



THAMES STRATEGY EAST





Image: Thames Estuary Partnership

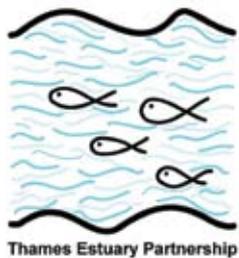


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THAMES ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

The Thames Estuary Partnership was formed in response to the challenges facing the river Thames in particular. It brings together all the major stakeholders with an interest in the river. The Partnership recognises the importance of the river and its hinterland as a growth area of international, national, regional, metropolitan and local significance. The Partnership was responsible for initiating, managing and co-ordinating the preparation of the Strategy. The project partners are the eleven local authorities on both sides of the Thames from Tower Bridge to Tilbury, the Greater London Authority, the Communities and Local Government, the London Development Agency, the Environment Agency, the Thames Gateway London Partnership, the Thames Estuary Partnership, the Port of London Authority, English Heritage, Natural England, RSPB and Groundwork UK.



ENGLISH HERITAGE



GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY



FOREWORD

The River Thames is world renowned and characterises London and the Thames Gateway – a world-class city-region and financial centre. To ensure that it remains so, the government have designated the Thames Gateway as the most ambitious urban regeneration and development programme anywhere in the world. The River and the estuary are of international significance for wildlife - home to 170,000 birds and 121 species of fish - it is one of the cleanest metropolitan rivers in the world. It is home to world-class archaeological, built and cultural heritage including the World Heritage Site at Greenwich. It is also home to one of the UK's largest ports.

The Thames Gateway also, however, has areas and developments of poor visual, ecological, archaeological, built and cultural quality; in addition to areas of social and economic deprivation. Consequently, this river-focused Thames Strategy East will provide the much needed background data, analysis, policies, guidelines and spatial frameworks that will promote the transformation that the government is committed to.

Greening the Gateway promotes the central role of accessible green space in securing sustainable economic and social regeneration and the government's desire to see the Thames Gateway 'become a world class model of sustainable development, with the living landscape at its heart'. It states the government's expectation of 'extremely high standards' in the design and implementation of new developments; looks forward to the 'emergence of a continuous linked network of varied landscapes, both within and between built-up areas'; promotes the central role of accessible green space in securing sustainable economic and social regeneration and the government's desire to see the Thames Gateway 'become a world class model of sustainable development, with the living landscape at its heart'.

This Strategy takes the key messages of the Sustainable Communities Plan and Greening the Gateway forward with particular reference to the River Thames and promotes an holistic approach to the delivery of the necessary transport, utilities and environmental infrastructure in relation to the river and its hinterland. This would be a multi-functional infrastructure to be planned, designed, implemented, managed and maintained in conjunction with transport, utilities and flood-risk management infrastructure integrating the needs of people and wildlife.

Translating policy, planning and design into implementation, management and maintenance in compliance with this Strategy, will ensure the highest quality of outcomes for future generations. It promotes the highest quality of development possible, so that the Thames Strategy East area within the Thames Gateway becomes an exemplar world-wide for sustainable, high quality, liveable, communities.

This report has been produced by a partnership led by the Thames Estuary Partnership and involving over twenty other organisations. The background research has been carried out by LDA Design and graphic design by Draught Associates. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this valuable piece of work.

Signed:



Chris Baines
President
Thames Estuary Partnership

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION

THE STRATEGY IS IN THREE PARTS:

PART ONE:

Introduction - describes the background, extent and scope of the Strategy. It also sets out a Vision for the River.

PART TWO:

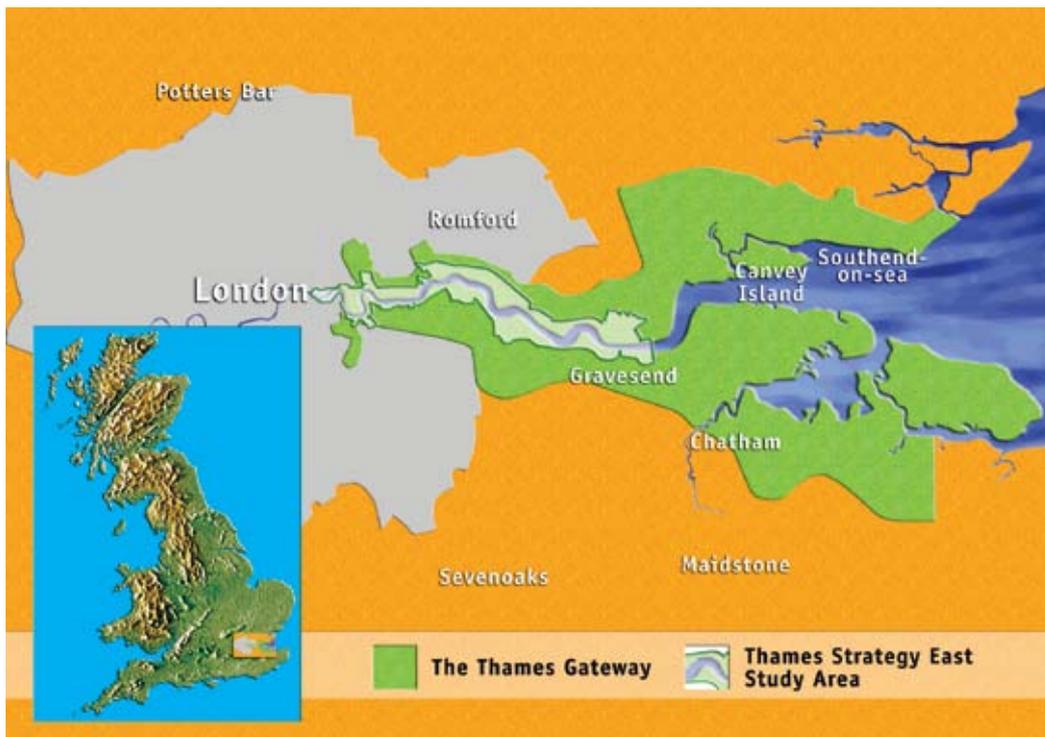
Strategic Guidance - provides a broad understanding of the river as a landscape, townscape and riverscape resource and promotes an overall guidance to achieve the Vision. It also describes an underlying framework supported by Strategic Guidance statements based on the themes of:

- planning and design
- biodiversity
- archaeology, historic and cultural resources
- flood risk and climate change
- river economy
- related design guidance.

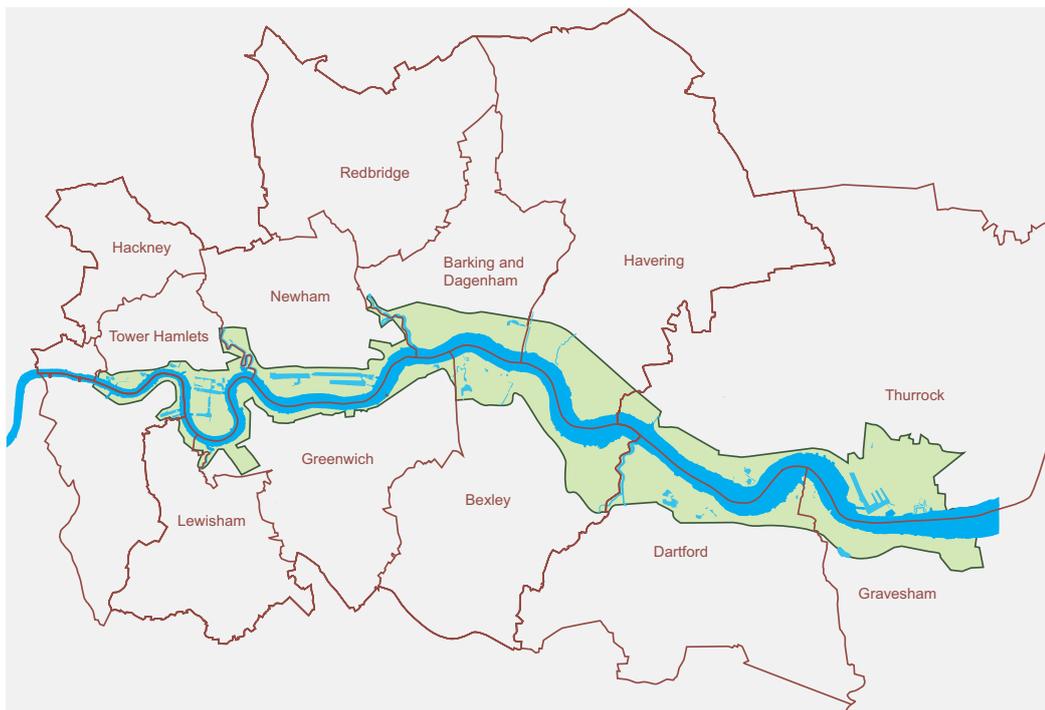
PART THREE:

Reach Guidance - this is the main body of the Strategy and provides more detailed guidance for each of the 9 river reaches based on the assessment of the reaches' character in order to deliver the overall Vision.

**FIG 1.1
THAMES
STRATEGY EAST
WITHIN THAMES
GATEWAY**



**FIG 1.2
THAMES
STRATEGY EAST
ADMINISTRATIVE
BOUNDARIES**



1.1 BACKGROUND

The River Thames is one of the world's great rivers, the UK's busiest and most commercially significant tideway and an important artery for London and the communities of Thurrock, Dartford and Gravesham. The River Thames sits at the heart of the Thames Gateway, which the government has designated as a national and regional growth area. With the projected growth in population and jobs and the consequent need for housing and infrastructure, there is a unique opportunity to transform the Thames Gateway into a model of sustainable development for the 21st century.

The Thames is a tidal 'working' river and supports important commercial activity focussed at the Port of London and Safeguarded Wharves. This commerce exists alongside recreational, leisure and tourism river uses.

The character of the river changes along its length and with the twice daily changing tides. It becomes gradually wider and waterfront development less continuous towards the east. Extensive inter-tidal mudflats and fresh-water marshes are important features of the River Thames and are of international importance for wildlife, supporting rich bird and fish populations.

The area covered by the Strategy has a deep and varied archaeological, cultural, industrial, built and environmental heritage, much of which derives directly from its association with the Thames. There is a quality and robustness in the juxtaposition of the very diverse landscapes, riverscapes, townscapes and cultural heritage. It is a rich legacy that traces social, economic and environmental human endeavour in relation to the river. The converse side of this rich legacy, however, is generally poor social, economic conditions and environmental quality unfit for contemporary, sustainable community life in the 21st century.

This Strategy therefore, promotes an holistic approach to the delivery of the necessary transport, utilities and environmental infrastructure in relation

to the river and its hinterland. If the Thames Gateway is to be successful and sustainable, there needs to be a step change in the real and perceived overall environmental quality and the River Thames should be central to achieving this.

The Thames Gateway faces serious challenges due to the combined effects of climate change, historic contamination and the poor image of parts of the area. The Strategy provides the context for and promotes the development of sustainable river-related communities fit for a world-class city and region over the next 100 years.

The Thames Gateway Delivery Plan (November 2007) sets out a framework for delivery of sustainable communities and is accompanied by a three year spending plan (2008-2011). This strategy will help to deliver the aims for the Thames Gateway.

This is the third in a series of strategies relating to the River Thames, the first from Hampton to Kew and the second from Kew to Chelsea.

1.2 THE VISION

The Vision for Thames Strategy East is to achieve:

A world class river where the diverse social, economic, cultural and environmental legacy is recognised through:

- conserving and enhancing the natural assets of the area and making a positive contribution to its character
- balancing the competing demands placed on the river - the region's greatest physical asset
- creating vibrant, sustainable communities alongside the Thames that include and benefit new and existing residents
- creating a high quality, multi-functional, well-connected network of river-related spaces and places that are accessible to all, and are managed and maintained to the highest standards for people and wildlife
- promoting the use of the river as an artery for public, commercial, industrial, leisure and recreational transport and use.

**MARITIME
GREENWICH
IN 1860**



**DOWNSTREAM
VIEW FROM
TOWER BRIDGE**



**BATTERY PARK,
NEW YORK**

The Esplanade which extends along the entire river edge of the Battery City Park, New York is an excellent example of a high quality, multi-use, urban riverside walkway



**LONDON AND
THAMES
ESTUARY
PHOTOMONTAGE**

London and the Thames Estuary will be at greater risk from flooding in future years. This photomontage illustrates a scenario for London if proper action isn't taken now (Thames Estuary Partnership)



1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide:

- An holistic and long-term vision and framework for the sustainable future development and management of the Strategy Area that provides the context for development over the next 100 years.
- A cross-borough, cross-river perspective to inform the preparation of Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Frameworks, masterplans, design guidance and investment programmes and priorities.

It does this through a series of Strategic Guidance statements in Chapter 2 and more specific Reach Guidance statements for each of the nine Reaches in Chapter 3. These statements are designed to either influence planning policies and development control decisions or provide an agenda for projects to be implemented.

1.4 WHO IS THE STRATEGY FOR?

The target audience for the Strategy is Officers and Members of Local Authorities, Government, Government Offices, Regional Government and Development Agencies, Thurrock Thames Gateway and London Thames Gateway Urban Development Corporations (UDC's), sub-regional and trans-regional partnerships, private sector developers, riparian land owners and managers and community interest groups. It is also expected that the Strategy will be of interest to other stakeholders and those interested in the long-term management and use of the Strategy area.

1.5 THE NEED FOR THE STRATEGY

The need for the Strategy was originally identified in RPG3B/9B Strategic Guidance for the River Thames RPG9A and Thames Gateway Planning Framework for the South East. Since then the London Plan has continued the requirement for an appraisal of the Thames Policy Area within London. By providing both policy and project guidance, the Strategy provides an essential bridge between statutory requirements and existing and future regeneration strategies for delivering the Thames Gateway.

1.6 THE SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy is based on the detailed character assessments that were carried out and which provide the baseline for the Strategic and Reach Guidance statements. The Strategy promotes the protection and enhancement of the river's assets, the mitigation of any unavoidable negative impacts of development and the creation of new infrastructure to reinforce the central dominant role of the river. It is an underlying assumption of the Strategy that development within the Gateway can be fundamentally positive, but that an integrated, holistic and creative approach to planning, design quality, management and maintenance of the river and riverside environment is essential.

The Strategy expands the Vision for the area based on the following themes:

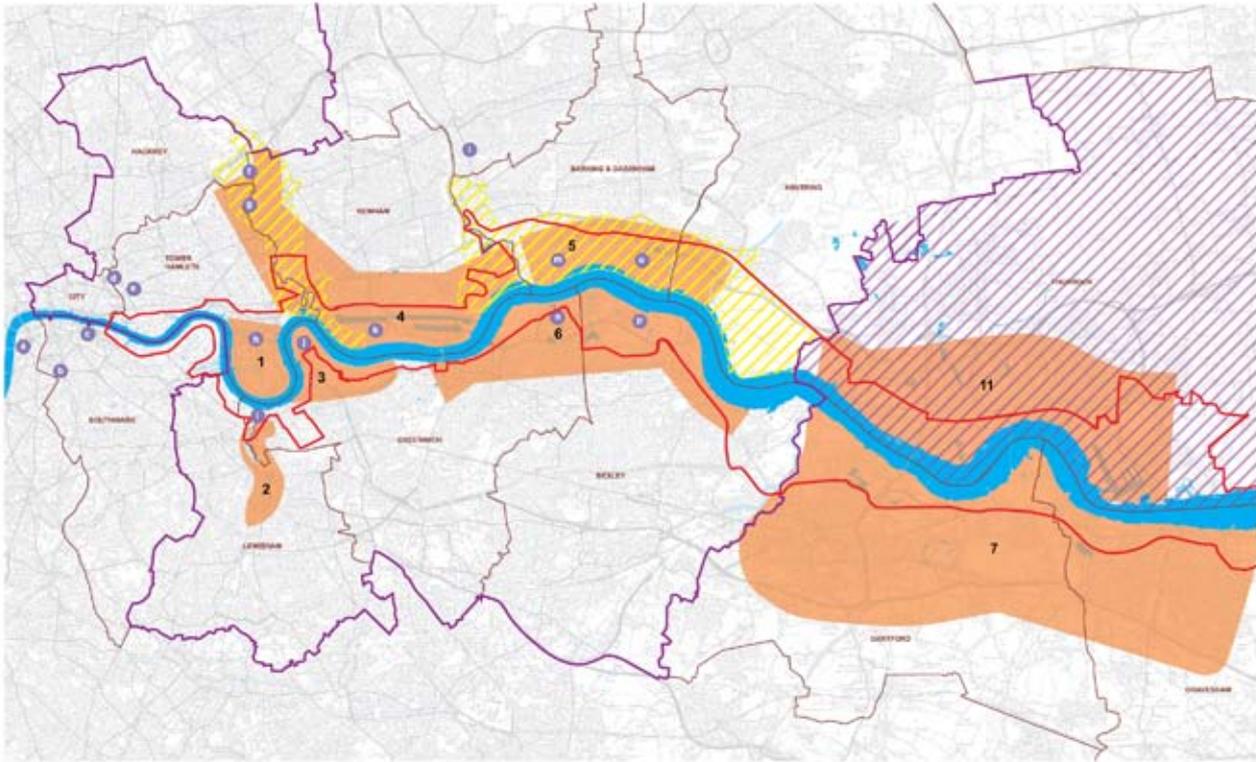
- Planning and Design
- Biodiversity
- Archaeology, Historical and Cultural Resources
- Flood Risk Management/ Climate Change
- Economy of the River.

Guidance statements (including project suggestions) and river related design guidance, have been produced which are supported by spatial Guidance Plans at both the strategic and reach levels.

1.7 CONSULTATION

The Strategy has been fully influenced by a wide consultation exercise encompassing key stakeholders at all levels of national, regional and local government, statutory authorities, interest groups and local communities. The consultation was carried out in 2005 through questionnaires, public exhibitions, workshops and meetings. The draft Strategy has been substantially amended in the light of the consultation responses to form this final Thames Strategy East.

**FIG 1.3
REGENERATION
INITIATIVES**



**FIG 1.4
KENT THAMESIDE
GREEN GRID**

