

Share Your Estuary Story

Press release

Thursday 16th July, 2020

What do you love most about your surroundings? And can you share your Estuary story?

People living across the Thames Estuary region are being called on to share their unique stories about what makes the Estuary so special, through photos, videos, poems and text.

Transformative culture-led economic growth programme Creative Estuary has launched a social media campaign to find the most inspiring, uplifting and creative perspectives of the area, from those who love it best.

Residents across the region - from Southend to Margate - are invited to contribute images, videos and words on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter using #MyEstuaryStory to help build an authentic picture of life along the Estuary.

Creative Estuary Project Director Emma Wilcox said: "As we tell the Thames Estuary's story and raise its visibility to the world, we want to put the people who live, work and learn along the river at the heart of our narrative.

"The Estuary has always been a place of inspiration and wonderful juxtapositions; it is both beautiful and gritty, peaceful and boisterous, rural and industrial.

"Through #MyEstuaryStory we want to give our diverse communities the opportunity to share their unique and diverse connections with the Estuary and tell us, in their own words, what makes it extraordinary.

"What is your town or community like? How would you describe it? What about it inspires you – the people, history, landscape, or is it the Estuary itself?"

Anyone living or working along the Estuary is welcome to submit original images, videos or text on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using #MyEstuaryStory and tagging their location.

As the recent COVID-19 restrictions have limited activity and travel, Creative Estuary is keen to hear from people who have rediscovered the region on their daily exercise during the pandemic lockdown, and can document the positive effect it has had on them and their families.

The Thames Estuary region stretches 60 miles from Essex across the coast of Kent, taking in the local authorities of Basildon, Canterbury, Castle Point, Dartford, Gravesham, Medway, Southend, Swale, Thanet and Thurrock.

The public submissions will provide a wealth of unique perspectives and visual content that showcases the Estuary, while also boosting local awareness of its creative growth plans.

Creative Estuary is an ambitious three-year project to transform North Kent and South Essex into one of the most exciting cultural hubs in the world. The programme is part of the Government-backed Thames Estuary Production Corridor, driving forward the creative and economic evolution of the region, and delivering new skills, qualifications, and apprenticeships across an area of 1.5million people.

For more information about Creative Estuary, visit www.creativeestuary.com, [Twitter @creativeestuary](https://twitter.com/creativeestuary) / [LinkedIn / creative-estuary](https://www.linkedin.com/company/creative-estuary/) / [Instagram @creativeestuary](https://www.instagram.com/creativeestuary)

For full details on the Creative Estuary programme and ambitions, visit <https://creativeestuary.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/07/Creative-Estuary-Press-Release-8th-July-2020-1.pdf>

NOTES FOR EDITORS

For further media information, images or interview requests, please email press@sineadhanna.com

About Creative Estuary

Launched in 2019, with an ambition to transform 60 miles of the Thames Estuary across Essex and Kent into one of the most exciting cultural hubs in the world, the £6.5m Creative Estuary programme will transform the visibility, identity and future of the region's creative production infrastructure, supporting more than 400 new jobs, delivering new skills, qualifications and apprenticeships for 300 people.

Stretching from Southend to Margate, the Thames Estuary is a region of untold creative potential. A network of fishing towns, heritage sites, imposing dockyards and post-industrial communities, it is home to some of the fastest growing regions in the UK and benefits from unprecedented levels of regeneration investment.

Creative Estuary is part of the Government-backed Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC) project, initiated by the South East Creative Economy Network and Greater London Authority. TEPC was recognised as a key part of the Estuary's future in the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission report, attracting investment from both The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

In early 2019 the University of Kent was awarded £4.3m from the DCMS Cultural Development Fund on behalf of the partners who include the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), Kent and Essex County Councils, the Greater London Authority, 11 local authority areas represented by Thames Gateway Kent Partnership and Opportunity South Essex, South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN), University of Essex, Locate in Kent and cultural organisations, Metal and Cement Fields.

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