

# T100

EXPLORE TALK CREATE

# Our River

1 - 31 May 2025

A free festival of exploring, talking, and creating along the Thames Estuary, in Thurrock and beyond. What will you discover?



KINETIKA  
DESIGN THAT MOVES



@T100Festival  
#T100OurRiver

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# DIVE INTO Our River

This May, T100 celebrates the Thames Estuary – Thurrock’s ever-changing gateway to the world. As we explore, talk, and create along its banks, what stories will we uncover? The clang of industry, the hum of wildlife, the rhythm of the tides – our river speaks.

But are we truly listening?

Faced with pollution, habitat loss, and the pressures of modern life, the Thames Estuary is at a turning point. How can we protect and restore this vital waterway for future generations?

We invite you to deepen your connection to the Thames Estuary and spark meaningful conversations about its past, present, and future.

What does the Thames mean to you? How can we make a difference together? Our River will take you on a journey through landscapes and conversations that bring Thurrock’s riverfront to life. Each event begins with a question, setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of the river and its significance.

**Explore hidden paths along the Thames, discovering places that tell a story.**

**Talk with your community – share your thoughts, memories, and ideas.**

**Create ... to honour the river, inspire action, and celebrate its significance.**

Our River is part of Beach of Dreams, Kinetika’s UK-wide coastal arts festival. Learn more [beachofdreams.org](http://beachofdreams.org)



## Beach of Dreams National Launch

### Unveiling Threads for Tomorrow and the Estuary Exchange

Saturday 3 May  
1pm – 5pm

What tales does our waste tell?

Join us for the launch of *Beach of Dreams*, a UK-wide coastal arts festival presented by Kinetika. This dynamic event celebrates the creativity, cultural heritage, and resilience of the Thames Estuary, featuring the artist commission *Threads for Tomorrow* in partnership with T100 – a powerful collaboration between Kinetika artists, Rahemur Rahman, Sarah Doyle, and sewing groups across the Estuary.

**Don't miss the action:** Begin your day with guided walks along the Thurrock Estuary, led by T100. Then, witness the unforgettable *Threads for Tomorrow* performance, featuring over 200 local performers blending dance and storytelling. Explore the Estuary Exchange, a lively marketplace filled with workshops, interactive installations, and opportunities to engage with cultural organisations and creators shaping the vibrant cultural landscape of the Thames Estuary.

## Join the morning walks

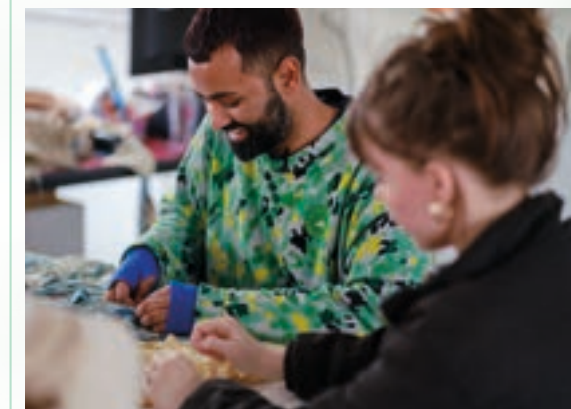
**Walk 1: What inspires the vision behind Beach of Dreams? A conversation with Artistic Director Ali Pretty**  
9:30am – 12:30pm

**Starting Point 1:** 9:30am, East Tilbury Train Station

**Starting Point 2:** 10:30am, Coalhouse Fort

**Walk 2: Tilbury Trail with Views of the Docks: How have the docklands shaped Tilbury's history and future?**  
11.30am – 12.30pm

**Starting point:** Tilbury Civic Square



Artist Rahemur Rahman and North Kent College students working on *Threads for Tomorrow*



**How to book**  
Visit [T100festival.co.uk](http://T100festival.co.uk)

Please be advised that individuals under the age of 16 are welcome but must be accompanied by an adult.



## Coastal Futures with T100 Young Ambassadors

Thursday 1 May  
4pm – 6pm

Starting point: Coalhouse Fort

Book via the school: Open to East Tilbury Primary School students, parents and carers.

The East Tilbury Primary T100 Young Ambassadors will take us on a guided walk near Coalhouse Fort, sharing their personal stories and connection to the local riverside. Discover why protecting these spaces is vital for future generations. After the walk, the whole school community is invited to enjoy a special presentation of the students' Coast Cards, made in collaboration with artist Lu Williams – unique, creative artworks that celebrate the Young Ambassadors' connection to the river with a QR code to three self-guided walking routes.

How can we protect our riversides for future generations?

## The Thames: The M25 of Its Time

Sunday 4 May  
1pm – 5pm

Starting point: Davy Down

Join Sue Yates, Chair of Thurrock Local History Society, for a walk along the ancient Pilgrim route from Davy Down to St Clement's West Thurrock. Discover historical gems along the way, including the 14-arch viaduct, Stifford Pumping Station, and St Clement's Church, where pilgrims once prayed before crossing the river to Canterbury. After the walk, enjoy refreshments, and a talk inside St Clement's Church.

How do the stories of the Pilgrim route resonate today?



Courtesy of Stephen Green

## VE80: Echoes of War

Thursday 8 May  
10:45m – 12:30pm

Starting point: Grays War Memorial

Following the VE80 service held at the War Memorial, join us for a creative journey through Grays Town Centre and the riverside, making stops along the way to explore the WW2 history and local stories linked to VE Day. Led by young artists from East Tilbury Primary School, we'll explore the town centre and the riverside. In partnership with Thurrock Museum, Thurrock Council, and artist Triggerbliss.

How has Thurrock's unique spot on the Thames shaped its mighty impact?



Courtesy of Thurrock Museum



## Meandering Monday: Our River Special

Monday 12 May  
10am – 12pm

Circular Route: A short loop of Purfleet-on-Thames.

No booking required, just turn up! Join us for a relaxed stroll through Purfleet-On-Thames, followed by tea and a chat hosted by friends Riverview at St Stephens Church. A perfect opportunity to explore the area, meet new people, and enjoy some conversation. Meandering Mondays take place on the second Monday of every month.

How can the river's flow and shifting tides inspire renewal?

## River & Roots: Explore the Natural Dye Garden

Saturday 17 May,  
11am – 3pm  
[Workshops only: 1:30pm onwards]

T100 Community Natural Dye Garden, High House Production Park

Immerse yourself in a day of creativity and nature at the T100 Community Garden where we nurture plants for natural dyes. Bring the whole family and a packed lunch for a hands-on experience as we weave fish from willow, scavenge for plants in the garden, and forage on a scenic walk to the nearby Willow Tree. You'll also create a beautiful solar dye jar to take home, infused with the vibrant hues of the garden.

How can the river provide for us?

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## T100 Young Ambassadors: Workshops and Walks

Tuesday 20 May – Friday 23 May

Book via the schools: Open to school students, parents and carers.

Join the T100 Young Ambassadors for a series of unique walks, exploring the Thames Estuary through activities and performances created and led by these young visionaries.

**Tuesday 20 May:**  
The Gateway Academy & Primary Free School

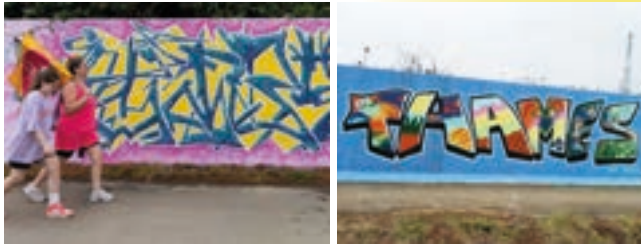
**Wednesday 21 May:**  
Lansdowne Primary

**Wednesday 21 May:**  
Tilbury Pioneer

**Thursday 22 May:**  
Deneholm Primary

**Thursday 22 May:**  
Stifford Clays Primary

**Friday 23 May:**  
Herringham Primary



## Graffiti Silks William Edwards Secondary

Thursday 22 May  
3:30pm – 6pm

Join us for the unveiling of striking graffiti silks, created in collaboration with Kinetika Founder and Artistic Director Ali Pretty, artist Sarah Doyle, mural artist Scotty Brave, and Young Ambassadors from William Edwards Secondary. This artistic response explores the ever-changing spirit of the river. Watch as the silks come to life in a powerful performance by school pupils, inspired by the river's movement. Discover the connection between Europe's longest graffiti wall and our stretch of the Thames.

Is the river alive?

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## Jacktars and Landlubbers: A 4-Day Journey Along the Estuary

Friday 23 May – Monday 26 May

Journey: Shoeburyness → The Wharf in Grays

Join us for an unforgettable 4-day journey through the Thames Estuary, where walkers and sailors move side by side, tracing the footsteps and wake of those who shaped this historic waterway.

From boat decks to riverbanks, Jacktars and Landlubbers will immerse you in the landscapes, industries, and communities that have thrived along the Thames. Explore historic routes, uncover maritime and industrial heritage, and hear the untold stories of the Jacktars (sailors) and Landlubbers (labourers) who built the estuary's rich history.

How does Thameside living connect land, river and sea?

Whether on foot or by boat, be part of this unique adventure and rediscover the Thames in a whole new way.

Continued →

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## Day 1: Friday 23 May

1pm – 6:30pm

**Route: Shoeburyness → Westcliff, via Southend Pier**

Kick off your journey at Shoeburyness, where the Thames meets the North Sea and history runs deep. Follow the shore past military remnants and shifting tides to Southend Pier, the world's longest pleasure pier, once a bustling hub for sailors and traders. Stroll its length, take in the vastness of the estuary, and enjoy a special performance on the pier from locals Fitz & Sons that echoes the river's rich past. Ending in Westcliff, with sweeping views over the water, you've traced the footsteps of Jacktars and Landlubbers – just the start of an unforgettable adventure.



## Day 2: Saturday 24 May

9am – 3pm

**Route: Westcliff → Benfleet via Old Leigh**

Step into the past as you leave Westcliff behind, following the shoreline to Old Leigh, a timeless fishing village where salt-worn boats, cockle sheds, and weathered taverns tell tales of hard graft and high tides. Wander its narrow lanes, soak up the briny air, and hear echoes of the Jacktars who once ruled these waters. A visit to the Leigh Heritage Centre offers a deeper dive into the village's rich maritime and fishing history.

From here, the path winds through salt marshes and creeks toward Benfleet, where the estuary's wild beauty meets its storied past – Viking battles, industrious boatyards, and the ever-present pull of the tide. Walkers on land will be joined by boats sailing parallel part of the way, moving in step with the tide, with support from Leigh Sailing Club and Thames Estuary Yacht Club cadets bringing land and water together once more.

## Day 3: Sunday 25 May

8:30am – 6pm

**Route: Benfleet → Thameside Nature Reserve via Pitsea**

Leaving Benfleet, the route shifts from estuary industry to wild, open landscapes. Skirt the edges of Pitsea and across into Thurrock, where marshland meets modern life, before stepping into the sweeping expanse of Thameside Nature Reserve. Once land claimed by industry, now a thriving habitat, this stretch offers a different view of the estuary – teeming with birdlife, wind-rippled grasses, and panoramic river views. The day will finish with a specially-devised Morris dancing performance from locals Hands Around and a conservation talk by Thameside team members.

## Day 4: Monday 26 May

8am – 4pm

**Route: Stanford-le-Hope → The Wharf at Grays**

**A Bit of a Do: 4pm – 8pm**

From Stanford-le-Hope, trace the river's industrial backbone – past docks, shipyards, and towering cranes – where the Thames hums with the energy of trade and toil. As the estuary narrows, history and industry give way to celebration at The Wharf at Grays, where we wrap up the journey with "A Bit of a Do" – an evening of live roots, blues, and singer-songwriters, all paying tribute to the river in song. A fitting finale to four days of walking, sailing, and storytelling along this mighty waterway.

Book your  
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Courtesy of William Palmers Trust



Captured by Thurrock Youth Cabinet Member Daniel

## Thurrock Youth Cabinet: Fort to Thought Walk

Tuesday 27 May  
1:30pm – 4:30pm

Starting point:  
Coalhouse Fort

Join the Thurrock Youth Cabinet for an exciting walk between two iconic forts – Coalhouse Fort and Tilbury Fort – as we explore the area’s history and the future of these vital riverside spaces. Along the way, we’ll discuss how we can protect and preserve the places we love. End the walk at Tilbury Fort, sharing stories and insights about the journey.

Will this place still be here when you return as an adult?

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## Made in the Mardyke: Finale Performance and Picnic

Saturday 31 May  
10:30am – 2:30pm

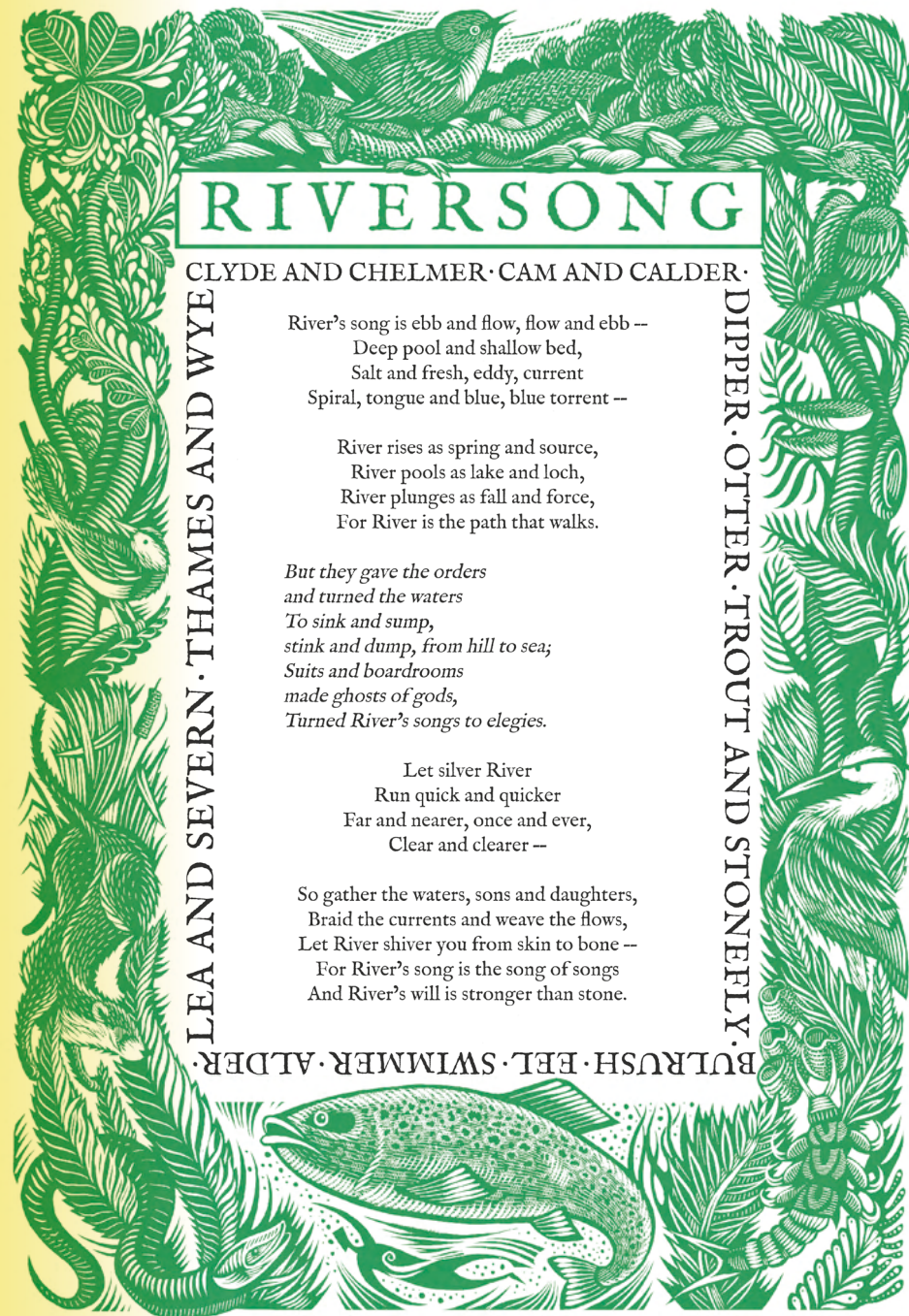
Starting point: Chafford  
Hundred Train Station

Celebrate the culmination of the Made in the Mardyke project with a special finale performance and a community picnic. Join us for a walk from Chafford Hundred Train Station to the serene Field of Peace, where artist Charlie Fox will guide us through a thought-provoking performance. Bring your picnic and enjoy a relaxed afternoon with fellow participants, reflecting on the river’s vitality and the power of art to connect us to nature.

What hybrid creatures might emerge in the Mardyke’s post-natural future?



Credit: Creatures by Aygalades River, Marseille, mitrcollective (2024)



# RIVERSONG

CLYDE AND CHELMER · CAM AND CALDER ·

LEA AND SEVERN · THAMES AND WYE

DIPPER · OTTER · TROUT AND STONEFLY ·

BURRUSH · EEL · SWIMMER · ALDER

River’s song is ebb and flow, flow and ebb --  
Deep pool and shallow bed,  
Salt and fresh, eddy, current  
Spiral, tongue and blue, blue torrent --

River rises as spring and source,  
River pools as lake and loch,  
River plunges as fall and force,  
For River is the path that walks.

*But they gave the orders  
and turned the waters  
To sink and sump,  
stink and dump, from hill to sea;  
Suits and boardrooms  
made ghosts of gods,  
Turned River’s songs to elegies.*

Let silver River  
Run quick and quicker  
Far and nearer, once and ever,  
Clear and clearer --

So gather the waters, sons and daughters,  
Braid the currents and weave the flows,  
Let River shiver you from skin to bone --  
For River’s song is the song of songs  
And River’s will is stronger than stone.

Our fate flows with that of rivers, and always has.

This is Riversong, a “broadside ballad” which protests the slow death of rivers in the UK and around the world -- and sings for their revival. The art is by Nick Hayes and the words are by Robert Macfarlane.

# Monthly walks

Join our regular walks programme from June to September 2025:

## June

### Meandering Monday

**Monday 9 June, 10am – 12pm**

See Art in Grays Town Centre – led by Mike Ostler. Starting from the Foyer of Grays Thameside and finishing at the Grays Town Park Cafe.

### Weekend Trail

**Saturday 7 June, 10am – 2pm**

Pride walk from Purfleet to Grays with Thurrock LGBTQ+ Community Network followed by picnic.

## July

### Meandering Monday

**Monday 14 July, 10am – 12pm**

Chafford Gorge. Starting and ending at the Angel Cafe, Grays RM16 6RW

### Weekend Trail

**Saturday 5 July, 10am – 1pm**

Walk the Line, art trail East London. Starting at Stratford Station, London E15 1AZ and ending at Canning Town Station.

## September

### Meandering Monday

**Monday 8 September, 10am – 12pm**

Langdon Hills Circular, starting and ending at the Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Discovery Centre, SS16 6EB.

### Weekend Trail

**Sunday 28 September, 10am – 1pm**

River Rom, starting at ending at Eastbrookend Discovery Centre, Romford, RM7 OSS

# Thank you

Ali Pretty / Arts Outburst / Bata Heritage Centre / Beach of Dreams / Benfleet Yacht Club / Bug Life / Charlie Fox / Coalhouse Fort / Dazzle / East Tilbury Primary / Find your Active Thurrock / Fitz & Sons / Gateway Learning Community / Goodnight Crow / Hands Around Morris / Horndon Woolmarket / InspiralLondon / Jacci Todd / Kinetika / Leigh Heritage Centre / Leigh Sailing Club / Lesley Robinson / Lu Williams / Mark Massey / Mitr Collective / Nature's Rainbow / Pam and Jen of Music Mondays / Purfleet on Thames Community Forum / Ray Rahman / Riverview Charitable Trust / Scotty Brave / Sarah Doyle / St Clements, West Thurrock / Southend Council / Southend Pier / Start Thurrock / Thames Chase / Thames Estuary Yacht Club / Thameside Nature Discovery Park / The Wharf, Grays / Thurrock CVS / Thurrock Council / Thurrock LGBTQ+ network / Thurrock Local History Society / Thurrock Museum / Thurrock Youth Cabinet / Thurrock Young Carers / Tilbury Forum / Tilbury on the Thames Trust / Tilbury Riverside Project / TriggerBliss / U-Turnships / WECET / Wellness Walks

And a huge, huge thank you to all our community members including our volunteers, Young Ambassadors, creators and supporters who inspire us continuously and without whom we couldn't do what we do.

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