

MAYOR OF LONDON

THE CASE FOR A
RIVER THAMES
CULTURAL VISION



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Greater London Authority
September 2019

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Co-commissioned by the Greater London
Authority and the Port of London Authority

MAYOR OF LONDON **PORT OF**
LONDON
AUTHORITY

Researched and written by Publica and
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Publica **BOP**
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FOREWORDS



Christopher Rodrigues
Chairman, Port of
London Authority

The Thames is the beating heart of London – it is why our city was created centuries ago and over the years that have followed, it has made a unique contribution to the city’s history and prosperity. But after the Second World War, the river lost its attraction to many Londoners. It had arguably become a dirty waterway, with little to see beyond the bomb-damaged warehouses and riverside buildings.

Fortunately recent years have seen attention given to cleaning the river as homes and offices were built celebrating their proximity to the river. Cultural venues reappeared on the South Bank. The docks moved downriver in the wake of the container revolution and Canary Wharf rose phoenix-like from the ashes of Docklands. From east to west, there is a unique opportunity to reconnect the communities of London and visitors to our city with the wealth of culture and heritage that the Thames and its banks are home to.

This report makes a compelling case for a joined-up approach to future activities on and around the Thames to make the most of the heritage and cultural resources that already exist and to stimulate further cultural development. A coordinated approach can connect more people with the Thames, deepen their appreciation of its myriad attractions – winter and summer, day and night – and perhaps even encourage them to think of working on the river.

As custodians of the tidal Thames, the Port of London Authority is committed to seeing this happen. It is our job to look after the river in trust and pass it on to future generations in an improved condition. We sought to contribute to the river renaissance with the publication of the Thames Vision in 2016, a project that garnered input from the river’s many stakeholders. They told us that they wanted more people to use the river, whether for trade, travel, sport, recreation, for its environment to improve and for understanding of its heritage to deepen.

We were delighted when the opportunity arose to work with the Greater London Authority on the development of this case for a cultural vision for the Thames. The case for a cultural vision for the Thames is strong. We look forward to being part of further work on the development of a vision and supporting delivery of the immediate actions that will give people easier and greater access to the Thames’ culture and heritage.



Justine Simons OBE
Deputy Mayor for
Culture and Creative
Industries

Why does the River Thames need a Cultural Vision?

The River Thames is the reason London exists. It is a cultural icon in its own right and has shaped the identity of the capital.

Poems have been written about it, painters have been inspired by it, filmmakers have given it starring roles in movies. From Battersea Power Station to Greenwich Peninsula, Woolwich Creative District to Somerset House and the Tate Galleries, the river weaves together two millennia of history, heritage and creativity into one rich London story.

We all love the River Thames. We love walking along its banks on a summer evening, watching river life unfold from its bridges and enjoying a less familiar perspective of London when sailing along it. A staggering 24 million people visit the South Bank of the river every year and five of London's top ten visitor attractions are on the banks of the Thames.

Its festivals and events draw us together as Londoners, whether that's regular features like Totally Thames Festival, the New Year's Eve Fireworks or one-off spectacles like Artichoke's *London 1666*, which commemorated the Great Fire of London by burning a 120m-long replica of the city on the river. More recently, Illuminated River, which is lighting up the bridges, is destined to be the world's longest public artwork and has already changed the way we see the river at night.

The Mayor's vision for the Thames Estuary Production Corridor puts the river's industrial heritage at the centre of cultural regeneration out to the east. And the Mayor's Cultural Infrastructure Plan, along with the draft new London Plan, are hardwiring culture into the fabric of the city as London continues to grow.

But are we making the most of the river and do enough Londoners get to benefit from all it has to offer? I would say not. We know that many London schoolchildren have never even seen the river. The river's cultural life, whilst lively, lacks consistency and night-time activity is limited.

Cities like Paris, Amsterdam or Berlin celebrate rivers and canals as key destinations at the heart of cultural life. And it's clear the River Thames has unrealised potential for London.

So, I'm delighted to have co-commissioned this document with the Port of London Authority. It's an invitation to think, debate and shape a new and ambitious vision for the River Thames.



Now is the time to put the River Thames back at the centre of London's cultural story.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for London. A River Thames Cultural Vision will elevate London's international profile, deliver on the Mayor's Good Growth priorities, help to transform London into a 24-hour city and support the Port of London Authority's Thames Vision goals and priority actions.

The River Thames is London's greatest natural asset, a vital part of the city's life and its transport network. Since London's creation as a Roman city, two thousand years of history, culture and heritage can be found on its banks from Hampton Court Palace, through to the Houses of Parliament, Tower Bridge, Greenwich and Canary Wharf – once the site of working docks and now one of the most important financial centres in the world. The existing wharf network and the Thames have a continued significance to sustainable freight movement along the river in addition to being an important source of jobs.

The River Thames will be central to driving London's evening and night-time cultural life. Illuminated River – an ambitious public art commission for a unified installation across up to 15 bridges along the Thames – is already revitalising the river at night. The sensitive integration of night-time cultural programming on the river, its banks and its cultural institutions could support the Mayor's ambitions for a thriving and diverse night-time culture across the city.

A River Thames Cultural Vision can drive and enhance significant economic, environmental and social change at a city-wide scale:

- The River Thames is a growing destination for major cultural organisations, festivals and production facilities in central London and the Thames Estuary
- The River Thames offers a multitude of reasons to visit the city, increasing and widening our cultural tourism offer
- The River Thames will be central to driving London's evening and night-time cultural life
- The River Thames will be home to new diverse communities, with better transport connections and access to a range of new local cultural infrastructure and public spaces
- The River Thames should be an exemplar of public/private sector co-operation in Opportunity Areas, which are London's principal opportunities for accommodating large-scale development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research, fieldwork, engagement workshops and conversations to inform this report show that despite its international profile, the River Thames is far from reaching its full potential. This is particularly striking when compared with other river cities internationally, such as Paris and Berlin. In both cities the rivers have been embraced as an integral part of cultural life and have become key destinations offering urban beaches and riverside culture throughout the year. In each of the workshops there was overwhelming support from organisations (boroughs, community groups, cultural organisations, developers, business improvement districts, transport and environmental groups) for a joined-up and long-term cultural vision.

Key findings include:

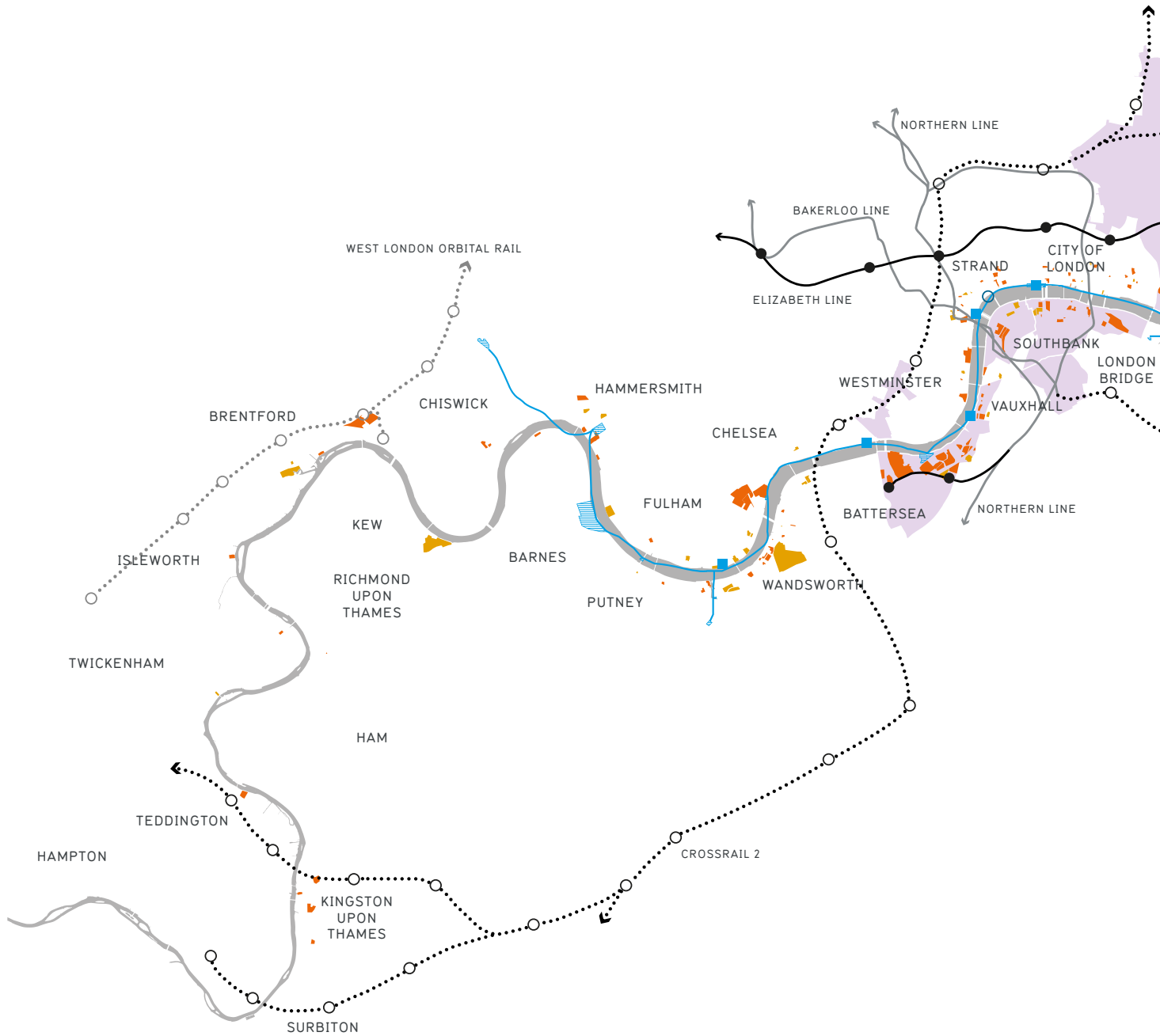
- governance on the Thames is complex, cross-borough collaboration is inconsistent and investment in culture is often disjointed along the Thames
- some communities in the east have little or no physical access to the Thames and lack access to culture on or near the Thames
- no single platform exists to communicate and promote the Thames' existing cultural offer
- there is little cultural programming along the eastern parts of the Thames in comparison to other areas
- cultural activity on the Thames is currently concentrated in the summer months, and night-time activity on the Thames is limited
- the Thames links thousands of cultural venues, visitor attractions and built heritage, but transport connections on the river are not being utilised to their full potential
- there is untapped potential for tourism on the Thames, particularly in relation to the river's heritage and natural assets.

The development of a cultural vision for the River Thames offers unmatched opportunities to deliver on many of the Mayor's priorities for Londoners by:

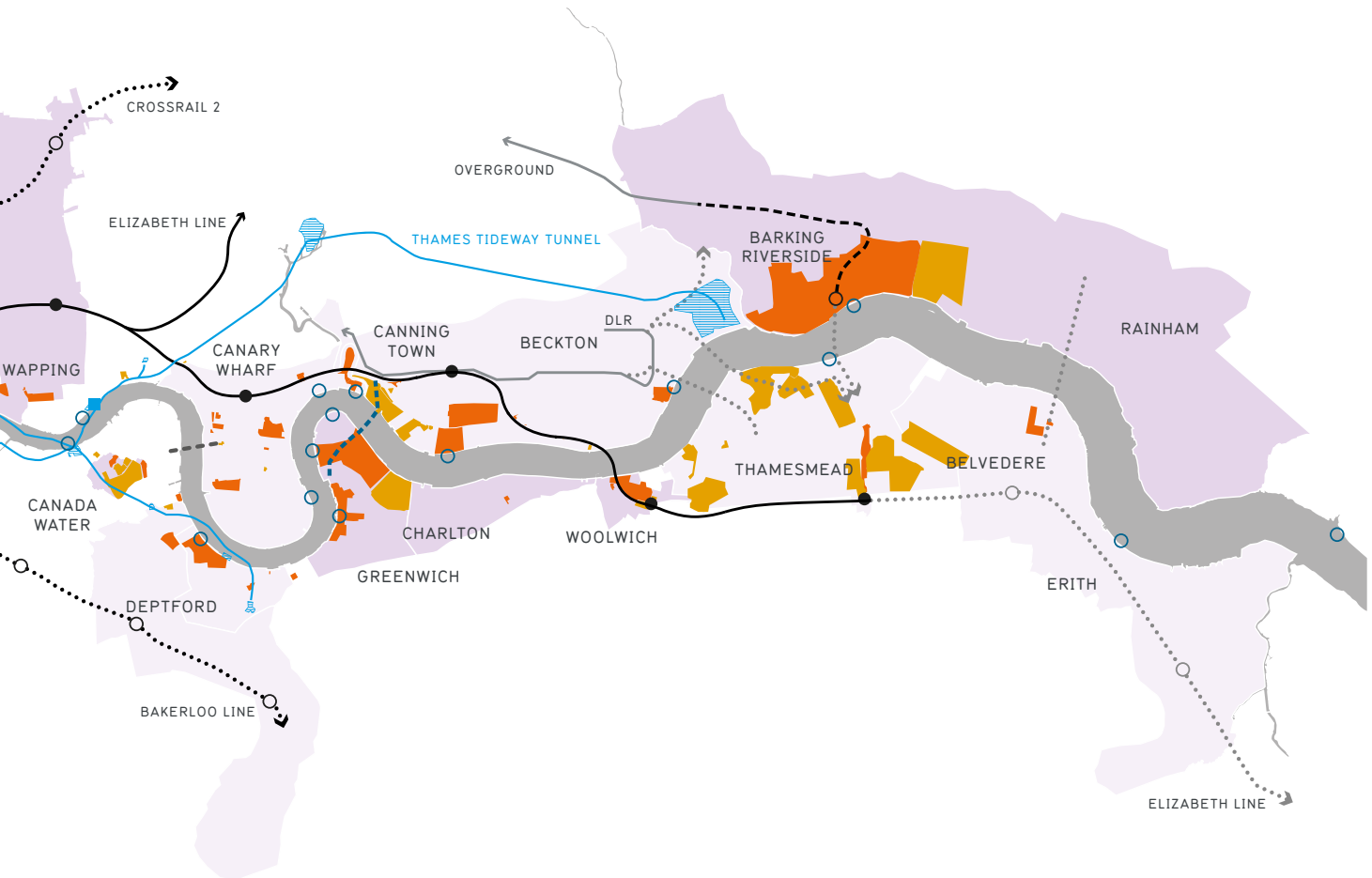
- building on the Mayor's Culture Strategy vision, particularly broadening access to culture for all Londoners. All of Us: The Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration calls for opportunities for Londoners to come together and recognises culture's role in promoting shared experiences
- promoting cultural infrastructure as important to the success of large-scale developments — approximately 40 per cent of the Thames' banks are within Opportunity Areas, with significant growth capacity for housing and jobs
- creating quality new jobs for Londoners, and meaningfully supporting the Thames Estuary Production Corridor vision to develop a world-class industrial hub for the creative industries in east London
- increasing Londoners' awareness of the heritage and importance of the River Thames to London, as called for by the Mayor's draft new London Plan, including increasing night-time use and engagement with under-used areas
- promoting access to nature in alignment with the Mayor's Environment Strategy and in doing so, contributing to the Mayor's launch of London as a National Park City
- encouraging journeys along the Thames and aligning with aims in the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the Vision for the Tidal Thames from the Port of London Authority (PLA), which both propose further steps to increase river services. The cultural vision is also an opportunity to support the work of the Thames and London Waterways Forum and the upcoming London's Passenger Pier Strategy
- linking up and maximising the benefits of important, long-term projects such as the Thames Tideway Tunnel, the Illuminated River, and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE THAMES OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Areas along the Thames are undergoing considerable investment and growth. Over 40 percent of the river's banks are within GLA-designated Opportunity Areas — London's principal opportunities for accommodating large-scale development.



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FUTURE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE (within 500m of the Thames or within a mapped OAPF)

- Elizabeth line under construction
- Silvertown tunnel (open 2025)
- Barking Riverside Extension
- Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf Crossing
- ⊙ Proposed transport link and station
- ⊙ Potential transport link and station
- Existing transport link to be extended
- Proposed pier

DEVELOPMENT (within 500m of the Thames)

- Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) adopted
- OAPF in progress (illustrative only)
- Development planned or under construction (project cost £10 million or over)
- Development proposed (project cost £10 million or over)

THAMES TIDEWAY TUNNEL (completion 2023)

- Tunnel route
- Construction site
- New public space, following construction
- River Thames, tributaries and inland water

OUR APPROACH

In early 2018, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Port of London Authority (PLA) commissioned Publica, in partnership with BOP Consulting, to undertake a study to explore the case for a future River Thames Cultural Vision.

This project was commissioned with the long-term aim to increase engagement with the Thames, including an increase in night-time use and engagement with underused areas, and to inspire Londoners about the heritage and importance of the River Thames to London. These objectives are included within the Mayor's draft new London Plan.

The project started with an intensive three month period of fieldwork – walking, travelling and documenting the full length of the river in London – paired with desk-based research to uncover some of the existing assets, challenges and opportunities offered by the Thames. Five facilitated workshops were held to identify the opportunities offered by the prospect of a cultural vision for the River Thames. These workshops explored five themes:

1. Communities, skills and education
2. Culture, heritage and tourism
3. Development and investment
4. Environment, ecology and nature
5. Movement and transport

A broad range of participants were invited to these workshops. They included representatives from 17 riparian boroughs (which are those that border the river), community groups, cultural organisations, developers, business improvement districts (BIDs), transport and environmental groups.

This document sets out ten key opportunities established through this research and engagement process. In order to develop an ambitious cultural vision for the River Thames in a subsequent stage of work, the ten key opportunities are intended to build consensus and establish a case.

This document is structured around these ten key opportunities, illustrated by supporting findings, maps, photography and quotes from the discussions held in the workshops.

What do we mean by culture?

The GLA understands culture as the people, places and activities of creative production and consumption. This study embraces the broad definition of cultural infrastructure set out by the Mayor, which includes the buildings, structures and places where culture is consumer or produced.

What do we mean by the River Thames?

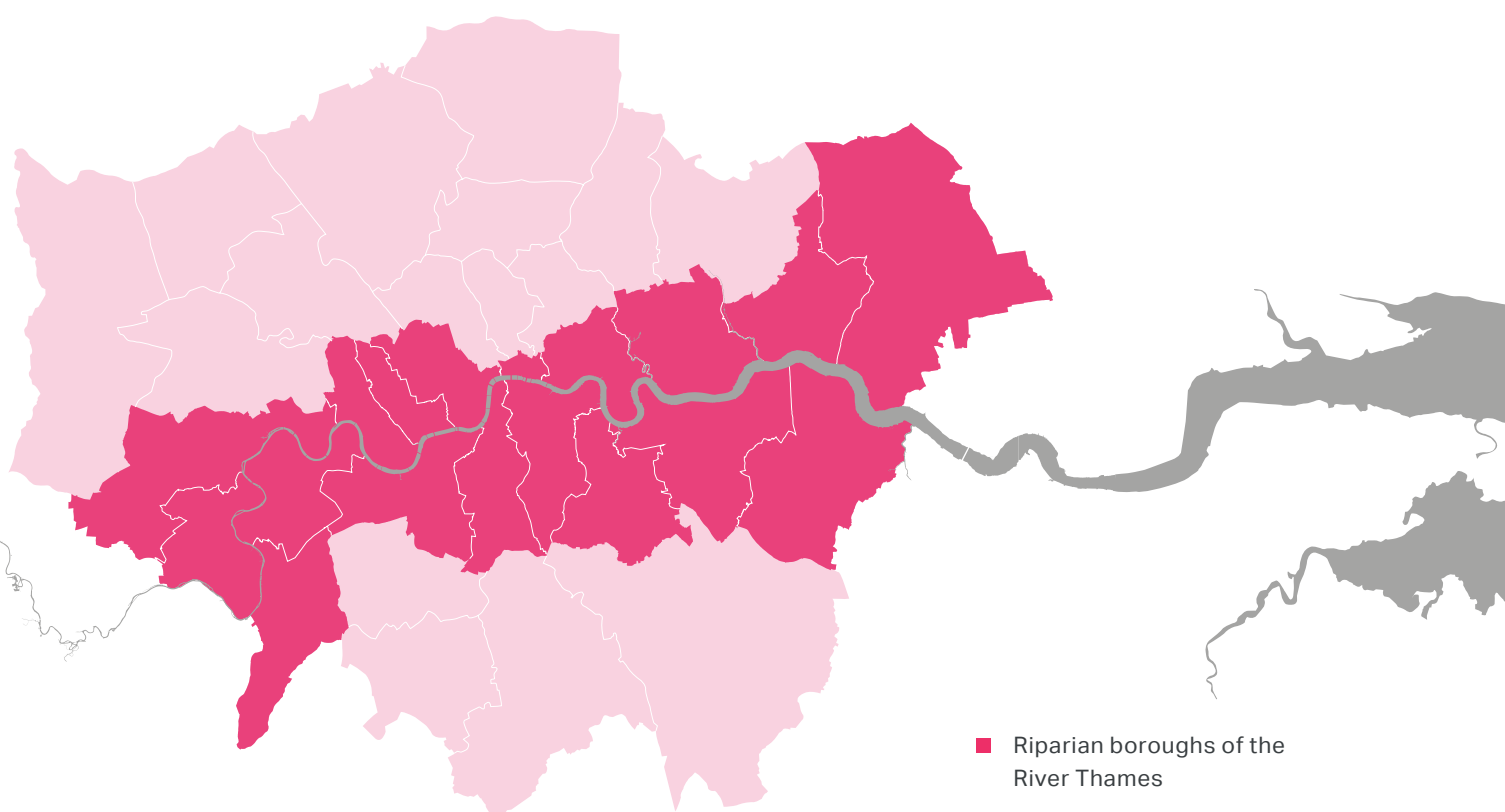
The Thames has its source in Thames Head, in Gloucestershire, and flows into the North Sea; the river is tidal up to Teddington Lock. This study refers to the River Thames within Greater London, which extends from Kingston in the west to Bexley in the east, covering both tidal and non-tidal reaches of the river.

The maps within this study comprise the river and its banks and have been drawn to consider areas within 500m from the river's edge.

The operational wharves and docks are an integral part of the Thames' industry, heritage and culture and are therefore included within the study. Tributaries of the Thames are included within maps but are not the focus of this study.

"London's famous institutions are a crucial part of this city's culture and hugely important to Londoners. The same can be said for the local pub, the skate park down the road, the community centre that offers dance classes, or local heritage on the way to the Tube"

Sadiq Khan, Culture for All Londoners: Mayor of London's Culture Strategy, 2018



A JOURNEY ALONG THE THAMES

Between February and June 2018, Publica studied the Thames along its entire length by boat and on foot, capturing some of the character, patterns of use, assets and challenges of the river through fieldwork. This photographic essay represents some of these observations, illustrating places along the river, and is intended to portray a glimpse of the cultural life of the Thames.



Riverside Walk, Kingston upon Thames

Visitors enjoy views of boats, swans and parkland with ample opportunity to get close to the water's edge.

**Riverbank, Ham**

A conversation on the Thames foreshore in Ham. Compared to other parts of the Thames, the river is quieter and more accessible in west London.



Richmond Bridge Boathouses, Richmond

In 2011/12 this workshop, led by master boatbuilder Mark Edwards MBE, built The Royal Barge Gloriana in just five months for HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The workshop has also constructed fencing and stiles for pathways along the Thames.



Potters Fields Park, central London

The riverside promenade at Potters Fields Park provides an important pedestrian thoroughfare with sweeping views of the river and iconic views of central London landmarks including HMS Belfast and City Hall. Lawns and terraces offer opportunities for contemplation and rest.

“The river is just eternally itself, and I think Waterloo Bridge is where I would have my last second, looking back at the National Theatre and the Tate.”

Fiona Shaw, actress



Tower Bridge Moorings, Bermondsey

This floating community on the Thames is home to more than one hundred adults and children. The roofs of the barges have been planted making it London's only floating gardens. It is also home to the 'ArtsArk' – a floating platform for a variety of events and performances.

**“The Thames was all gold. God it was beautiful,
so fine that I began working a frenzy, following
the sun and its reflections on the water.”**

Claude Monet, painter



Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich

A group of children explores the foreshore by the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich. According to historic accounts, the foreshore steps shown here were used to bring Lord Admiral Nelson's coffin to the Thames, where it was placed in Charles II's state barge and rowed up the river to Westminster for the funeral.



Royal Docks, Newham

Filming dance choreography against a backdrop of ExCeL London and Royal Victoria Dock Bridge.



Concrete barges, Rainham

Sixteen concrete vessels used in the D-Day landings for WWII lie on the northern foreshore of the Thames, next to Rainham Marshes. These ships helped to transport men and equipment to shore during the D-Day invasion. According to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, they now serve as a bird roosting site and support the annual wintering of rock and water pipits.

**"There are two things scarce matched in the universe
the sun in heaven and the Thames on earth."**

Sir Walter Raleigh, explorer, soldier and writer

TEN KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR A RIVER THAMES CULTURAL VISION

The study identifies ten opportunities that could be achieved through a River Thames Cultural Vision, illustrated by supporting findings, maps and quotes from the discussions held in the workshops.

The long-term objective – included within the Mayor’s draft new London Plan - is to increase engagement with underused areas and to inspire Londoners about the heritage and importance of the River Thames to London. Exploiting the river’s full potential could drive significant economic, environmental and social change, supporting London’s cultural tourism offer, enriching its evening and night-time life, improving public transport, connecting its diverse communities with each other and the river and putting the Thames back at the heart of London’s cultural life.

LONDON NEEDS A RIVER THAMES CULTURAL VISION TO:

- 1. COMMUNICATE AND PROMOTE THE CULTURAL LIFE OF THE THAMES**
- 2. EMBRACE 24 HOURS ON THE THAMES**
- 3. CELEBRATE HISTORY AND HERITAGE ON THE THAMES**
- 4. RESTORE EAST LONDON'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE THAMES**
- 5. EMBED CULTURE WITHIN TRANSPORT AND PROMOTE JOURNEYS ON THE THAMES**
- 6. CHAMPION DESIGN OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY ON THE THAMES**
- 7. PROMOTE AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF THE THAMES**
- 8. FOSTER COLLABORATION AND RELATIONSHIPS CONNECTED BY THE THAMES**
- 9. EMPOWER CULTURAL CHAMPIONS FOR THE THAMES**
- 10. ENABLE THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF CULTURE ON THE THAMES**

1. COMMUNICATE AND PROMOTE THE CULTURAL LIFE OF THE THAMES



The Great River Race, Thames Lens, 2018 (Image: Alan Skene)

“It would be fantastic to see the media fully embrace the river’s role in the city, celebrating the array of events on the Thames.”

Alistair Gale, Port of London Authority

Each year, the Thames hosts a wealth of cultural activities throughout the daytime and after dark. These encompass a wide range of activities, from jazz cruises and archaeological walks to organised open water swims within docks and over 60 outdoor festivals. Hundreds of exhibitions, theatre, dance, art and music events are hosted by venues located along the river. However, many Londoners are not aware of these events, and there is no single platform to tell people what is happening on the river.

The Totally Thames Festival, which takes place in September each year, includes around 150 events promoted on one central platform, allowing the festival to attract a wide audience. However, the website only lists events on the Thames for the duration of the festival.

Similarly, over 80 major sporting events take place each year – including the renowned University Boat Race, but these are promoted separately, listed on the PLA website, which is arguably not an obvious place to find sporting event listings.

Communicating and promoting the cultural life of the Thames holistically could mean:

- establishing a single digital platform for Thames events and cultural activity on the river and its banks, such as a website and/or app
- communicating Thames events and major festivals events more widely in the media, for example by establishing a Thames media liaison role
- promoting cultural events along the Thames through existing riverside networks such as riparian boroughs, cultural institutions, BIDs and community groups
- communicating and promoting night-time activities and cultural programming on the river, its banks and in its cultural institutions
- organising – and publicising – boat trips, walks and events to celebrate cultural events by day and by night
- promoting the Thames as an essential cultural destination for visitors and international audiences.

“The Thames is the beating heart of London but there’s no river website, there’s no river app. If you’re a visitor or a Londoner where can you find out what’s on?”

Christopher Rodrigues, Port of London Authority

2. EMBRACE 24 HOURS ON THE THAMES



Illuminated River, 2019 (Image: James Newton)

“We hold over 680 events per year on the river, and we currently work at around 40% capacity. We have a huge ability to make the night-time economy work. It’s a 24 hour, 7 days a week opportunity.”

Chris Livett, Livett’s

The Thames is a dynamic, ever-changing river governed by natural cycles. Over 12 hours, the tidal river rises and falls, hiding and revealing London's largest public open space and 10,000 years of the city's history.

The Mayor's Vision for London as a 24 hour city and the Culture and the Night-Time Economy Supplementary Planning Guide outline ambitions to create a thriving and diverse night-time culture across the city. Illuminated River – a continuous ambitious, public art commission for a unified light installation across up to 15 bridges – is revitalising the River Thames at night. Once complete, it will be the longest public art project in the world. There is great potential to build on this momentum to invigorate the night-time economy along the Thames.

Night-time activity on the Thames is currently limited. Based on a sampling of theatre, dance, art, music and events that take place along the river, the majority (over two-thirds) of cultural activity takes place in the afternoon and early evening, with a much smaller number of events happening in the morning and after 8pm.

The most active months for cultural activity along the Thames are from June to October – with almost twice as much activity as the late autumn and winter months. In winter, the Thames comes alive with the Mayor of London's New Year's Eve Fireworks, one of the largest celebrations of its kind in the world.

This concentration of events in certain months puts pressure on cultural organisers to deliver activity within a condensed period, which can limit their ability to contribute (due to resource and time constraints).

Amplifying the urban and natural rhythms of the Thames could mean:

- embracing tidal movements for events, commissions and programmes that use the foreshore and the river itself
- embracing existing world-class night-time cultural events on the Thames, whilst ensuring that the river's ecology is respected
- celebrating seasonal change and the natural cycles of the Thames, for example, annual migration patterns
- facilitating cultural activities and events throughout the seasons, for example, through thematic (rather than time-limited) programmes
- extending existing cultural riverside activities into the evening and night-time, for example, museum 'lates' linked by boat
- organising boat trips to view Illuminated River
- sensitively integrating new night-time cultural programming on the river, its banks and within its cultural institutions – examples could include floating open-air cinemas, riverside night markets, evening sports and leisure, and performances on the water.

3. CELEBRATE HISTORY AND HERITAGE ON THE THAMES



Surrey Commercial Docks, c1880, (Image: National Library of Scotland)

“Everyone knows the Thames, but the truth is people don’t know very much about it. When you start to reveal the history people are immediately gripped and want to know more.”

Joe Watson, formerly National Trust

London is the way it is because of the Thames. Despite their significance, the stories that shaped the Thames – and London – are often invisible. The City of London's establishment on the northern banks – easier to access by boat – led to stark differences between the north and south of the river, with illicit activities flourishing on the south bank beyond the city walls. In the east, the width of the river facilitated the growth of large-scale industries, whilst the pastoral nature of the river's western reaches inspired artists of the English Landscape movement and conservationists.

London and the River Thames are inextricably linked to the horrors of the transatlantic slave trade. In the mid-16th century some of the earliest slave traffickers, such as John Hawkins, set out from London. During the 17th and early 18th centuries ships owned by London merchants dominated the slave trade. London handled and processed most of the sugar and other slave-produced goods imported into the country. A 2018 Museum of London Docklands exhibition highlighted that the east London docks were built, in part, to trade in slave-harvested goods from the Caribbean and mapped the often hidden remaining traces of the transatlantic slave trade.

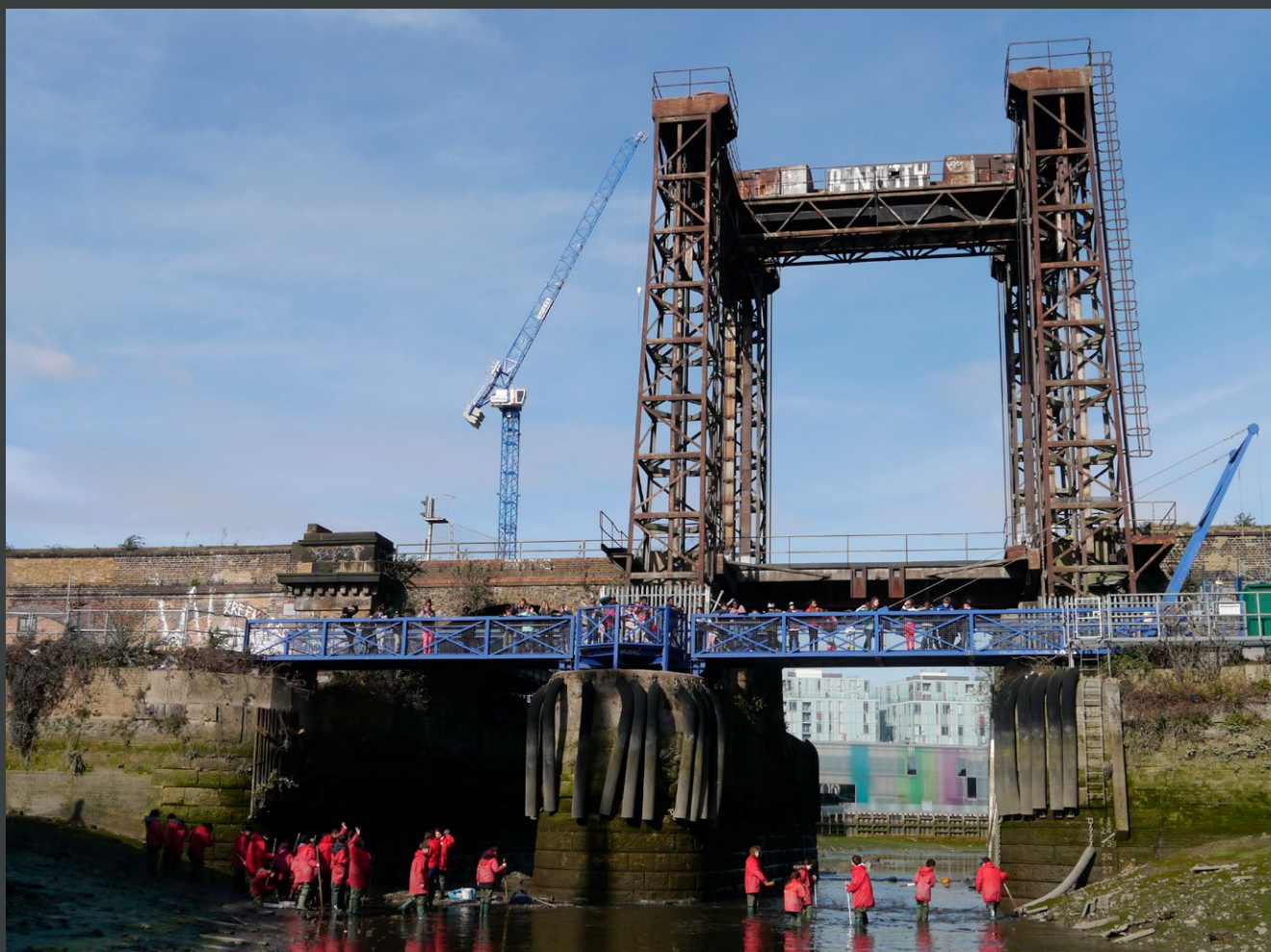
Built heritage along the river is often not celebrated, and significant views, listed structures and historic locations are frequently hidden from plain sight. The history of the Thames is present in the river's foreshore, where archaeological finds are still commonplace.

The river serves many important functions today. It is the UK's busiest inland waterway for freight and transportation – in 2017, there were over 10 million passenger journeys on the Thames.

Telling the stories of the Thames, on the Thames could mean:

- ensuring Londoners understand the significant role the river played in the transatlantic slave trade and its impact on London
- commissioning new cultural projects to tell the stories of the Thames and of London, for example through art commissions, processions or digital archives of archaeological finds
- expanding and building on the London Curriculum work that is already river focused
- embracing difference along the Thames and commissioning culture that reflects the unique qualities and heritage of different places along the river
- celebrating and revealing the history of the Thames within the programmes of riverside cultural organisations, schools and community groups
- celebrating and promoting the diverse functions of the river through cultural programmes, for example through campaigns and tours to promote the 'working river' and educational programmes celebrating its ecology
- including the Thames at the heart of high-profile London-wide cultural programmes such as Open House London.

4. RESTORE EAST LONDON'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE THAMES



Low Tide Walk in Deptford Creek, Creekside Education Trust 2016 (Image: Creekside Education Trust)

"The east is where the opportunity lies.
That's where culture could be cutting edge."

Jason Debney, Thames Landscape Strategy

London's East End docks were, by the early 19th century, the world's largest assembly of wet docks. They shaped the development and populations of areas such as Rotherhithe and Shadwell, where at the time the majority of local men earned a living as watermen, seamen, dockers and shipbuilders.

Many East End docks were rendered obsolete by advances in shipping technology during the 20th century. During this time, neighbourhoods that had been close to the Thames became cut off from it, changing their relationship with the river.

Today, many of the communities to the east of Canning Town have little or no physical access to the river and limited access to cultural infrastructure close to the Thames. There are many anecdotal reports of schoolchildren in East London having never visited the Thames.

Cultural programming on the Thames is also limited in the east in comparison to other areas. A sample of 2017 – 2018 events along the Thames revealed that the majority of cultural programmes on the banks of the Thames take place in central London and, to a lesser extent, west London.

The extent of development around the eastern reaches of the Thames is extraordinary, with over 40 per cent of the river's banks within Opportunity Areas — London's principal opportunities for accommodating large-scale development. Upcoming developments such as Thamesmead, Barking Riverside, Royal Arsenal Riverside and East Bank will act as a catalyst to promote good growth along the Thames in the east. This scale of change offers a unique opportunity for a bold, coordinated approach to cultural infrastructure and planning, celebrating the unique ecology, industrial infrastructure and heritage of the eastern reaches of the Thames.

Restoring east London's relationship with the Thames could mean:

- embedding cultural infrastructure in new development within the changing east, to create a coordinated network of complementary culture, sports and leisure uses and creative workspaces
- enabling free access to everyday culture for Londoners along under-served areas of the Thames, including play, sports and leisure uses linked by walking and cycling routes
- creating accessible and engaging new cultural programmes specific to the eastern reaches of the Thames, celebrating the unique features of this geography, such as its rich ecology, marshes and nature reserves
- making use of and celebrating the historic and active industrial infrastructure in the east to create unique cultural and visitor destinations
- expanding the geographic extent of existing river cultural programmes to the parts of the Thames that currently lack access to culture
- connecting creative communities with each other, with cultural production sites and with residential communities, both locally and more widely with the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

“There is a need to improve people's engagement with the river – there's a sense that 'it's not for us'.”

Anne Lydiat Wainwright, Hermitage Community Moorings

5. EMBED CULTURE WITHIN TRANSPORT AND PROMOTE JOURNEYS ON THE THAMES



View from Tower Millennium Pier, 2018 (Image: Publica)

“People would use the river more if there was more understanding of how to access it. Signage and wayfinding are outdated.”

Sarah Gaventa, Illuminated River

The Thames is a vital, growing transport corridor for London. The PLA's Vision for the Tidal Thames sets out major ambitions for the Thames; including doubling the number of people travelling by river (20 million users by 2035), making more efficient use of piers and river space, and developing and implementing a long-term pier strategy. These ambitions have been supported by the Mayor's Transport Strategy (2018), which proposes further steps to increase river services and improve interchange with walking and cycling.

In 2016/17 around 4.7 million people (44 per cent of river journeys) went on river tours and charters. The majority of these tours only visited London's major attractions. Activities currently available from leisure services on the river are limited, with most focusing primarily on drinking and dining experiences.

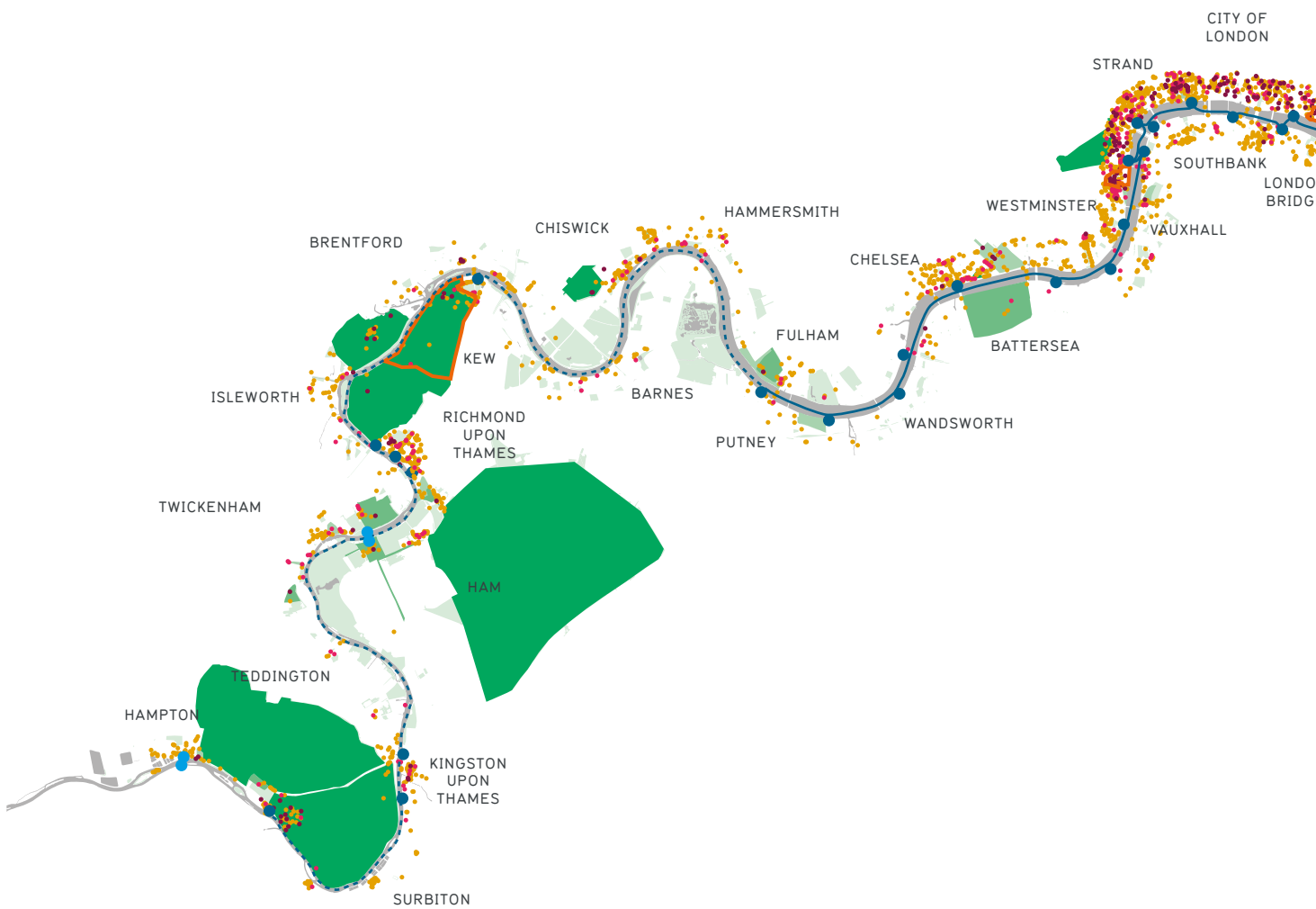
The Thames connects thousands of cultural venues, visitor attractions and built heritage across London, but transport links on the river are not being used to their full potential, and the eastern reaches of the Thames lack river transport connections altogether. Very few riverside destinations promote river services to their audiences as a means of getting to their venues. Examples such as the special Thames Clipper services during Art Night 2018 illustrate the potential to make transport an integral part of cultural events and festivals.

In comparison to other forms of public transport, it is expensive to travel on the river, which prevents access for some people. In addition there is limited public awareness of how to use river services, and their legibility within London's wider transport network is not as clear as it could be. The iconic design of London's public transport is recognised around the world, but river passenger vessels lack a distinctive visual identity.

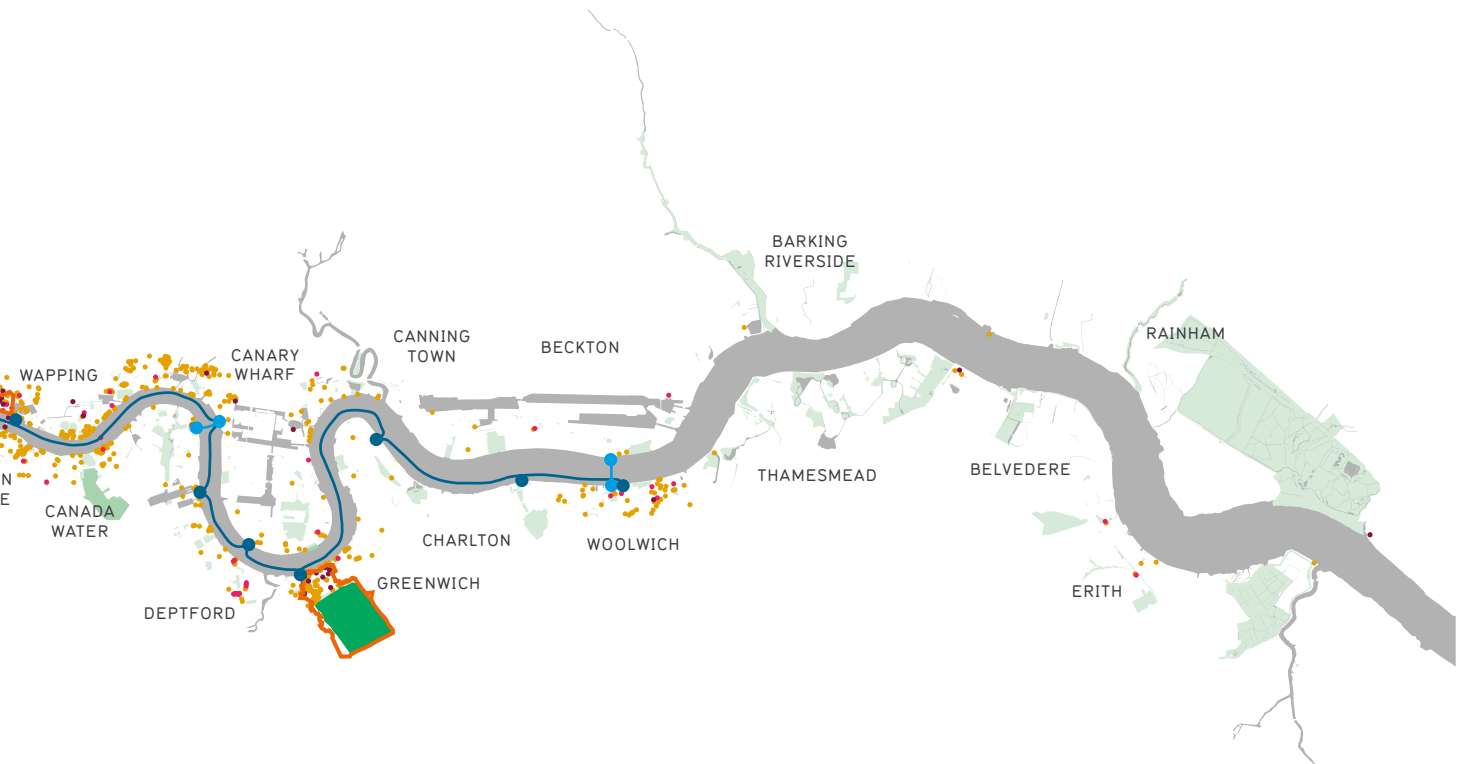
Embedding culture within transport and promoting journeys on the Thames could mean:

- connecting cultural and visitor destinations via the river, and encouraging riverside cultural venues and visitor destinations to promote river journeys on their online platforms
- connecting cultural and visitor destinations to the riverfront from town centres, to encourage better walking and cycling connections along the river
- encouraging and supporting programmed river services, such as evening, architectural and wildlife tours, and tours of art installations, such as Illuminated River
- integrating exhibitions, art commissions and cultural activity on piers and river services, including extending the Art on the Underground programme
- creating a strong visual identity for river services, to match the iconic design identity of other public transport modes in London.

HERITAGE ASSETS AND RIVER SERVICES ON THE THAMES



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HERITAGE (*within 500m of the Thames*)

- UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Grade 1 listed building/structure
- Grade 2* listed building/structure
- Grade 2 listed building/structure
- Grade 1 listed park/garden
- Grade 2* listed park/garden
- Grade 2 listed park/garden
- Publicly accessible green space (*within 500m of the Thames*)
- River Thames, tributaries and inland water

RIVER SERVICES

- River services pier
- Ferry service
- River services – all year
- River services – summer (March – October)

6. CHAMPION DESIGN OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY ON THE THAMES



Thames Barrier Park, 2019 (Image: Tian Khee Siong)

“Every pier could be a work of art;
a destination in its own right.”

Tim Beckett, Beckett Rankine

The Thames provides views to some of London's most iconic architecture, and the river's banks include structures and public spaces with unparalleled heritage value. The Victoria Embankment, designed by Joseph Bazalgette in the 19th century as part of London's first sewerage project, is exemplary in its integration of exceptional design quality and craftsmanship within a major infrastructure project. Many of London's bridges, such as Tower Bridge and Millennium Bridge, are also destinations in their own right.

The Mayor's Good Growth by Design programme sets out clear aspirations; including creating 'successful, inclusive and sustainable places' as part of new development across London.

As London faces sea level change, innovative design approaches for new flood defences could not only enhance ecology and maintain access to and views of the river, but become a distinctive feature of London's urban landscape. The Thames is also home to 125 species of fish, as well as seals, porpoises, seahorses and otters – a remarkable ecological feat after the Thames' eastern reaches were declared biologically dead in the 1950s. As the river's banks undergo change as part of upcoming developments, there is great potential to create a network of distinctive new spaces that accommodate the cultural and ecological life of the Thames. At present, many public spaces are designed without a meaningful relationship with the Thames, and at night, many heritage assets are lost in overly-lit public spaces.

Passenger piers offer a great opportunity to showcase London's best architecture. At present, most piers are not distinctive or consistent in their design quality, and the majority have little or no relation to their context.

Championing design of the highest quality on the Thames could mean:

- establishing design programmes for new piers that are distinctive, environmentally sustainable, and place-specific
- commissioning design competitions for the innovative re-purposing of former industrial structures in the river
- championing beautiful, distinctive and sensitively integrated new flood defences, public spaces and bridges
- developing a coherent, bold and sensitive lighting strategy for the length of the Thames
- improving and connecting public spaces along the Thames' banks through high-quality and distinctive public realm
- facilitating design reviews for new build projects on the Thames.

“The Thames is alive and thriving. It's full of wildlife. We want people to recognise that and to know it is a valuable asset.”

Alison Debney, Zoological Society of London

7. PROMOTE AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF THE THAMES



Paddles Ahoy! Thames Lens, 2016 (Image: John Clare)

“When you’re canoeing, sailing, paddle-boarding or swimming in the river, you reclaim the river and it brings you viscerally in touch with it.”

Adrian Evans, Totally Thames

The Thames provides Londoners with unrivalled access to nature. Not only is the river of vital ecological importance; it also connects 877 adjacent publicly accessible open spaces and 14 major metropolitan parks.

The Thames Path, one of the Mayor's strategic walking routes, is a remarkable asset for London. By 2020 the Thames Path, a 184 mile-long (294km) National Trail, will meet the new England Coastal Path to provide an uninterrupted link from source to sea. Nevertheless, physical connectivity to the river is limited in some parts of the city. No Thames Path currently exists east of Leamouth (on the north bank of the Thames), and the industries located in these reaches often create a severance between nearby communities and the river.

The Thames Path opened in 1996, and sections have since been extended to provide a joined-up path. As a result of the varying condition and buildings along the river, the route frequently diverts from the river's edge, which can mean places near to the river feel disconnected from it. The Thames Path also lacks a consistent visual identity; signage changes along its length, and the route is marked by the National Trails' acorn symbol, which has little relevance to the Thames.

Many Londoners lack the knowledge, awareness and confidence needed to access the river safely. Information on access rights to the river and foreshore is unclear, and the majority of foreshore access points are poorly maintained and signed, unwelcoming and difficult to use for people with restricted mobility.

Inviting the public to access and enjoy the Thames could mean:

- in line with the Mayor's Healthy Streets Approach, using culture to encourage active use of the Thames for walking, cycling, watersports and swimming (in appropriate locations, such as docks). This could be done through art trails along the length of the Thames Path and through provision of sports facilities linked by the river
- in line with London's National Park City programme launched in May 2019, using culture and public realm enhancements to animate and promote use of the Thames as an outdoor public space
- enhancing the visual identity and legibility of the river through bespoke and coherent wayfinding and signage, for example through design guidelines for the Thames Path
- identifying a network of safe, accessible and intuitive access points to the foreshore, with clear information on access rights
- raising public awareness of the tidal movements and currents of the Thames, and how this influences the ecology of the river; as well as safe practices for the use of the Thames and the foreshore.

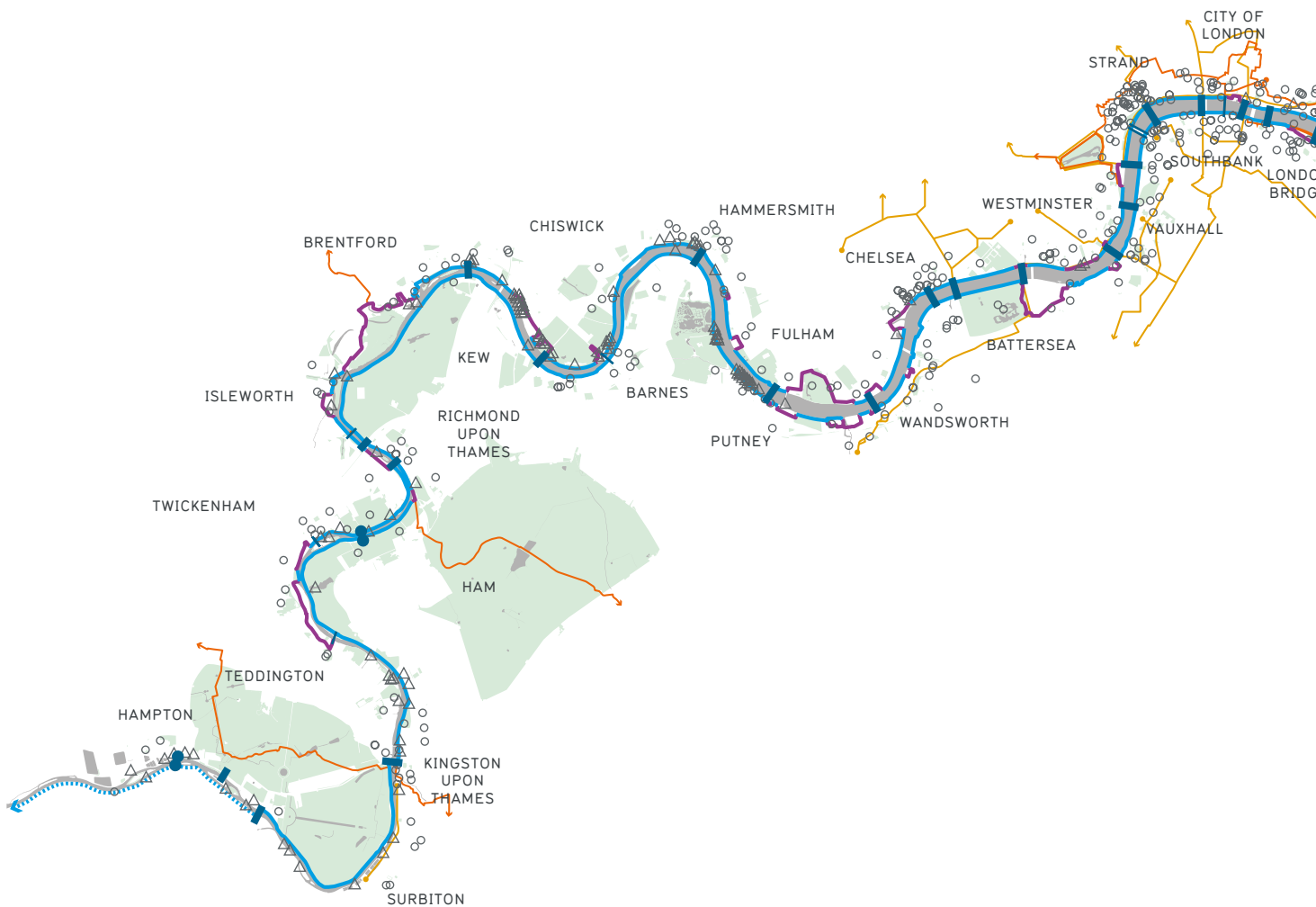
"We need consistent messaging that the river is an asset to enjoy, but with management of risk."

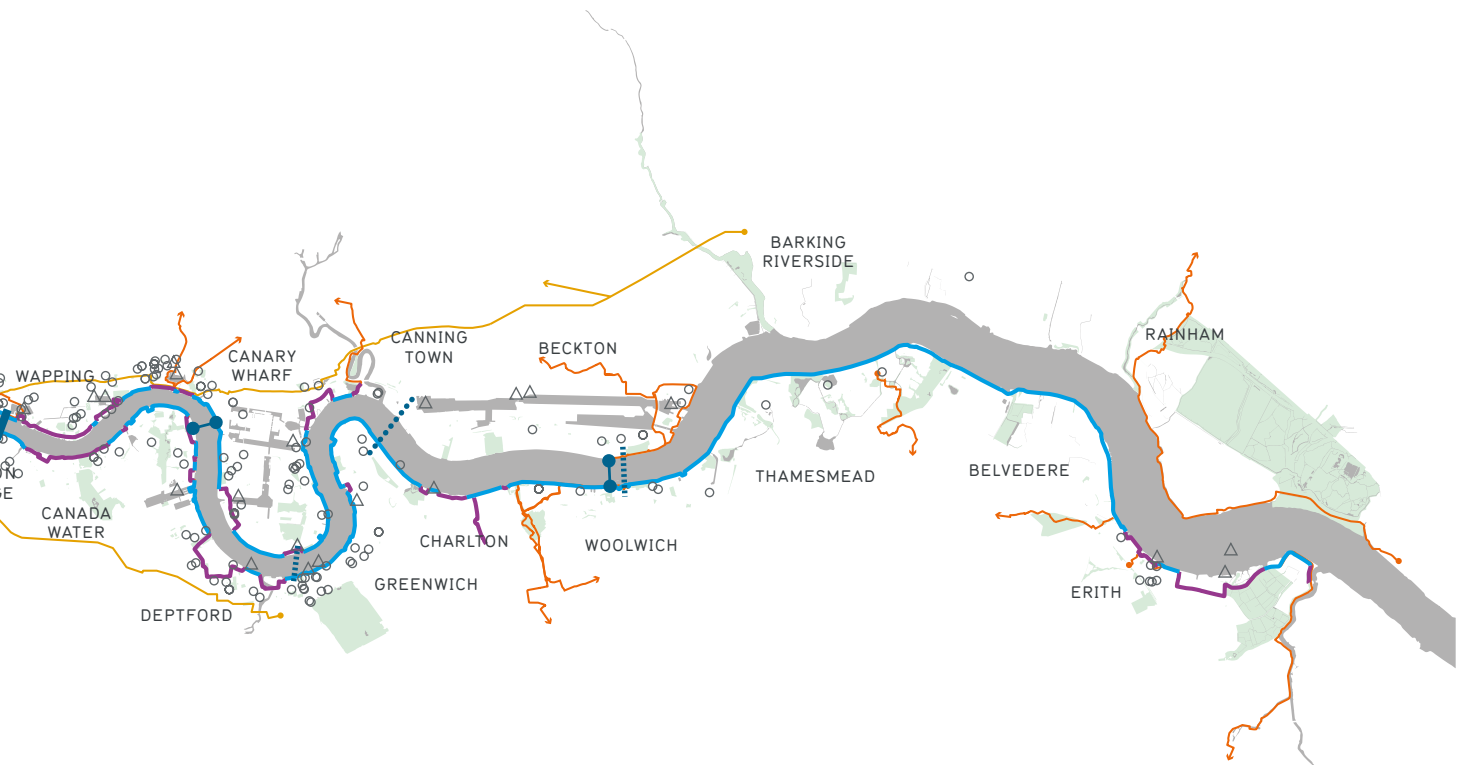
Mike Appleton, formerly Tideway

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE CONNECTIONS ALONG THE THAMES

“Currently it is very difficult to implement Thames-wide strategies, there is no “go to” place to connect... This is apparent in the out of date wayfinding and signage along the riverfront, there is a lack of stitching together. There needs to be more of a cross-borough approach”

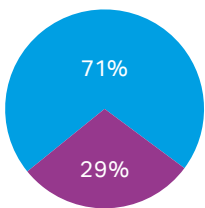
Heather Hilburn, CEO of Thames Estuary Partnership and formerly Project Director for the Tower of London





THAMES PATH

Directly next to the river



Away from the river

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES

- Thames Path next to river
- Thames Path away from river
- ... Thames Path outside London
- Other London walking route (within 500m of the Thames)
- Cycle route (within 500m of the Thames)

- Cultural infrastructure (within 500m of the Thames)
- △ Water-based sport or leisure facility (within 500m of the Thames)

PEDESTRIAN RIVER CROSSINGS

- Ferry
- Road bridge
- Footbridge
- ... Foot tunnel
- ... Cable car
- Publicly accessible green space (within 500m of the Thames)
- River Thames, tributaries and inland water

8. FOSTER COLLABORATION AND RELATIONSHIPS CONNECTED BY THE THAMES



London 1666, David Best, produced by Artichoke, part of London's Burning, 2016 (Image:Flickr/_Andrew)

"A thematic [rather than seasonal] approach to cultural programming would work in the boroughs."

Kathryn Woodvine, Royal Borough of Kingston

Five of London's top 10 visitor attractions are located on the banks of the Thames. It is the only river in the world to connect four UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

However, this extraordinary concentration and connection of cultural assets is not being utilised. Along the length of the Thames there is limited collaboration between riparian boroughs, cultural institutions and community groups.

Cultural institutions are thinking more expansively and innovatively than ever before, extending their activity beyond their walls and changing the way they interact with their audiences. As they develop increasingly ambitious productions in an era of funding cuts and diminishing resources, many cultural organisations are turning to partnership and collaboration to maximise their resources, to find new sources of funding, to develop ideas and to expand their audiences. A River Thames Cultural Vision could connect organisations across sectors to make the most of these opportunities.

Fostering collaboration and relationships connected by the Thames could mean:

- making the most of existing cultural networks and creative talent along the Thames to deliver collaborative, spectacular productions that engage all Londoners with the river
- forming international partnerships to share knowledge and strengthen the cultural profile of the Thames globally. For example, using the World Cities Culture Forum or Thames Festival Trust's Rivers of the World programme, delivered in partnership with the British Council
- establishing a steering group of core partners for the development and long-term delivery of a cultural vision for the Thames
- establishing geographic sub-groups, working with riparian boroughs to identify and connect with partners at a local level
- establishing partnerships between cultural institutions and creative communities on the Thames, building on the momentum of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor vision and the Mayor's Creative Enterprise Zone programme to bring out and celebrate creative production and collaboration
- working together to secure greater financial support for ambitious cultural programming.

9. EMPOWER CULTURAL CHAMPIONS FOR THE THAMES



Back to the River, Raewyn Harrison and Mike Webber, part of Totally Thames, 2017 (Image: Gabor Gergely/ Raewyn Harrison)

“Developers are open to hearing about exciting opportunities for cultural collaboration, but there has been little discussion and we need a joint strategy for the river. We also have to consider the needs of multiple stakeholders in order to make things happen.”

Kaia Charles, Knight Dragon

The river crosses through 17 boroughs, often acting as a borough boundary. The draft new London Plan encourages boroughs to work together on policies applying to their stretch of river.

However, the complex governance and layering of policy can mean that collaboration between riparian boroughs is often piecemeal. Investing in and realising cultural projects on the river can be challenging, with organisations (particularly boroughs) lacking the necessary resources and expertise.

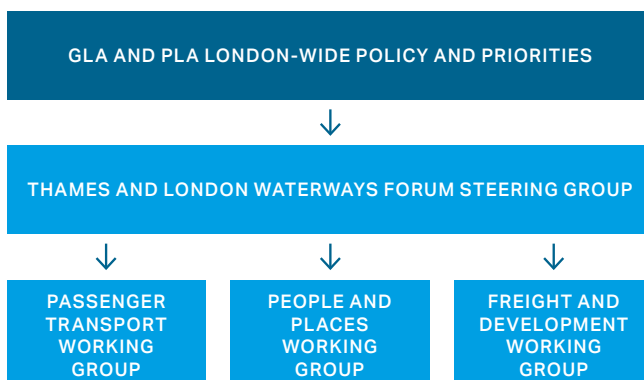
One way in which stakeholders collaborate is through the recently established Thames and London Waterways Forum, which brings together policymakers from different bodies, including riparian boroughs, PLA and TfL to advise the Mayor on river and waterway issues. Within the steering group of this forum raising the representation for culture would be beneficial for all working groups.

With the PLA's Vision for the Tidal Thames – and aspirations to promote increased use and enjoyment of the river – there is an opportunity to embed culture within all functions of the Thames, and to engender a positive attitude towards ambitious cultural projects for the Thames.

Empowering cultural champions for the Thames could mean:

- embedding cultural river champions within existing river and cultural groups and networks, such as the Thames and London Waterways Forum and Thames Estuary Partnership
- expanding the role of the Thames and London Waterways Forum to establish lines of communication and knowledge-sharing between culture liaison partners in each riparian borough
- advocating for a greater prominence of the Thames in policy and undertaking policy reviews to ensure comprehensive policies for the river
- engendering a positive attitude towards cultural projects on the Thames and providing clear guidance and tools for anyone wanting to introduce culture on the Thames, for example through guidelines and toolkits, or a river centre for London
- creating a new cultural programme coordinator for the Thames to stimulate and promote cultural activity along the river.

Thames and London Waterways Forum Structure



10. ENABLE THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF CULTURE ON THE THAMES



One Extraordinary Day, STREB, staged by LIFT, 2012 (Image: James O'Jenkins)

“Could there be a Thames Charter to create a collective vision? It would ask private developers and landowners to sign up to a set of principles which encourage collaboration with creative and cultural businesses. This collective working could be transformative.”

Adriana Marques, Peabody

Areas along the Thames are undergoing considerable investment and growth, with over 40 per cent of the river's banks within GLA-designated Opportunity Areas. The investment and growth in these areas will include the delivery of important cultural buildings and programmes. Several major developments featuring cultural infrastructure and creative workspace are emerging along the river, including new cultural districts, such as Woolwich Creative District, Greenwich Design District and the English National Ballet in London City Island.

Although local policies require cultural strategies to be produced as part of major developments, in many cases these are produced in isolation from other projects, meaning that opportunities for a coordinated approach to cultural investment are not used.

Our research highlighted that there are complex challenges to funding culture in a joined-up way. Many reported that there are few mechanisms available to local authorities to pool resources and ring-fence funding for culture.

Unlocking funding mechanisms for culture and enabling meaningful, coordinated investment will be critical to the delivery and long-term success of a cultural vision for the Thames.

Enabling the long-term viability of culture on the Thames could mean:

- developing new agreements with boroughs to pool Section 106 monies and use for coordinated activity, especially where the scale and focus of the Thames can add particular value in drawing new audiences and engaging new participants
- working with developers and major property owners to assess how the benefits from increased activity on the Thames, in terms of improved retail yields or greater footfall, can help to support cultural activity, for example through long-term partnership agreements or the provision of no-cost or very low-cost space.

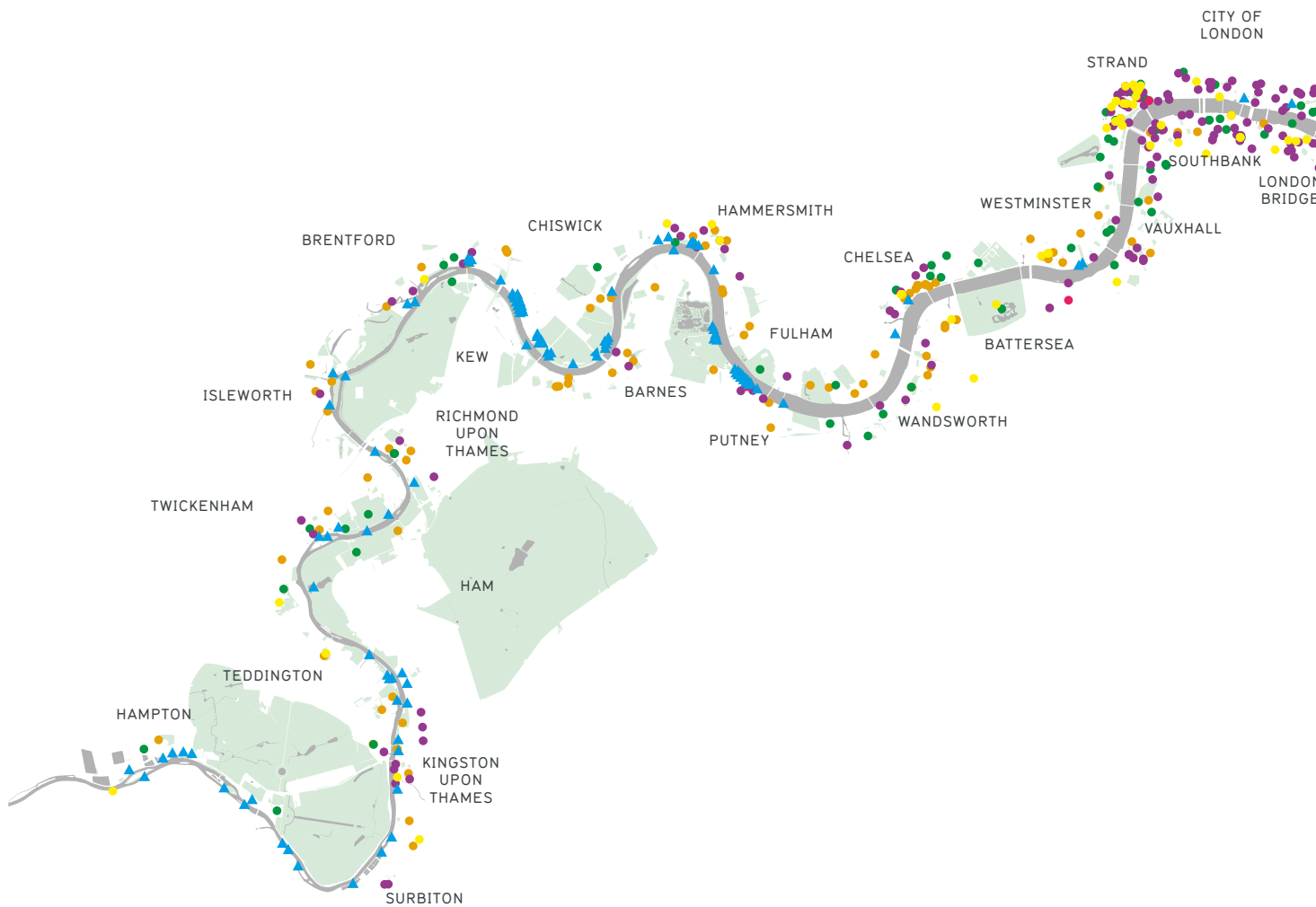
“Developers write their own cultural strategy. That does mean you have a proliferation of different strategies, not necessarily pulling in the same direction.”

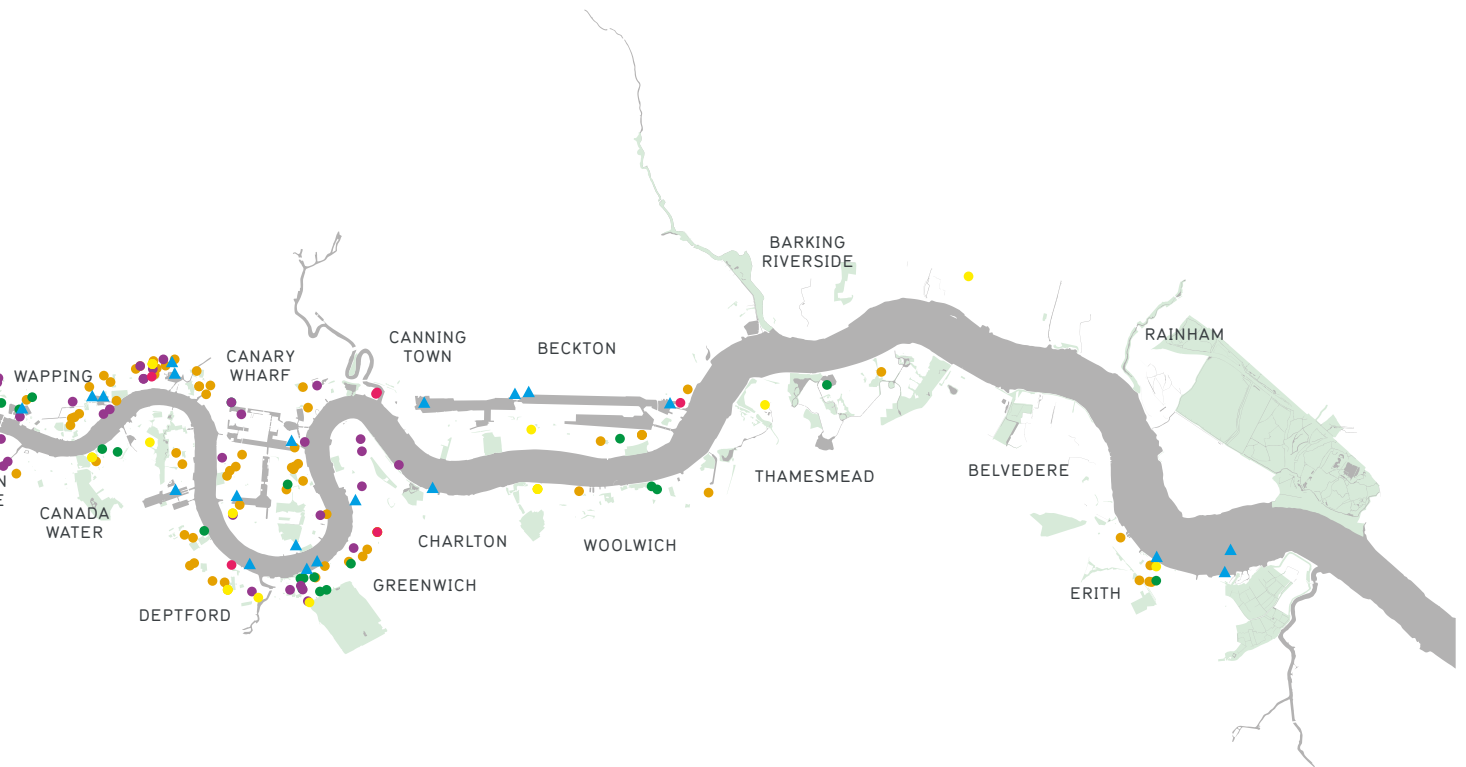
Sara O'Donnell, London Borough of Wandsworth

CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SPORTS/LEISURE ON THE THAMES

“Out of the 400 Newham secondary schoolgirls I spoke to, less than a quarter had ever been on the river.”

Katherine Riggs, Thames Skills Academy





CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE (within 500m of the Thames)

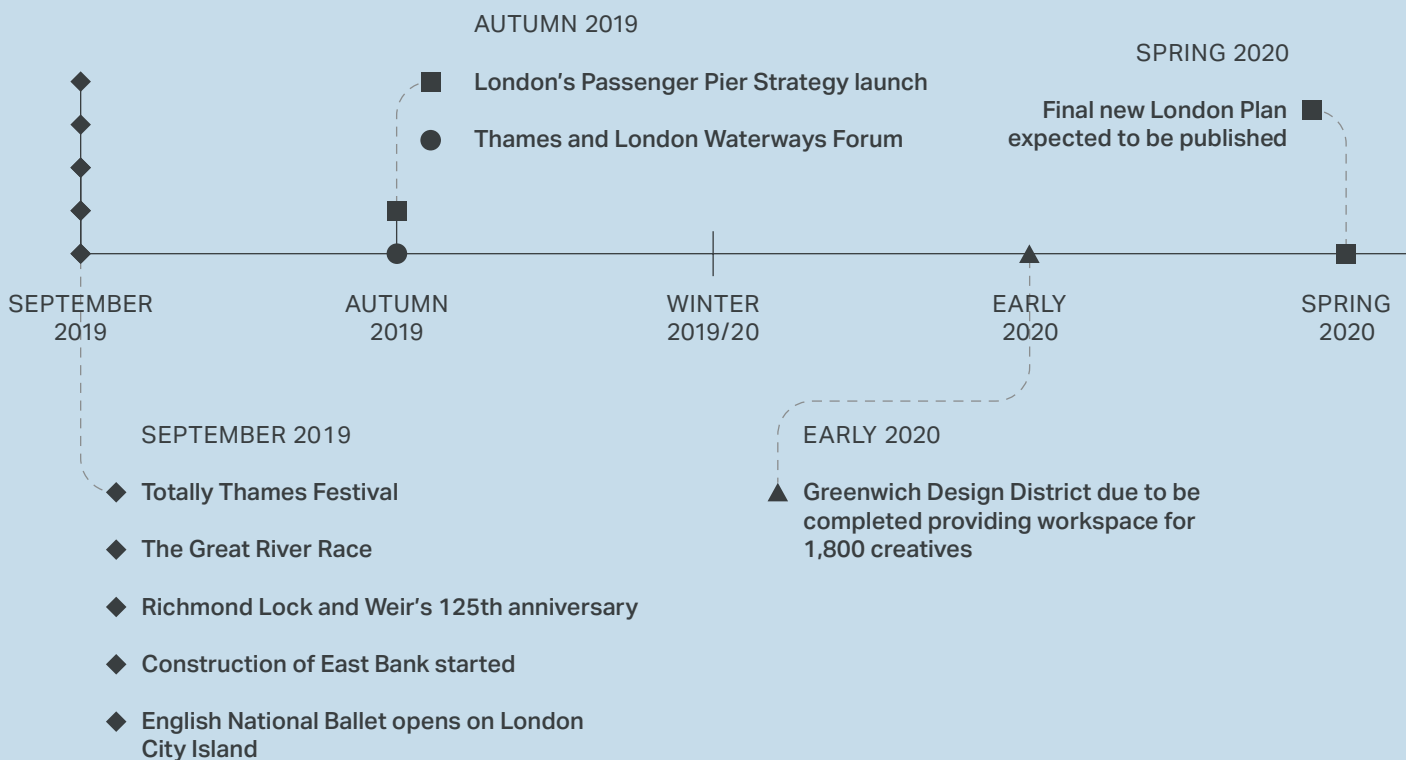
- Creative workspace
- Community centre
- Dance or theatre rehearsal or performance space
- Museum, gallery or library
- Music recording studio, rehearsal or performance space

SPORT/LEISURE (within 500m of the Thames)

- ▲ Water-based sport or leisure facility
- Publicly accessible green space (within 500m of the Thames)
- River Thames, tributaries and inland water

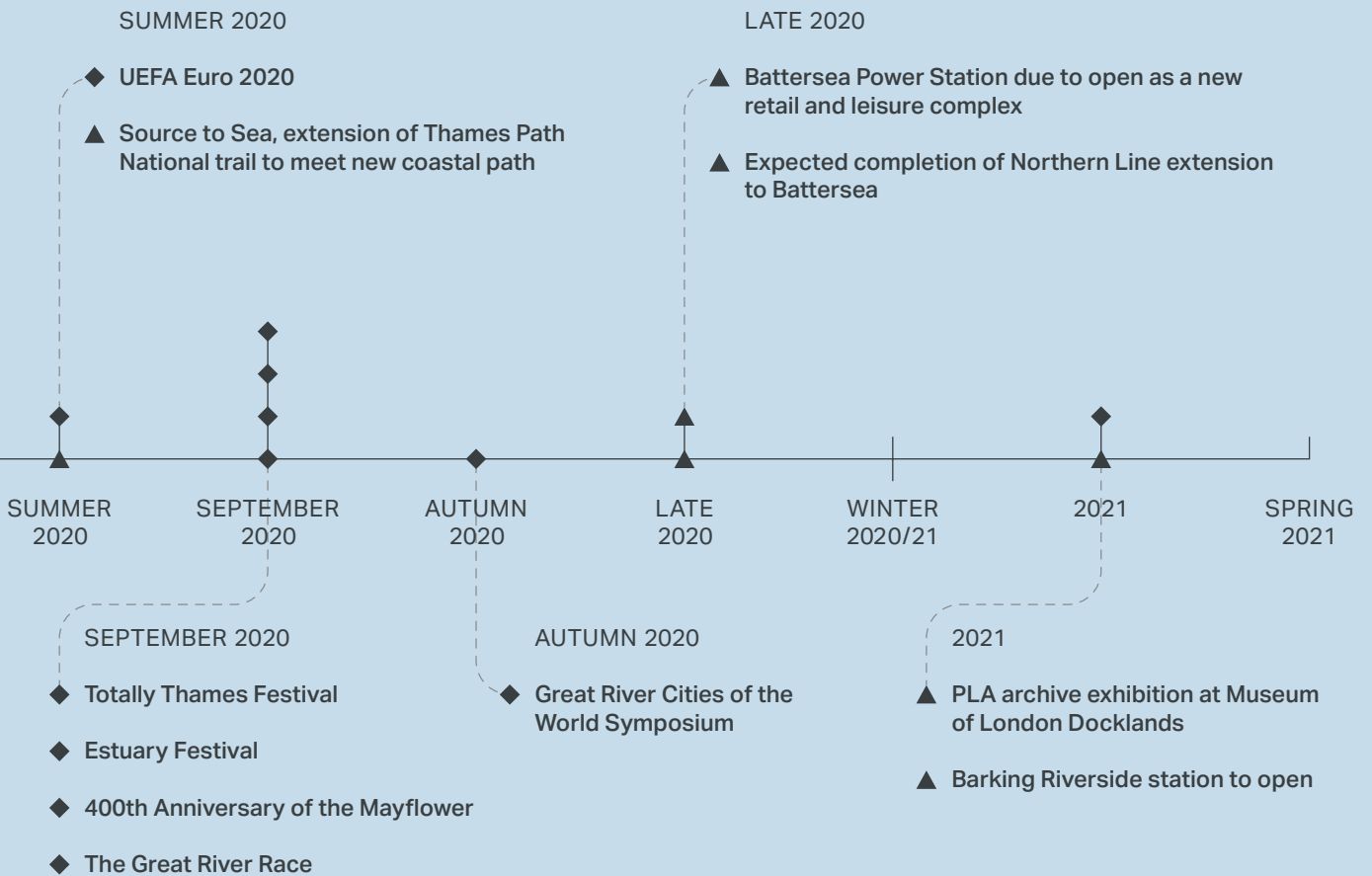
MILESTONES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CULTURAL VISION

Delivering the enduring cultural vision that complements a world city will require an evidence base of focused research and analysis, as well as substantial partnership-building, campaigning and advocacy. The timeline below illustrates the number of opportunities for integrating the development of a River Thames Cultural Vision into other activities and events.



KEY MILESTONES

- Policies and publications
- Forum/network
- ▲ Development
- ◆ Festival/event



RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Strategic activities, undertaken in the short term, can maintain momentum, build networks, and lay the groundwork for the development of a cultural vision.

Taking advantage of the opportunities set out above and drawing from the objectives identified in this first phase of work, a proposed short-term four-point action plan has been set out on the following page.

Actions 3 and 4 relate to governance and funding frameworks. These would need to be put in place to sustainably address actions 1 and 2.

1. Communicate ways that Londoners and visitors to London can already enjoy and access the Thames

- Raise the profile of existing cultural destinations, activities and events on the Thames, including the development of a new PLA visitor website
- Support and promote educational programmes and campaigns that place the Thames at their centre
- Promote river services and the Thames Path for journeys on, and walking routes along, the river
- Identify opportunities to improve safe access to the foreshore at key locations

2. Promote the benefits of a River Thames Cultural Vision and a coordinated approach to cultural opportunities on the Thames

- Position London as an international leader in embracing and maximising river culture, through world class festivals and cultural programmes
- Provide guidance to clarify and encourage cultural activity on the Thames and ensure that culture is represented in existing Thames forums and partnerships
- Review the design and environmental quality of upcoming built projects and lighting strategies on and adjacent to the Thames through existing design review panels
- Develop a coherent, bold and sensitive lighting strategy for the length of the Thames

3. Establish pragmatic governance and coordination

- Establish a leadership structure for the development of a cultural vision
- Develop and expand stakeholder strategy
- Ensure the integration of culture into policies and strategic plans, including London's upcoming Passenger Pier Strategy and river transport

4. Secure funding

- Identify opportunities to access, pool and ringfence funding for culture on the Thames

DID YOU KNOW

The earliest known surviving depiction of the Thames is in a fifteenth-century manuscript of poetry held in the collection of the British Library.

•

There has been a river crossing at London Bridge since AD 55.

•

Although nobody knows for certain, it's thought that the name Thames comes from the Celtic name Tamesas, meaning 'dark'.

•

The Thames is home to 125 species of fish, as well as seals, porpoises, dolphins and otters.

•

In 2017 there were 10 million passenger journeys on the Thames, including 4.7 million people on river tours and charters.

There are two tides on the Thames every day – with a 23 feet (7m) difference between low and high tide at London Bridge.

•

The River Thames is approximately 215 miles (346km) long. It has over 200 bridges, 27 tunnels, six public ferries, one cable car link, and one ford crossing its entire length.

•

Leo Villareal's 'Illuminated River' artwork will eventually light 15 bridges from Tower Bridge to Albert Bridge, becoming the longest public art installation in the world.

•

By 2020 the Thames Path, a 184 mile-long (294km) National Trail, will meet the new England Coastal Path to provide an uninterrupted link from source to sea.

THANK YOU

To everyone who helped to shape the Case for a River Thames Cultural Vision.
Organisations engaged during consultation (April – May 2018)

Aluna

Arts Council England

Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA)

Ballymore

Barking Riverside

Battersea Power Station Development Company

Be Richmond BID

Beckett Rankine

Better Bankside

British Council

British Land

British Rowing

CPRE: London

Canal & River Trust

City Cruises

Creative and Cultural Skills

Creative Industries Council

Creative Industries Federation

Creekside Education Trust

Cross River Partnership

Crossrail

Department for Culture, Media & Sport

Department for International Trade

Environment Agency

Estuary Festival

First Base

Greater London Authority (GLA):

- **Communities and Social Policy**
- **Culture and Creative Industries**
- **Environment**

- **Housing and Land**

- **Planning**

- **Regeneration and Economic Development**

- **Skills and Employment**

- **Transport**

Gloriana

Heritage Lottery Fund

Hermitage Community Moorings

Historic England

Historic Royal Palaces

Illuminated River

Kinetika

Kingston First

Knight Dragon

Livett's

London & Partners

London Councils

London First

London Riverside BID

London Wildlife Trust

London Youth Rowing

Merge

Museum of London

Museum of Water

National Trust

Natural England

Northbank BID

Port of London Authority (PLA)

Port of London Health Authority

Peabody

Riparian Boroughs:

- **City of London**
- City of Westminster
- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- **London Borough of Bexley**
- **London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham**
- **London Borough of Havering**
- **London Borough of Hounslow**
- **London Borough of Lambeth**
- London Borough of Lewisham
- London Borough of Newham
- London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
- London Borough of Southwark
- **London Borough of Tower Hamlets**
- **London Borough of Wandsworth**
- **Royal Borough of Greenwich**
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- **Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames**

River Thames Society**Royal Docks****Royal National Lifeboat Institution**

Royal Parks

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Somerset House**South Bank BID**

Southbank Centre

Studio Octopi**Tate Modern****Team London Bridge****Thames 21****Thames Clippers**

Thames Estuary Partnership

Thames Explorer Trust**Thames Landscape Strategy**

Thames Path Partnership

Thames RIB Tours

Thames Skills Academy

Thames and Field

The Mill Co. Project

The Ramblers**Tideway****Totally Thames****Tower Bridge****Tower of London****Transport for London (TfL)**

Try Twickenham BID

U+I

University of East London

Vauxhall One

Visit Britain

Work Wild**Zoological Society of London**

 Organisations contacted
Organisations in attendance at workshops

INTERNATIONAL PRECEDENTS AND LONDON CASE STUDIES

Here are some international precedents and London case studies which can inspire a new approach to culture on the River Thames.

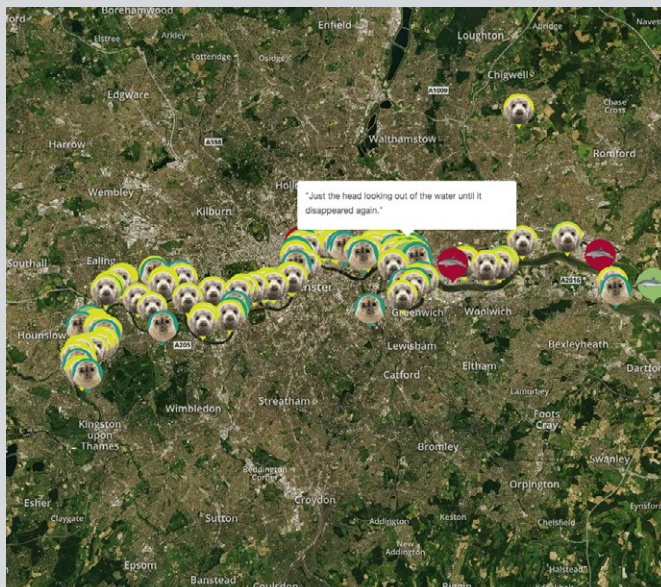
EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION



Riverscape, London Curriculum resource (Image: GLA)

LONDON CURRICULUM

The River Thames is represented as part of the Mayor's 'London Curriculum' initiative, which provides learning resources to enable key stage 2 and 3 teachers to integrate London-specific themes into their teaching. Resources are offered for cross-curricular learning, and look at specific subjects such as English, Geography, Physics, Biology, Art and Design through the lens of the River Thames. At present, nearly 60 per cent of secondary schools across London are registered for the curriculum, approaching one-third of all primaries and around 100 cultural partners and institutions back the programme.

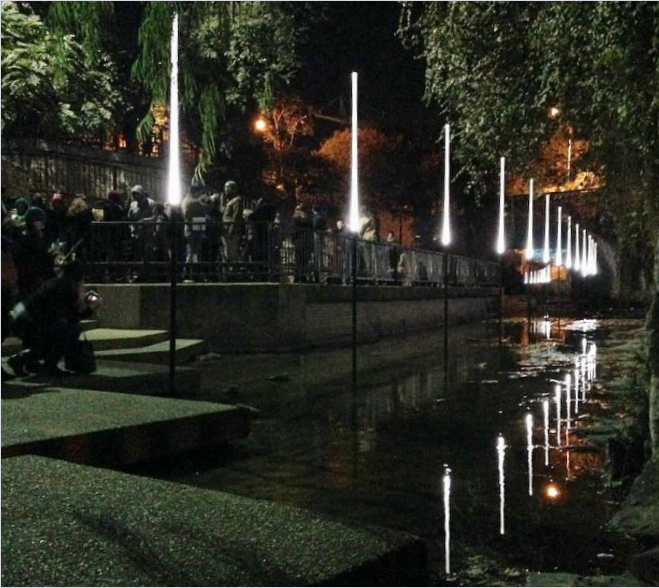


Thames Marine Mammal Survey, Interactive Map (Image: ZSL)

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

ZSL is an international wildlife conservation charity. On the Thames, ZSL is working with partners and volunteers to enhance the ecology of the Thames Estuary and the wider river catchment, and to better understand and conserve the wildlife that are found here. In partnership, ZSL is working to deliver clean water, thriving wildlife and connected people. ZSL has been collecting public sightings of marine mammals in the Thames since 2004. These sightings are marked on an interactive online map. The aim of the project is to monitor and better understand how the animals use the estuary whilst engaging the public. In September 2019, ZSL launched a free to use virtual reality experience that simulates the thriving ecosystem of the Thames and allows Londoners and our visitors to meet some of the incredible wildlife that live here including seahorse, porpoise and even sharks.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS



Tracing the Line, Baldrige Architects, 2014 (Image: Flickr/theusual)

WALLER CREEK, AUSTIN (USA)

Waller Creek is adopting a public-private partnership model to steward the city's most ambitious urban design project to date. The Waller Creek Conservancy – helmed by the former head of New York's famed High Line park Peter Mullan –brings together partners across city departments (Cultural Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Public Works), community foundations, local businesses, and the design and architecture community. The Conservancy has strategically used cultural interventions including the Ai Wei Wei outdoor art piece *Forever Bicycles* and the annual light-based art festival *Creek Show* to get people to interact with previously under-engaged sections of the creek.



Richmond riverside (Image: Publica)

THAMES LANDSCAPE STRATEGY, LONDON (UK)

The Thames Landscape Strategy is a not-for-profit partnership for the river Thames between Hampton and Kew. Launched in 1994, the strategy is a 100-year holistic vision with aims to conserve and enhance the Arcadian Thames in west London. The strategy brings together over 220 local and community groups, and 14 funding partners to inform strategic policy and implement projects that promote the landscapes, history, nature and architecture of the area.

FUNDING CULTURE



Jubilee Gardens, West 8, 2012 (Image: Publica)

THE LONDON EYE, LONDON (UK)

The planning permission for the London Eye includes a Section 106 agreement that ensures that one per cent of the Eye's annual revenue is invested back in South Bank to benefit the area's diverse community of businesses, residents, employees and visitors. Since it was set up, this innovative mechanism has supported many key services, projects and initiatives, including the management and maintenance of Jubilee Gardens – one of central London's busiest areas of green space – and South Bank's safety and place management teams. A proportion of the funds generated have been democratically allocated to a wide range of local community groups and charities - including the Thames Festival Trust - through a small grants scheme. This investment is coordinated and delivered through the South Bank Visitor Management Group, a unique partnership arrangement between Merlin Entertainments - as operators of the London Eye, Lambeth Council and South Bank Employers' Group. These arrangements have run for 15 years, with great success and real impact.



Do Ho Suh, Bridging Home, 2015 (Image: Lehmann Maupin/ Gautier Deblonde)

SCULPTURE IN THE CITY, LONDON (UK)

Facilitated and delivered by the City of London Corporation, Sculpture in the City is an annual open-air contemporary visual art festival featuring internationally-renowned artists and designed to engage residents, local office workers and tourists with the public realm within the City's Eastern Cluster. The project is funded by the City of London Corporation in partnership with private businesses – many of which are based in the area. Partners include Aon, Aviva, Bloomberg, Beaumont, British Land, Brookfield, CC Land, Hiscox, London & Oriental, Nuveen Real Estate, Tenacity, Tower 42 and Twenty-Two.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMING AND PUBLIC SPACES



Les Anneaux, Daniel Buren and Patrick Bouchain, part of Estuaire, 2012 (Image: Flickr/Retis)

RIVER LOIRE, NANTES (FRANCE)

Along the Loire River, between Nantes and Saint-Nazaire, the 60km open-air Estuaire trail consists of 30 contemporary artworks by internationally-renowned artists. Each work responds to the unique character of places along the estuary, and guides viewers to interesting sites along the trail, for instance, where nature reserves are located adjacent to industrial buildings. Walking and cycling are promoted along the trail through the provision of new cycle infrastructure and bespoke signage. The Loire can also be explored by boat, with themed cruises along the river between April and September.



Slinky springs to fame, Tobias Rehberger, part of Emscherkunst, 2010 (Image: Wikipedia/Arnoldius)

EMSCHER RIVER, RUHR AREA (GERMANY)

The Emscher River is a tributary of the Rhine that flows through western Germany. Emscherkunst is a free festival that has been running every three years since 2010. The festival inhabits the river's landscape in different places: overgrown wastelands, former industrial spaces and the no-man's-land between the Emscher river and the Rhine-Herne-Canal. In 2016 some 255,000 people experienced the outdoor art exhibition.



Krymskaya Embankment project, Wowhaus, 2014 (Image: Publica)

MOSKVA RIVER, MOSCOW (RUSSIA)

Public spaces along Moscow's riverside were neglected in the 1990s and 2000s as commercial uses moved in, making spaces inaccessible to the public. Five green spaces, open spaces and the Crimean Embankment are being brought together in a phased revitalisation plan across 250 hectares. Changes are on-going and include green space improvements, improved connectivity and access along the river, lighting, physical accessibility and repair of historic structures. Large new sports facilities, new museums, galleries, food services as well as markets are transforming the previously neglected sites.



Brooklyn Bridge Park, 2012 (Image: Flickr/ Chris Goldberg)

BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK, NEW YORK (USA)

New York's Brooklyn Bridge Park spans 1.3 miles along the East River linking green space, multiple piers, leisure and sporting facilities, and a number of historic industrial sites. In many instances former industrial structures have been re-purposed for basketball courts, football pitches and play spaces. To promote the varied programme of cultural and community events Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy has created an easily navigable website, which lists all the amenities of the park and upcoming events. River ferry connections to the park have also been reinstated to allow improved access.

PLACE-SPECIFIC COMMISSIONS



Illuminated River, 2019 (Image: James Newton Photographs)

ILLUMINATED RIVER, LONDON (UK)

Illuminated River - an on-going ambitious, public art commission for a unified light installation across up to 15 bridges across the Thames - is revitalising the river at night. The artwork, by light artist Leo Villareal and Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands, will capture the unique history and identity of each bridge and respond to its distinct area of the Thames. The first four bridges - London Bridge, Cannon Street Railway Bridge, Southwark Bridge and Millennium Bridge - were illuminated in summer 2019, with the next phase due for completion in autumn 2020. The scheme has been developed in consultation and collaboration with over 50 organisations on and around the Thames. When complete, Illuminated River will be the longest public art project in the world.



RAGA DAWN, Caroline Bergvall, part of Estuary, 2016 (Image: Benedict Johnson)

ESTUARY FESTIVAL, SOUTH ESSEX AND NORTH KENT (UK)

Estuary is a cultural celebration of the Thames Estuary across the north and south shorelines and on the river itself. It was developed by Metal in Southend-on-Sea, in partnership with Whitstable Biennale, five estuarine local authorities, the Ports, the PLA and other key Thames Estuary stakeholders. In 2016, Estuary took place over 16 days in September hosting 55 events across seven key venues and attracting live audiences of over 100,000 with a further 23.7 million reached through media and broadcast platforms. The dates of the next festival will be September to October 2020 and it will span 60 miles of the Thames Estuary Coastline, with the help of the Cultural Development Fund and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor partnership.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Active Row, London Youth Rowing, 2018 (Image: London Youth Rowing)

THAMES TIDEWAY TUNNEL, LONDON (UK)

The 25km Thames Tideway Tunnel is a major expansion of London's sewer network which will prevent millions of tonnes of untreated sewage overflowing into the River Thames. Tunnelling started in 2018 and the project is due to be completed in 2024. Many of the construction sites and safe-guarded wharves used for the project will become public spaces, creating three acres of public space along the river. Tideway has engaged London's communities during construction, with a significant community investment programme that 'aims to reconnect Londoners with the river and leave a lasting Legacy'. Projects include Thames River Watch, a partnership with environmental charity Thames21; Active Row, a partnership with charity London Youth Rowing; and the Thames Discovery Programme, a partnership with Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA).



Origami, Dance Umbrella UK, 2017 (Image: Trinity Buoy Wharf/ Jon Oliver)

TRINITY BUOY WHARF, LONDON (UK)

In 1998, Trinity Buoy Wharf was an empty, derelict site. Now it is a thriving centre for the arts and creative industries with an established community of over 600 people. In 1988 the site was purchased by the London Dockland Development Corporation (LDDC) from owners Trinity House who used to make buoys there. In 1998 the LDDC passed a long lease to Urban Space Management who had won a competition to turn the site into a centre for arts and creative enterprises. The LDDC also set up arts charity the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust as USM's landlord. USM pay 25 per cent of their rental income to the TBW Trust who use that to promote arts activity in the area. The trust has supported and funded a wide range of arts projects and organisations. With careful regeneration and protection from over-development, Trinity Buoy Wharf has kept its historic character whilst offering amenities such as studio and gallery space, a pier, Foundation Year art school, rehearsal rooms and cafés. Current tenants include The Prince's Drawing School, Thames Clippers and English National Opera.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MAP DATA SOURCES:

All of the base maps in this document contain OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018 and GIGI data provided by the GLA. All maps were produced by Publica in 2018 from the data sources listed below.

DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE THAMES OPPORTUNITY AREAS p.10 – 11

This map represents development adjacent to and on the Thames based on third party data sources listed below:

OAPF (Opportunity Area Planning Framework) data based on information from the GLA (Accessed 24.04.18); <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/opportunity-areas/opportunity-areas>

Development data based on GIS information provided by the GLA showing live developments within 500m from the Thames with a project cost of over £10 million (24.04.2018). 'Development planned or under construction' illustrates live developments granted detailed planning permission. 'Development proposed' illustrates live developments with statuses of; detail submitted, no permission, outline approved, outline submitted or uncertain.

Thamesmead development data based on information from Peabody (05.06.2018); <https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/londons-new-town/>

Future rail infrastructure data based on information from the Mayor's Transport Strategy, March 2018; <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>

Existing rail infrastructure data based on information from Transport for London; Geographically accurate representation of London tube and rail lines, 2014; <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/london-connections-map.pdf>

Proposed pier data based on information from the PLA (Accessed 05.06.18); <http://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/The-Thames-Vision/Thames-Vision-Interactive-Map>

Thames Tideway Tunnel data based on information from Tideway (Accessed 05.06.18); <https://www.tideway.london/locations>

River crossings data based on information from Transport for London (Accessed 05.06.18); <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/how-we-work/planning-for-the-future/new-river-crossings-for-london>

and Diamond Jubilee Footbridge data (Accessed 05.06.18); <http://diamondjubileebridge.london>

PROJECT EXTENTS MAP p. 13

This map represents Greater London, the route of the River Thames and the riparian boroughs based on third party data sources listed below:

River Thames route based on OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

Borough boundaries based on GIS information provided by the GLA

HERITAGE ASSETS AND RIVER SERVICES ON THE THAMES p. 34 – 35

This map represents heritage buildings, structures and listed green spaces adjacent to the Thames, and river services on the Thames based on third party data sources listed below;

UNESCO World heritage site data based on information from UNESCO (Accessed 05.06.2018); <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

Listed building or structure data based on information from Historic England (Accessed 08.06.2018); <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search?clearresults=True>

Listed park or garden data based on GIS information provided by the GLA showing listed parks or gardens within 500m from the Thames (24.04.2018)

River services data based on information from Transport for London, London's River Services map, 2018; <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/river-services-map.pdf>

Hampton Ferry service data based on information from Visit Richmond (Accessed 05.06.2018); <http://www.visitrichmond.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=3515070>

Hammertons Ferry service data based on information from Hammertons Ferry (Accessed 05.06.2018); <http://www.hammertonsferry.com/home/4573871055>

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE CONNECTIONS ALONG THE THAMES p.40 – 41

This map represents pedestrian and cycle connections and cultural infrastructure on and adjacent to the Thames based on third party data sources listed below;

Crossing data based on Publica fieldwork and desk based research.

Pedestrian routes data based on information from Transport for London (Accessed 05.06.18); <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/walking/top-walking-routes>

Cycle route data based on information from the Mayor's Transport Strategy, March 2018; <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>

Cultural infrastructure data based on GIS information provided by the GLA showing cultural infrastructure within 500m from the Thames (24.04.2018).

Sport and leisure facilities data based on information from the PLA (Accessed 05.06.18); <http://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/The-Thames-Vision/Thames-Vision-Interactive-Map>

and information from the Thames Landscape Strategy (2012); <http://thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/who-we-are/vision/the-review-of-the-thames-landscape-strategy/>

CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SPORTS/LEISURE ON THE THAMES

p.48 – 49

This map represents cultural infrastructure and sports/leisure on and adjacent to the Thames based on third party data sources listed below;

Cultural infrastructure data based on GIS information provided by the GLA showing cultural infrastructure within 500m from the Thames (24.04.2018). 'Creative workspace' illustrates developments with creative workspaces.

'Dance and theatre' illustrates theatre rehearsal space, theatre performance space and dance facilities. 'Music' illustrates music rehearsal space, music recording studio, music venue and music grassroots venue

Sport and leisure facilities data based on information from the PLA (Accessed 05.06.18); <http://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/The-Thames-Vision/Thames-Vision-Interactive-Map> and information from the Thames Landscape Strategy (2012); <http://thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/who-we-are/vision/the-review-of-the-thames-landscape-strategy/>

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