



# THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR

## FROM VISION TO ACTION

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## FROM VISION TO ACTION

This report provides a summary of the strategy to unlock and maximise the potential of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

It marks the culmination of a year-long programme of activity in 2018-2019 which included consultation with over 200 partners and stakeholders and granular research into baseline conditions across the Estuary.

This research was undertaken before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK and the world, and recognises projected impacts on the South East. Despite the devastating impacts of the pandemic, the cultural and creative industries will be integral to accelerating the UK's economic and social recovery.

# MAYOR OF LONDON



**SOUTH EAST  
LOCAL ENTERPRISE  
PARTNERSHIP**

In partnership with:



**Lewisham**



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# VISION

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**Lewisham: Globally Significant Knowledge, Talent and Research** – Goldsmiths, University of London has long anchored creative activity in London, supporting the development of some of the world's great creative talent. Today, alongside Trinity Laban, the University supports a thriving graduate community as well as high quality research in augmented reality and digital art. Now one of the Mayor of London's first Creative Enterprise Zones and with significant capacity to support new spaces for creative production, Lewisham can provide knowledge, space and public sector support to support sector investment and growth.



## INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



Silver Building, Royal Docks  
Photo: Matt Crossick

# VISION

The Thames Estuary is London's gateway to the world. On its banks and inland lie ancient settlements, fishing harbours, resort towns, industrial hubs, active and decommissioned docks and some of the newest and fastest growing districts in the country.

The Estuary is benefiting from unprecedented levels of regeneration investment, unlocking new homes and workspaces, and transforming regional and local connections. In London, it includes some of the most diverse communities in Europe, alongside areas of rapid growth and transition such as the Royal Docks, Thamesmead, Bexley Riverside, Woolwich, Deptford, New Cross and Dagenham Dock. Further east across the North Kent Coast and South Essex, towns such as Margate, Ebbsfleet and Southend have been redefining themselves around creativity and culture, capitalising on space,

championing talent and investing in new facilities and infrastructure.

Creativity and culture provide a common thread cutting across the story and evolution of the Estuary. This, alongside the embedded economic and social networks which unite the Estuary's places and communities, underpin the vision for the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

Launched by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, in partnership with the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP), the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and the South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN) in February 2017, the vision established a bold aspiration to develop a world class cluster of cultural and creative production along the Thames Estuary.

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“...A world class centre for production  
– leading global innovation,  
developing talent and cultivating world  
changing ideas”

**Sadiq Khan** Mayor of London

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“... A unique, self-sustaining, infrastructure  
to support creative businesses in a way that  
has not been seen before”

**Christian Brodie** South East LEP Chair

The vision and potential of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor is already widely recognised.

It was highlighted as a high priority initiative by the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission in its June 2018 report to Government.

In January 2019 it was awarded £4.3m from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through the Cultural Development Fund to unlock long-term, transformational, culture-led growth across the North Kent Coast and South Essex and establish the region as a world-class creative hub.

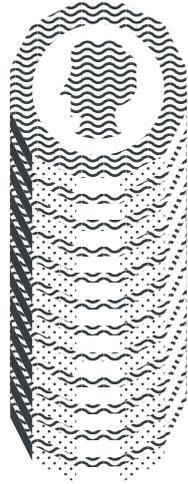
In March 2019, in its response to the Commission's report, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced a £350,000 grant to support master planning and feasibility studies to develop the programme.

And in July 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Thames Estuary Growth Board announced its support to the Thames Estuary Production Corridor in its first action plan, 'The Green Blue', recognising the programme as a key part of the Estuary's future.

# OPPORTUNITY

£111+bn

**Value** of UK's creative industries in 2018 per annum, growing at five times the rate of the economy as a whole



£127bn

Estimated **supply chain spend** per annum by the creative industries across the UK

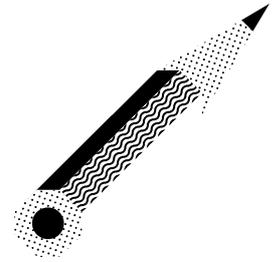


+20%

Average **productivity** per creative SME compared to the economy average

100,000

Residents across the Estuary already working in creative **occupations**

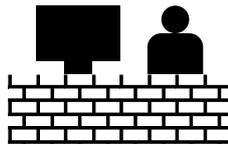


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# FOUNDATIONS

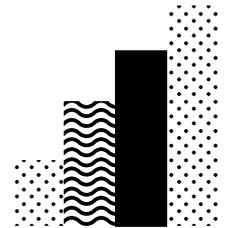
16,000

Creative and cultural **production businesses** supporting over 46,000 jobs across the Estuary



+37%

Increase in the number of **production businesses** across the Estuary over the past five years



£200m

**Investment** in large scale production facilities across the Estuary over the past decade



63

**Higher and Further Education Institutions** across the Estuary. Many of these specialise in creative industries

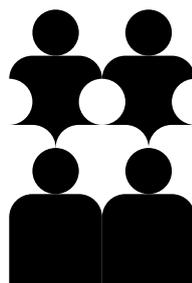


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# FUTURE POTENTIAL

+50,000

**Projected number of jobs** delivered by the Thames Estuary Production Corridor - creating the UK's largest concentration of production activity



+£3.7bn

Projected additional **GVA** per annum which could be delivered by the Thames Estuary Production Corridor - enhancing UK productivity and local prosperity



## The Royal Docks: Capacity and Momentum for Rapid Growth at London's Enterprise Zone

As London's only Enterprise Zone, the Royal Docks is one of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor's most important opportunities. The cluster of creative companies built up by Projekt, including Block 9 and others, forms the basis of a larger future community of creative companies in the Royal Docks. Also home to London City Airport, the University of East London and the Excel exhibition centre, the area has assets which will complement and enable rapid growth.



INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



High-end artist and creative studio in Greenwich  
© Based Upon

# WHAT IS THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR?

## **Supporting the UK's Global Competitiveness**

The creative and cultural industries are central to the UK's current and future economic vitality and competitiveness. With strong year on year growth over the past decade, they are now established at the heart of the economy, contributing in excess of £100bn per annum in total output. They have a formidable track record in export, attracting investment, catalysing innovation and enhancing the quality and distinctiveness of places.

To remain competitive, the UK's creative and cultural economy needs to be at the vanguard of cluster development. However, without investment in space, facilities and specialist skills, the UK risks losing ground to its global competitors. International clusters such as Shenzhen and Rotterdam are already leading the way in 3D fabrication, virtual reality, augmented reality and robotics, and without proactive leadership there is a risk that long term vitality of the UK's creative and cultural economy – and the 2 million jobs that it currently supports – will be undermined.

## **A Globally Significant Cluster of Creative and Cultural Production**

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor is a collaboration by partners across Kent, Essex and London. It will transform the scale, diversity and visibility of creative and cultural infrastructure.

It will secure investment in new production facilities, workspaces and infrastructure, supporting the development and evolution of stronger creative networks, clusters and places.

It will support national economic competitiveness, build positive community relationships. It will build resilience across London, Kent and Essex.

It will champion the next generation of creative talent and leadership, increasing levels of economic and social engagement and inclusion.

Creativity, culture and production will be the new engine for the Estuary: from towns, to high streets, to industrial areas.

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor is a major project that marks a new, stronger commitment to collaboration by partners across Kent, Essex and London.

**Bexley: Heritage in Performance** – Rose Bruford and Bird Colleges provide Bexley with a unique offer supporting the evolution of theatre production in London. Bexley benefits from a large and talented workforce, two of London's largest opportunity areas and the potential of enhanced connections to London and Kent through the opening (and potential extension) of the Elizabeth Line. The current redevelopment of Thamesmead will provide new residential and cultural facilities to support the evolution of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.



## INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



# FOUNDATIONS AND MOMENTUM

Creative and cultural production activities are already worth £3.7bn to the Thames Estuary economy, with more than 16,000 businesses supporting over 46,000 jobs. The sector has grown by over a third in recent years, outstripping national averages and exceeding the previous rate of growth across the Estuary economy.

The Estuary is a critical breeding ground for new creative and cultural production, with emergent cultural districts fostering the development of new work – in film, gaming, design and the arts. It performs a vital role in providing capacity and delivering quality services to London, the preeminent global creative city. In recent years, the Estuary’s cultural production activities have diversified and grown to serve much wider markets – from Hollywood films to largescale performance productions in China and the Middle East.

## **Unique Production Assets and Clusters**

The Estuary is already home to a significant network of creative and cultural production hubs and assets. Over the past decade, specialist production capacity has been boosted by investment in excess of £200 million, and significant further investment is on the way.

Production capacity ranges from large scale and highly bespoke facilities serving a specific sector or activity (such as High House Production Park in Thurrock, English National Ballet in London City Island, 3 Mills Studios and Maidstone Studios), to mixed-activity facilities and campuses (such as Chatham Historic Dockyard, Resort Studios, the Silver Building (meanwhile) in the Royal Docks, Nucleus Arts Centre, the Underwater Studio

and the BOW Arts RAW Labs), and to smaller scale creative workspaces (such as Metal in Southend and Cockpit Arts in Deptford).

## **World Class Creative Education**

The region covered by the Thames Estuary Production Corridor is home to a dense network of higher and further education institutions. Many are renowned world leading specialists in the creative and cultural industries and are working together to form a powerful academic curriculum and fostering an environment of knowledge exchange.

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor will offer a new opportunity for knowledge sharing that is distinctive, contemporary and agile. From the internationally renowned activities of Goldsmiths and the London College of Fashion in the west of the Estuary to the new Creative Production courses at Universities of Kent and Essex, the Estuary will provide a world class educational environment dedicated to creative and innovative thinking.

## **A Renowned and Diverse Cultural Offer**

The Estuary is already seeing exciting cultural diversity in development, including the Turner Contemporary in Margate and the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival. In the thrilling new developments of Royal Docks and East Bank, we are seeing the V&A (in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution), Sadler’s Wells, the BBC, University College of London and UAL’s London College of Fashion all opening new world-class facilities.

The Estuary is fast becoming one of the major cultural destinations and culture-led hubs in Europe.

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor will build on and strengthen the Estuary’s existing ecosystem of creative and cultural activity and infrastructure.

## Thurrock: Continued Momentum for a Creative Production Success Story

– Purfleet in Thurrock has become one of the most important locations for creative production in the South East. High House Production Park has provided a stimulus for both large scale production and the growth of a creative SME community. It is home to the Bob and Tamar Manoukian Royal Opera House Production Workshop, the Backstage Centre, Kinetika and other high-profile anchor tenants. High House will continue to grow, while, in April 2019, Purfleet Centre Regeneration Limited received cross party unanimous approval at the Thurrock Planning Committee for their comprehensive £1bn mixed-use development in Purfleet.

This incorporates a Media Village on the Thames, including up to 135,000 sq m of film and television studio and post-production facilities.

### INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



# THE OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

While creative and cultural production is well established in the Estuary, there is significant room for growth.

## **Global Competition**

Cities and regions across the world are prioritising investment in creative and cultural production infrastructure and networks; from city and region wide approaches (such as the Toronto-Waterloo Innovation Corridor, and Shenzhen Maker City), to more local approaches (such as Ile de Nantes and Hilversum Media Park). Policy makers are increasingly recognising the important role that creative and cultural industries can play in local and national growth and prosperity. The UK needs to innovate and invest if its world-leading creative and cultural industries are to remain competitive.

## **Demand for Space**

Across the Estuary there is proven demand for space: from larger scale production facilities, to smaller specialised spaces to support enterprise and innovation. Lack of space for film, performing arts and gaming is stifling growth. Meanwhile, demand is stronger than ever from artists, businesses and institutions seeking new locations to scale-up and innovate.

London provides direct access to global creative and cultural markets, and with growing relationships between east London, Kent and Essex, the Thames Estuary Production Corridor provides an exciting new opportunity for natural growth in networks and information sharing within the creative and cultural industries.

The availability of space, the fine grain of the industrial landscape and the mobilisation of creative networks make the Estuary one of the most compelling locations in the UK to grow creative businesses.

## **Growth and Regeneration**

In addition, the investment, development and regeneration across the Estuary's network of locations will stimulate demand for housing, commercial space and enhanced transport and digital infrastructure in the decades to come.

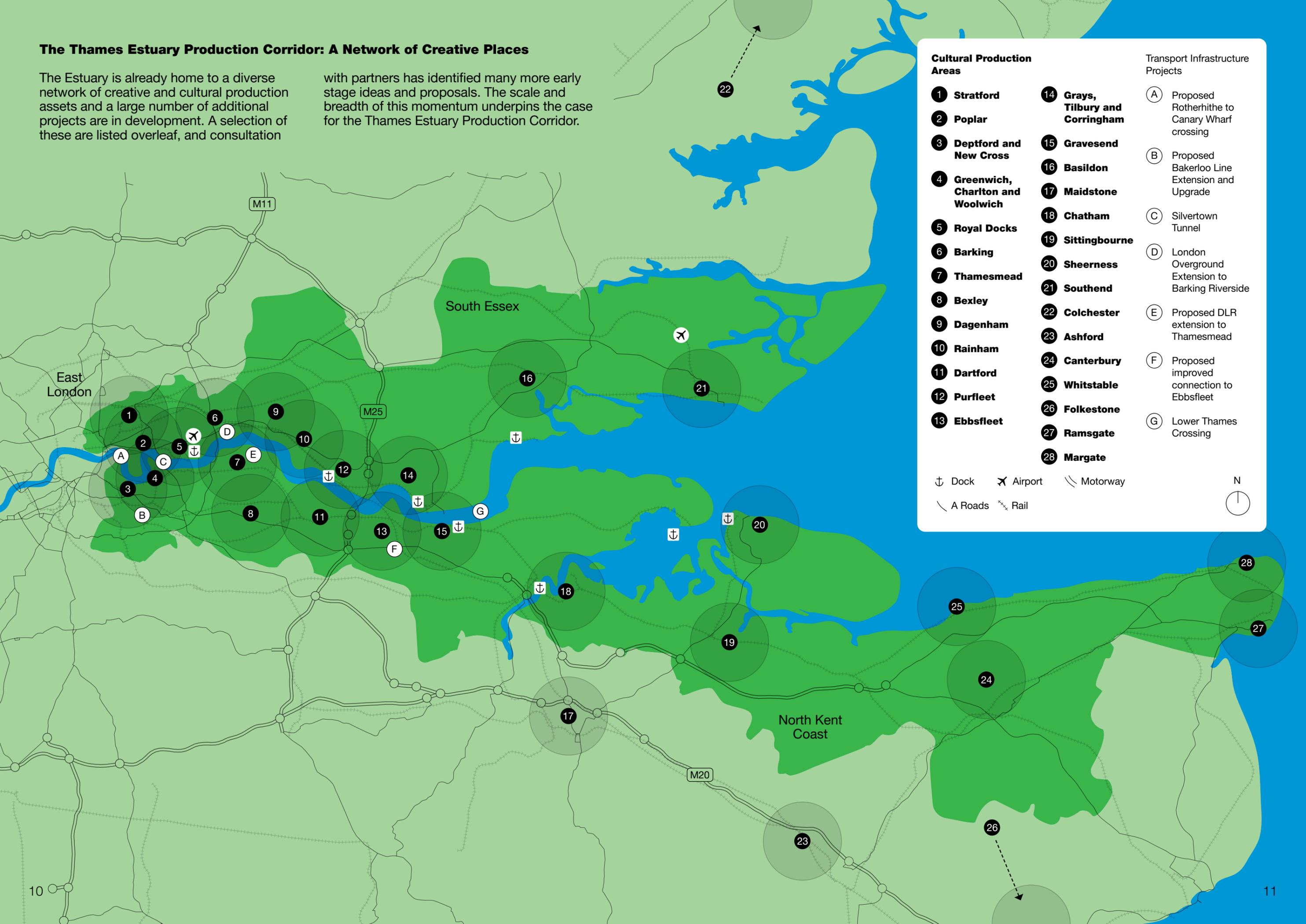
The Thames Estuary Production Corridor can play an instrumental role in driving local growth, vitality and identity, and in doing so, support the case for new investment in strategic infrastructure.

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor will be a super-cluster of creative and cultural production, unmatched in scale, diversity and ambition. It will be one of the most compelling locations in the UK for creative businesses and institutions to invest and grow.

## The Thames Estuary Production Corridor: A Network of Creative Places

The Estuary is already home to a diverse network of creative and cultural production assets and a large number of additional projects are in development. A selection of these are listed overleaf, and consultation

with partners has identified many more early stage ideas and proposals. The scale and breadth of this momentum underpins the case for the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.



### Cultural Production Areas

- 1 Stratford
- 2 Poplar
- 3 Deptford and New Cross
- 4 Greenwich, Charlton and Woolwich
- 5 Royal Docks
- 6 Barking
- 7 Thamesmead
- 8 Bexley
- 9 Dagenham
- 10 Rainham
- 11 Dartford
- 12 Purfleet
- 13 Ebbsfleet
- 14 Grays, Tilbury and Corringham
- 15 Gravesend
- 16 Basildon
- 17 Maidstone
- 18 Chatham
- 19 Sittingbourne
- 20 Sheerness
- 21 Southend
- 22 Colchester
- 23 Ashford
- 24 Canterbury
- 25 Whitstable
- 26 Folkestone
- 27 Ramsgate
- 28 Margate

### Transport Infrastructure Projects

- (A) Proposed Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf crossing
- (B) Proposed Bakerloo Line Extension and Upgrade
- (C) Silvertown Tunnel
- (D) London Overground Extension to Barking Riverside
- (E) Proposed DLR extension to Thamesmead
- (F) Proposed improved connection to Ebbsfleet
- (G) Lower Thames Crossing

- ⚓ Dock
- ✈ Airport
- ⚡ Motorway
- ↘ A Roads
- 🚊 Rail



## Cultural Production Areas: Local Assets and Projects

**1 Stratford.** Delivery of East Bank alongside Here East creates a globally significant hub for creative production and consumption.

- ↳ **Here East** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- ↳ **3 Mills Studios** Bromley-by-Bow
- ↳ **Loughborough University** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- ↳ **UCL East at East Bank** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- ↳ **UAL's London College of Fashion at East Bank** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- G **East Bank** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- G **National Talent House for Urban Culture** Stratford

**2 Poplar.** Economic identity becomes synonymous with the creative industries, and clothing design, production and manufacturing through the Fashion District.

- ↳ **Trinity Buoy Wharf** Leamouth
- ↳ **English National Ballet** London City Island
- ↳ **The Space** Isle of Dogs
- ↳ **Poplar Works** Fashion District, Poplar
- ↳ **Half Moon Theatre** Limehouse
- ↳ **The Trampery Fish Island Village** Hackney Wick
- ↳ **Queen Mary University of London** Mile End Campus
- ↳ **London Film School** City Island
- G **Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone** Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets in partnership with London Legacy Development Corporation
- L **Tobacco Dock** Shadwell

**3 Deptford and New Cross.** Creative Enterprise Zone status and action plan shape economy to focus on creative activity and the existing spark created by university spin outs increasingly evolves to realise the opportunity of Goldsmith's specialism in Augmented Reality.

- ↳ **Goldsmiths University of London** New Cross
- ↳ **Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and The Albany** Deptford
- ↳ **Deptford Foundry** Deptford and New Cross
- G **SHAPES Lewisham, Creative Enterprise Zone** Deptford and New Cross

- L **Goldsmiths Enterprise Hub** Deptford and New Cross
- L **Horniman Museum Creative Hub** Forest Hill
- L **Convoys Wharf and New Bermondsey Masterplan** Deptford
- L **Artworks Creekside** Deptford

**4 Greenwich, Charlton and Woolwich.** Design, culture and creative embedded at the heart of large scale regeneration delivery in North Greenwich and Woolwich.

- ↳ **Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance** Greenwich Campus
- ↳ **University of Greenwich** Greenwich Campus
- ↳ **Ravensbourne** Greenwich Peninsula
- G **Woolwich Works** Woolwich
- G **Greenwich Design District** Greenwich
- L **Thames-Side Studios** Woolwich
- L **Charlton Riverside Masterplan** Charlton
- L **Emergency Exit Arts, Rothbury Hall** Greenwich

**5 Royal Docks.** A new hub for creative and enterprise collaboration anchored by the Enterprise Zone - it will incubate creative production for the whole Estuary.

- ↳ **Silver Building (meanwhile)** Royal Docks
- ↳ **Bow Arts RAW Labs** Royal Docks
- ↳ **UEL** Royal Docks
- ↳ **London Design and Engineering University Technical College** Royal Docks
- G **Silvertown Quays Creative District** Royal Docks
- L **Millennium Mills Employment Hub** Royal Docks

**6 Barking.** Developments focused on artists and makers catalyse further activity and support the area to become a viable place for them to live and work.

- L **A House for Artists** Barking

**7 Thamesmead.** Culture-led regeneration supports residential and workspace opportunities for creative freelancers and SMEs.

- L **Bow Arts Lakeside Centre** Thamesmead
- L **Plumstead Power Station** Plumstead

**8 Bexley.** A Theatre Making Centre would support national touring

productions, building upon the strength of Rose Bruford and Bird Colleges while a Place and Making Initiative would provide a focal point for maker collaboration and education in the Estuary.

- ↳ **Bird College** Sidcup
- ↳ **Rose Bruford College** Sidcup
- G **Theatre Making Centre** Bexley
- L **Engine House** Erith
- L **Place and Making Initiative** Erith

**9 Dagenham.** Realisation of Dagenham Film Studios creates an internationally significant hub for film and television production.

- G **Dagenham Film Studios** Dagenham
- L **East London Works** Dagenham

**10 Rainham.** Development of Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence, building identity around future industry.

- ↳ **Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence** Rainham
- L **Bretons Manor** Rainham

**11 Dartford.** Town centre re-branding and re-modelling focusing on placemaking, creative meanwhile uses and establishing the future of the Orchard Theatre.

- L **North Kent College (Miskin Theatre)** Dartford
- L **Orchard Theatre and Shopping Centre** Dartford
- L **Dartford Northern Gateway Development Sites** Dartford
- L **London Resort** Swanscombe Peninsula

**12 Purfleet.** Evolution of Royal Opera House and High House Production Park alongside Purfleet Media Village create an internationally significant hub for film, TV and games post-production. Growth is accompanied by investment in producing theatre and workspaces.

- ↳ **High House Production Park** Purfleet
- ↳ **The National College for Creative Industries** Purfleet
- ↳ **University of the Arts London, South Essex College and the Royal Opera House Costume Construction Degree** Purfleet
- G **Purfleet-on-Thames Media Village** Purfleet

**13 Ebbsfleet.** Culture-led development in Ebbsfleet Garden City supports innovation in community-led cultural programming and with space to deliver production activity at scale.

→ G **Ebbsfleet Central** Ebbsfleet

**14 Grays, Tilbury and Corringham.** Town centre revitalisation supported by an increasingly visible presence of cultural and creative production.

☒ **The Performers College**  
Corringham

→ L **Tilbury Cruise Terminal**  
Tilbury

→ L **Bata Factory** East Tilbury

→ L **Thameside Theatre and Complex** Grays

→ L **Coalhouse Fort** East Tilbury

**15 Gravesend.** Realisation of creative workspaces at Customs House and the Henley Building deliver visible creative production in the town centre.

→ L **Customs House** Gravesend

→ L **Northfleet Embankment**  
Gravesend

→ L **Gravesend Canal Basin**  
Gravesend

**16 Basildon.** Supply chain and grassroots activities are supported through new town centre facilities and through further diversification from traditional manufacturing to creative and cultural production.

☒ **The Underwater Studio** Basildon  
→ G **Basildon Town Centre Regeneration** Basildon

→ L **Innovation Warehouse, Watt Tyler/town centre** Basildon

**17 Maidstone.** Existing strengths in film and television production will strengthen and, alongside other developments (e.g. Kent Medical Campus), support higher value employment.

☒ **Maidstone Studios** Maidstone

**18 Chatham.** Chatham becomes established as a regionally important cultural hub, supported by the development of the Institute of Creative and Cultural Industries at the University of Kent.

☒ **Historic Dockyard Chatham**  
Chatham

☒ **University of Greenwich** Chatham Campus

☒ **Canterbury Christ Church University** Medway Campus

☒ **University of Kent** Medway Campus

☒ **Institute of Creative and Cultural Industries** Chatham

☒ **University for the Creative Arts**  
Rochester Campus

→ L **Chatham Waters** Chatham

→ L **Dockyard 'Interface land'**  
Chatham

→ L **Nucleus Arts** Chatham

→ L **Chatham Intra** Chatham

**19 20 Sittingbourne and Sheerness.** Sittingbourne and Sheerness repurpose historic assets and connectivity to create opportunities and spaces for cultural production.

→ L **Sheerness Dockyard Church**  
Sheerness

→ L **Sheerness Historic Dockyard**  
Sheerness

**21 Southend.** The northern foreshore Estuary hub for arts, creative and digital production and education.

☒ **Metal and NetPark** Southend

☒ **Focal Point Gallery** Southend

☒ **University of Essex, E15 Acting School** Southend

☒ **South Essex College** Southend

→ L **Forum 2** Southend

→ L **Airport Business Park**  
Southend

→ L **Old Fire Station** Hadleigh

→ L **Better Queensway** Southend

→ L **Southend High St** Southend

**22 Colchester.** Home to University of Essex, which has a growing AR/VR and games research focus.

☒ **Mercury Theatre** Colchester

☒ **37 Queen Street** Colchester

☒ **Firstsite Gallery** Colchester

☒ **University of Essex** Colchester

**23 Ashford.** New Creative Laboratory anchored by Jasmin Vardimon Company will drive change supported by further site capacity.

☒ **Jasmin Vardimon Dance Laboratory** Ashford

→ G **Newtown Works** Ashford

**24 25 Canterbury and Whitstable.** Economic identity becomes established around arts, design and crafts anchored by the Whitstable Biennale. Increasing emphasis on innovation, led by the Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent.

☒ **Canterbury Christ Church University** Canterbury Campus

☒ **University for the Creative Arts**  
Canterbury Campus

☒ **University of Kent** Canterbury

**26 Folkestone.** Culture-led regeneration by Creative Folkestone including the Folkestone Triennial and the Creative Quarter, developing as a cultural hub for the South East.

☒ **Creative Folkestone** Folkestone

☒ **Creative Quarter** Folkestone

☒ **Folkestone Triennial** Folkestone

**27 Ramsgate.** Art and co-commissioning supports further town centre renewal, including repurposing of high street and heritage properties as creative production space.

☒ **Spacer** Ramsgate

→ L **Pugin Studios** Ramsgate

→ L **Ramsgate High Street**  
Ramsgate

**28 Margate.** The southern foreshore Estuary hub for arts, creative and digital production and education.

☒ **Resort Studios** Margate

☒ **Turner Contemporary** Margate

☒ **Marine Studios** Margate

## Key

☒ **Major Production Facilities and Local Anchors:** existing spaces and projects which have been identified as playing an important role in underpinning the Estuary's creative and cultural ecosystem.

☒ **Higher and Sector Specialist Education Institutions:** current and proposed education institutions which have a crucial role to play in developing talent, driving research and innovation, and supporting sector development.

→ **Future Creative and Cultural Projects** – projects in development or delivery which are supporting the continued growth and evolution of the Estuary's creative and cultural sector. These include:

→ G **Growth Engines:** Larger scale initiatives which have the potential to be transformational in supporting the development of the sector

→ L **Local Sparks:** Smaller scale projects supporting the development of creative, cultural and production activities in the Estuary's places.

**Chatham: Digital Evolution and a Diverse Knowledge Hub** – Chatham Dockyard has evolved into a hub for creative and digital activity for Kent. Anchored by established companies such as Dovetail Games and with significant new workspace provision at the Joiners Shop, the capacity for growth is significant. The area's offer is enhanced still further by the presence of the three universities each providing courses and research to directly support creative production.



## INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



# FROM VISION TO ACTION

The delivery approach for the Thames Estuary Production Corridor will build on the significant momentum which has been achieved over the past two years.

Initial investment of over £4.6m from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government demonstrates confidence in the opportunity

to deliver much needed capacity and specialism to the UK's creative economy.

Delivery of the vision will require collaborative planning across the sub-region, leverage of investment into larger production facilities, ongoing development of clusters and networks, and enabling actions to embed culture and creativity as central to inclusive growth and local place shaping.

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## Action Area 1. Enabling the Thames Estuary Production Corridor

Estuary-wide action to help to forge the identity of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, broker collaboration and network development, and provide the foundations for talent development. Immediate focus should be placed on:

### **1.1 Promoting the Thames Estuary Production Corridor. Example priorities include developing:**

- A strong global brand to stimulate inward investment
- A strategic communication campaign
- Exemplary cultural programming to highlight activity across the region
- Thames Estuary Production Corridor champions.

### **1.2 Developing pan-Estuary networks across higher and further education, sector representatives and business, to lay the basis for collaboration, policy development and investment. Example priorities include:**

- Creating a shared Higher Education and Further Education prospectus with a focus on creative and cultural production activities, working with the 63 providers and the Culture Innovation Forum (South East)
- Encouraging R&D and knowledge exchange within creative clusters
- Improving the quality and diversity of the local talent pipeline
- Publishing an integrated Creative Production Skills Strategy for the Estuary
- Supporting initiatives improving environmental sustainability across the creative production sector.

**Ebbsfleet: Connected sites at the UK's new Garden City** – Only 17 minutes from Kings Cross and 10 minutes to Stratford. Ebbsfleet is one of the biggest development projects in the UK, already home to a growing skilled population and with the benefit of being part of an Enterprise Zone. The area is home to significant development sites with current proposals for a major entertainment resort on Swanscombe Peninsula and ambitions to build culture into all aspects of the new development.

## INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



## Action Area 2.

# Securing Investment in the Thames Estuary Production Corridor

Coordinating, securing and delivering investment to strengthen strategic and local production clusters. Immediate focus should be placed on:

### **2.1 Supporting large-scale cultural and creative production clusters to grow, diversify and extend their reach regionally, nationally and globally. Priorities include:**

- Working with partners across the Estuary to identify sites for creative production – across high streets, large-scale industrial locations and regeneration and growth areas
- Development of cross-area masterplans which build cultural and creative production into development plans for sites across the Estuary  
Investing in flagship cultural and creative production projects (Growth Engines)
- Increasing scale and developing specialist facilities within existing clusters.

### **2.2 Smaller scale, local creative and cultural projects and networks should be supported to develop production capacity. Priorities include:**

- Investing in local masterplan and feasibility studies
- Strengthening local activity to amplify production capacity
- Investing in new production spaces in under-used local buildings on the High Street
- Working with micro and small businesses to help them scale up.

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## Action Area 3.

# Growing the Thames Estuary

### **3.1 Joint working across the Estuary, with the Thames Estuary Growth Board, to secure alignment in plan and policy development, and to foster closer collaboration in lobbying and case making:**

- Continue to work closely with the Thames Estuary Growth Board and Envoy to maximise their support to the Thames Estuary Production Corridor as a priority for the Thames Estuary Growth Board agenda
- Collaborating across the sub-region to undertake joint master-planning of opportunities and sites
- Working with central government and local partners to secure investment in strategic transport infrastructure. Strengthening the competitiveness of our network of places and production clusters.
- Advocating for the roll out of full fibre and a 5G network across the Estuary. Working with local, regional and government partners to secure prioritised investment.

## Southend-on-Sea: Tech City on Sea

The town has long been home to a vibrant grassroots cultural community which has been nurtured through a strong heritage and enablers of cultural production such as Metal. Southend is now diversifying and is identified by Tech Nation as one of the UK's up and coming digital hubs. Its offer is underpinned by ever improving public transport links to London, a growing, skilled workforce and public investment in wider economic infrastructure.



## INSIDE THE THAMES ESTUARY PRODUCTION CORRIDOR



# WHAT'S NEXT

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor Partners Board is responsible for the vision and delivery strategy, leading on identity and network development, and coordinating cross area masterplanning and feasibility work to stimulate new production investment.

To achieve its potential and support London and the South East's social and economic recovery after COVID-19, the Thames Estuary Production Corridor will require ongoing collaboration, innovation and commitment from all partners.

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## **London Economic Action Partnership, Greater London Authority and South East Local Enterprise Partnership**

Allocate resources to support delivery of pan-Estuary projects developing the Thames Estuary Production Corridor with cultural infrastructure and skills opportunities; positioning the Thames Estuary Production Corridor at the heart of economic and social strategy; consistent messaging to support a coherent identity

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## **Central government**

Funding to support the delivery of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor; active participation in governance and advocacy; promotion to international inward investor markets; investment in digital infrastructure; commitment to enhanced transport; investment in town centres to facilitate an enhanced role for creative production on the high street

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## **Higher and further education institutions**

Commitment to working collaboratively with sector partners across Estuary; providing greater access to facilities to boost innovation and collaboration; supporting the development of new learning opportunities to build the creative workforce

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## **Sector and cluster representatives and business**

Collaboration in local and pan-Estuary networks; using networks and connections to help build and project common messaging regarding local creative strengths and opportunity

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## **Developers and investors**

Advocacy of the vision; openness to testing new ideas and ways of working; integration of specialist cultural production facilities in new developments; leverage of connections and specialist expertise

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## **Local government**

Supporting the vision within strategic policy; leading on spatial masterplanning, strategy development and allocating resources to support the development of local production clusters

## **Get in Touch**

For more information or to find out how you can get involved, please contact:

The Greater London Authority Culture Team: [culturalinfrastructureteam@london.gov.uk](mailto:culturalinfrastructureteam@london.gov.uk)

The South East Creative Economy Network: [hello@southeastlep.com](mailto:hello@southeastlep.com)



