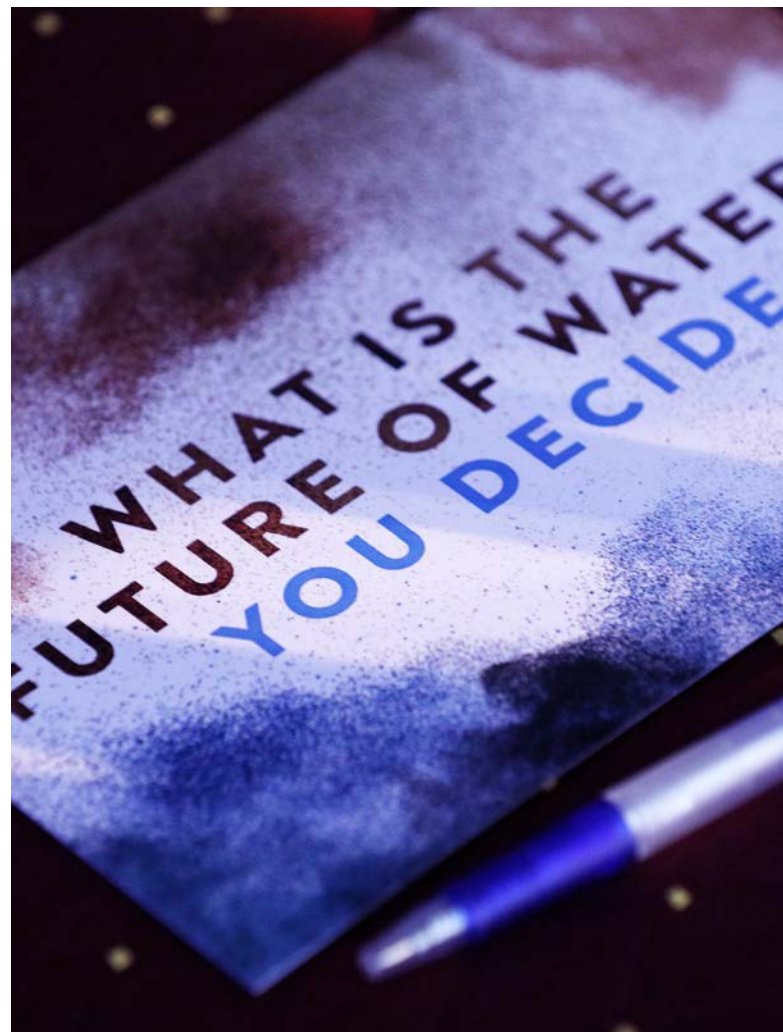
Dystopia: an unsettling immersive experience depicting the future of this century if no action is taken now.

Optimism: The result of a global action plan of WRE, Anglia Water and its partners to avoid the worst-case scenario, which demonstrates the sustainable use of water.

The invite asked guests to decide on the future of water with stark design that was replicated through the event.

The Future of Water was delivered in collaboration with Anglian Water and Fisher productions. Anglian Water was responsible for the project brief and inviting and engaging the stakeholders. Spring was responsible for the creative and production of all design aspects, and the Fisher productions was responsible for delivery of the build, rigging and light and sound. Design fees without production costs were £38,300.

Creating our vision of dystopia at the Lincolnshire showground, an open, light exhibition centre with one big floor space, was a design challenge for this project.



IMPLEMENTATION

REGISTRATION - SPLASHING OUT

Registration took place in the 'Splashing Out' room where a lavish and generous mood was created through projected light and the sound of splashing, cascading and leaping water. It felt bountiful, generous and light-hearted – just what people have come to expect from corporate hospitality.

Once the room was full, guests were played a news bulletin highlighting how current misuse of water through consumer consumption, agriculture and industry is impacting the environment. Spring's design team based the bulletin as closely as possible on prime-time news to ensure it felt real. The set was built around expected visual cues including actors dress and position on screen, colour palette and presentation of graphics and sound.



DYSTOPIA

Guests almost immediately received a very nasty shock when, after the news bulletin ended, they were hurriedly and unceremoniously moved into the immersive dystopia.

Brought to life by actors, to create this zone we built a warren of three rooms designed to create a shock to the system for guests. It was a tight uncomfortable place, taking guests through the heart of an overpopulated country with not enough housing, food or water. Communities are relying on ever-decreasing supplies from the government. Shops are boarded up, crime and corruption are rife and the environment is dry and inhospitable to crops and animals. News screens depict conflict as the population becomes more violent as the resources dry up. In this dystopia there is no hope for the future; our time to make change came decades earlier in 2018. We consumed everything, and left ourselves with nothing. The planet can no longer support us. We live on borrowed time given to us by what little technology we have left.

DYSTOPIA ROOM ONE THEME: AT HOME

Floor to ceiling backdrops were created to showcase the indoor dystopian environment. The colour palette was muted, lighting was low, sensory blocks created the smell of damp, flickering strip lights hissed a background buzz and actors playing paranoid protagonists pushed extortionate water bills into guests' faces in high-pitched desperation. We created a case board of fake news, highlighting locations where water could be potentially still be found. Water Resource East was pitched as the resistance. The new Water Resource East logo was subtly introduced across the design work in the form of tags, spray-painted by the resistance. A host of technology screens were being managed to monitor water sightings across the UK, CCTV of the outside corridor and newsfeeds depicted rioting and Government raids. The drama then culminated in a raid which queued up the move for guests into the second dystopian space.



DYSTOPIA ROOM TWO THEME: THE AGRICULTURE FACTORY

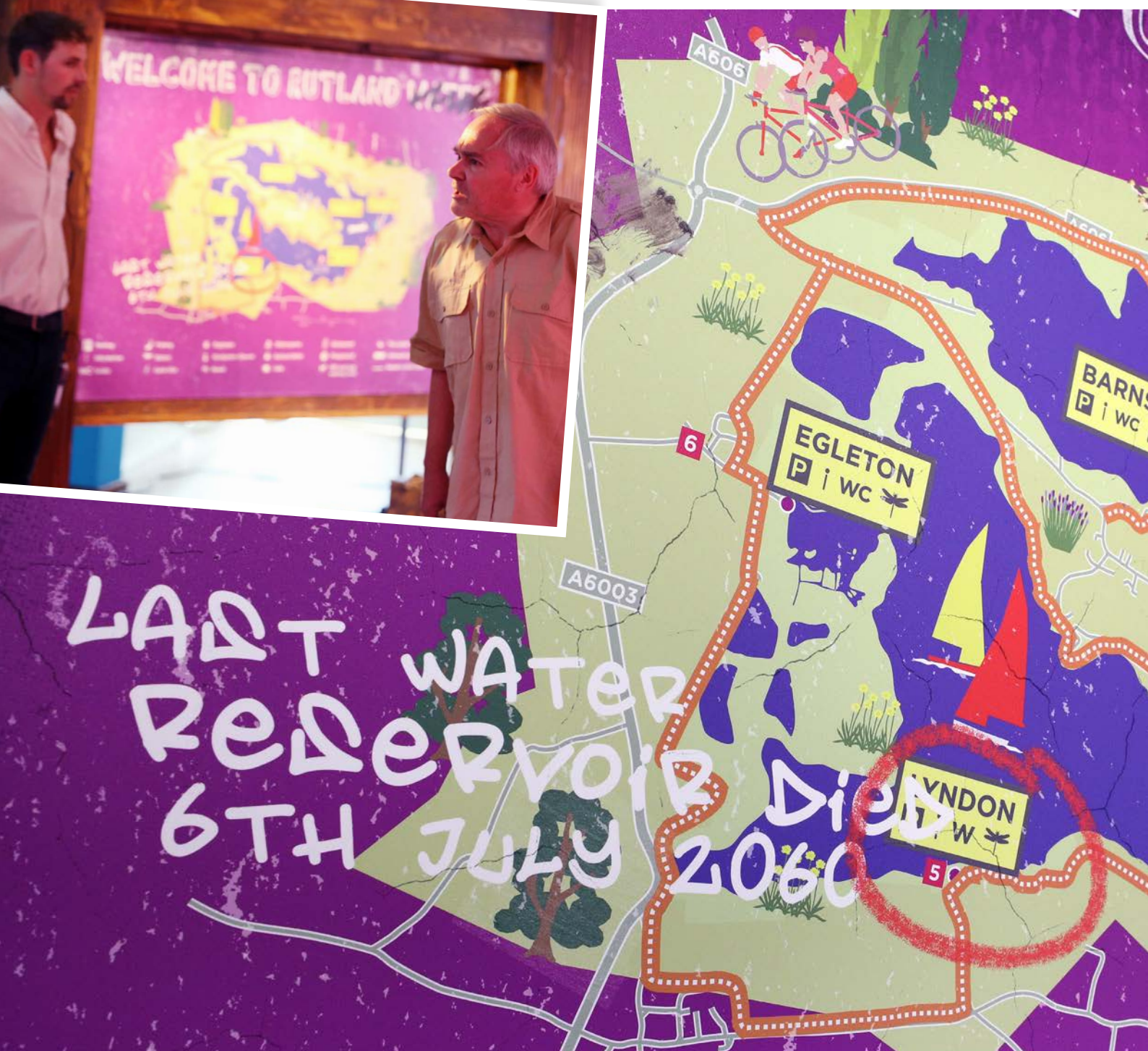
These backdrops were created in the same style as the conspiracy room but depicted as an outside space with derelict factories and barbed-wire fences also tagged by the WRE resistance. The backdrop was complemented by real Harris barrier fencing, 'Closed' posters were designed on dibond aluminium, cable tied to the fencing. Designs were replicated from real-life examples for authenticity. Screens showed a Google time-lapse of Lake Urmia drying up. Piles of hay bales and tractor tyres illustrated the abandoned farms and dry dust was pumped through the room to create an arid atmosphere that was inhabitable to nature. Desperate actors told the story of unemployment and industry decline.

DYSTOPIA ROOM THREE

THEME: RUTLAND WATER RESERVOIR

Spring's design team sourced the original artwork for the lecterns and wayfinding signage at Rutland Water, one of Anglian Water's largest reservoirs. Rather than a scene of picnics and water sports they displayed neglect and graffiti from the WRE resistance and destruction and extinction of wildlife. An actor playing the park keeper depicted a desperate man who had refused to leave the site when it was condemned. He told the story of destruction and extinction of the environment to guests through his stuffed bird.

The transition between dystopia and utopia was delivered at the end of the Leisure room through a WRE Optimism video made using text, illustration and animation to an upbeat soundtrack to capture the guest's engagement and turn it into action. A bright colour palette was complemented with fast moving frames reassuring guests that not all was lost.





OPTIMISM

Guests entered freely towards the end of their journey to a showcase of global action plans to create an optimistic future in direct contrast to the dystopia. WRE, Anglian Water, its partners and supply chain demonstrated how the dystopian environmental concerns can be mitigated with new infrastructure and technological breakthroughs currently in development. Refreshments were served.

WRE hosts were available to talk through their existing projects through bespoke showcases that tied together Anglian Water's award-winning Water Resilience Manifesto, which puts water at the heart of a new way of living. Understanding that it will take more than just the business itself to make a difference, this includes creating a national water resilience network with other water companies, community and business engagement, collaboration and innovation through the water supply chain. This was illustrated through a host of interactive displays including a flat screen map that used Google API to pinpoint each project, allowing guests to access information about them

and share it via social media or email. From here they were encouraged to talk to all WRE exhibitors to find out not only what was already happening, but to think further about how they could contribute either to existing projects or create new ones.

The event ended with a high-profile panel discussion including the Environment Agency, Association of Drainage Authorities, Natural England and Anglian Water. Bright and confident staging had a pared back design to encourage discussion and sharing of opinions. All guests were encouraged to make their own optimistic pledge before leaving the event, answering the question on the invite – what was the future of water and what they will do to ensure this future? Pledge cards were designed in line with the invite.

Poignantly, the timing of the event on 9th July tied in with a two-month heatwave where, country wide, reservoirs were running low and there was a declared agricultural and environmental drought. Further afield, Cape Town, South Africa were running down the clock to "day zero" where the city was to run out of water for the first time.

RESULTS

RESULTS AGAINST DESIGN OBJECTIVES (OUTPUTS)

1. Design an event to promote stakeholder engagement and participation in WRE on 9th July 2018
 - Spring designed and delivered the Dystopian/Optimism Future of Water event at the Lincolnshire Showground on the 9th July 2018
2. Highlight collaborative, multi-sector projects in the water sector designed to create a more sustainable future
 - Five existing projects from WRE's partners were showcased in detail at the event with spokespeople encouraging delegates to do the same. This included the University of East Anglia Centre for Water Studies, Anglian Water's Wisbech garden flood management project and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership
3. Raise awareness and educate stakeholders about the work that WRE is doing to help communities and businesses alongside safeguarding the future supply for all water use sectors
 - Content from the event allowed it to launch its social media channels through links to this stakeholder community, leading to 280 Twitter followers and 85 LinkedIn followers, creating a jump in reach and engagement
 - The event resulted in coverage in major trade press including The Water Report, the National Farmers' Union, and the Institute of Water
 - WRE is now influencing and informing national policy through the National Infrastructure Commission and Defra (Departments for environment, farming, and rural affairs), and the Environment Agency in creating a national framework for water resource management

- The timely nature of the design was reflected six months later when in October 2018 rebel climate activists Extinction Rebellion was founded with the stated aim of using civil disobedience to compel government action on climate breakdown, biodiversity loss, and the risk of social and ecological collapse

RESULTS AGAINST THE BUSINESS OBJECTIVES:

OUTTAKES

1. Secure 75% of WRE stakeholders in a room and engaged with WRE through the event
 - Of the 175 stakeholders invited, 135 delegates (77%) attended, including representatives from county and district councils; Environmental NGOs including the WWF and RSPB, universities including UEA and Lincoln University, water companies including Affinity and South Staff Cambridge and regional land owners
2. Encourage 30% of stakeholders to commit to the one/two things they can do to improve the situation
 - 59 (44%) pledges from stakeholders were made that evening covering Leadership, Financial, Policy and Technical sectors

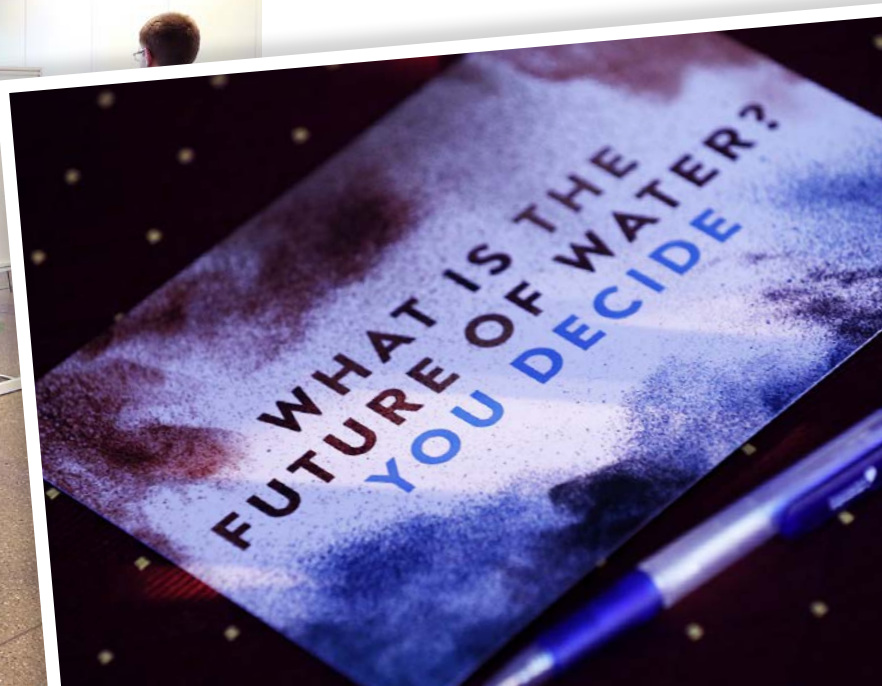
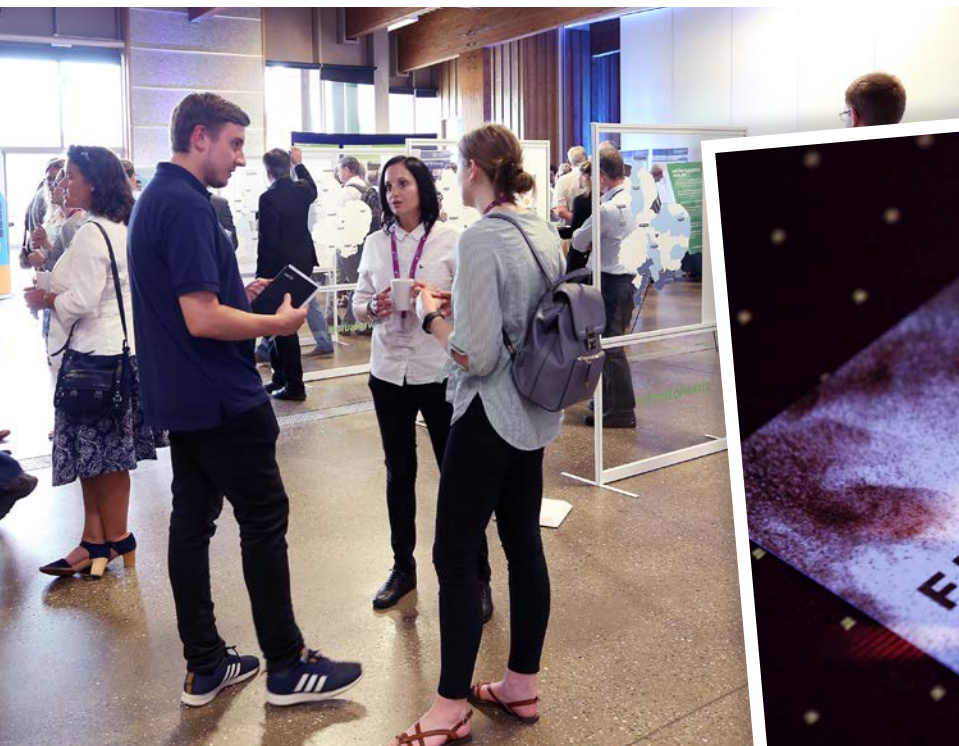
OUTCOME

3. Generate enough external funding for WRE to allow it to operate as its own entity
 - The WRE team was funded by Anglian Water at the time of the event and following its success, it has been able to set up as an independent organisation with the financial support of 10 organisations and practical support of over 40 and growing
 - This has provided job certainty and security for WRE employees



Feedback from event attendee, rainwater harvester Stormsaver:

"It was a splendid exhibition and an optimistic day, and I especially valued the 'dystopia', frightening though it was. Reality can be shocking, and [this] was a very forceful way to get the difficult message across. Objectives were met through a combination of clear and precise messaging, strong event management and a high level of delegate engagement."



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