



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister
Creating sustainable communities



Creating sustainable communities: Delivering Greenspace in the Thames Gateway





Keith Hill

Delivering greenspace in the Thames Gateway

The Government is committed to improving the quality, variety and management of greenspace in the Thames Gateway. We plan to provide better access to public spaces for new and existing residents to enjoy and to value. Through the delivery of sustainable communities we will help rectify neglect and create a positive image of the Thames Gateway as a place where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

In January 2004 the Government set out its vision for greenspace in the Thames Gateway in *Greening the Gateway*. This contained two key objectives:

- that a network of varied and well-managed greenspace should be the setting for new and existing residential and commercial areas;
- that the landscape should be regarded as functional green infrastructure, recognising the wide range of benefits from healthy recreation, to wildlife protection and enhancement, to flood risk management.

No one organisation can deliver these objectives on its own. In February 2005, we published the Greening the Gateway Implementation Plan, which set out the roles of Government, and its Agencies and gave a broad delivery framework for local authorities, local regeneration partnerships, private sector developers and voluntary groups.

This is a long-term project, but excellent progress has already been made in delivering cleaner, safer, greener communities and we are starting to see some real sustainable benefits. ODPM will continue to work with partners to ensure that the environment is at the heart of planning for growth in the Thames Gateway.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

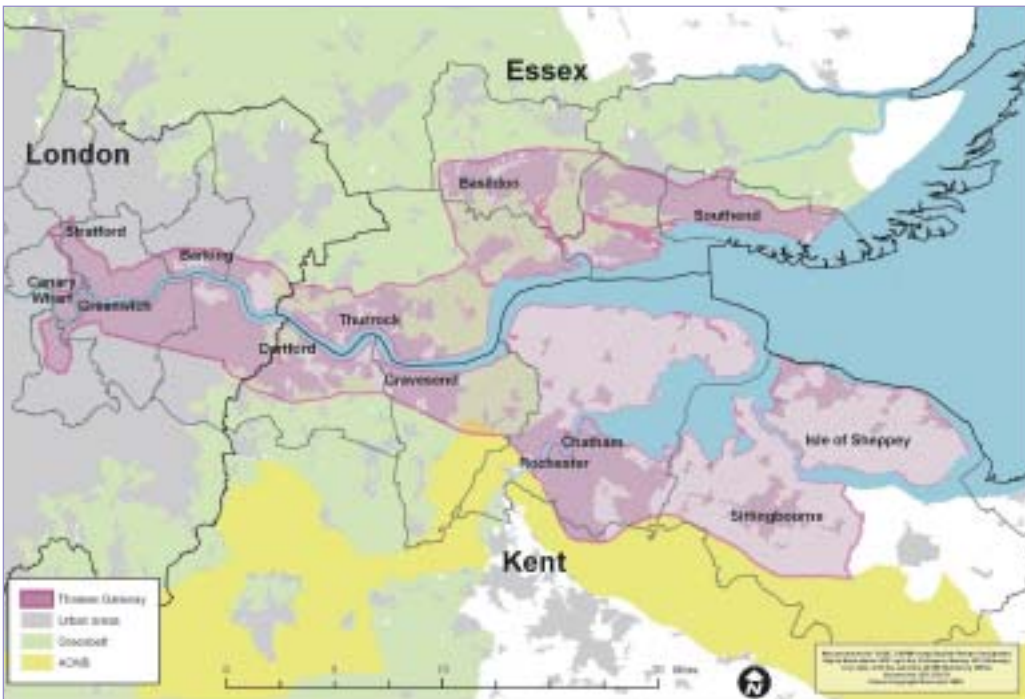
Minister for the Thames Gateway, ODPM

Our investment so far

ODPM is providing nearly £20m of Government funding for major projects across the region that will create and enhance valuable greenspace resources for both new and existing communities in the Thames Gateway.

Projects are being delivered in partnership with a broad range of organisations, including our sponsored agencies (such as Groundwork and CABI Space), local authorities, voluntary organisations and the Thames Gateway Partnerships. Future funding will be allocated in line with local regeneration frameworks, drawn up by the ODPM funded local regeneration partnerships.

The following examples highlight the projects that ODPM has funded in the Thames Gateway so far.



Investment in London

- £3.5m of ODPM funding is supporting flagship ecological and leisure resources on either side of the Thames. These projects include the restoration of Erith and Crayford Marshes, with links to Dartford Marshes, and the development of the London Riverside Conservation Park at Rainham Marshes, a Green Grid flagship project.
- ODPM is also providing £1m towards environmental enhancements to the River Roding at Barking, which will include new walkways and cycleways to provide access to the river for local communities.



Crayford Marsh

Investment in Essex

- £2m from the Thames Gateway programme fund has been allocated for a 74 hectare conservation site at Nevendon Nature reserve in Basildon.
- In another part of the Marshes at Rainham, ODPM has funded the RSPB reserve to the tune of just under £1m. This is an important ecological and leisure asset for South Essex and the project will ensure the protection of the site for posterity. The aim is to increase public access and to provide a high quality environmental and educational facility.
- ODPM is contributing £5m to the development of a Green Grid strategy to improve the quality of the urban and rural environment of South Essex. By linking green spaces and making enhancements, the Green Grid will create new, attractive and accessible environments.



Rainham Marshes

Investment in Kent

- A £4.65m package of environmental improvements in North Kent includes investment in “green grid” projects at Swanscombe Heritage Park, Darenth Valley and Shorne Woods Country Park.
- Ranscombe Farm Country Park, which borders the Thames Gateway to the west of Rochester, has secured £665,000 funding from ODPM as part of the North Kent funding package, enabling the development of six kilometres of new footpath and a new car park. Ranscombe Farm is now able to provide an attractive and functional ‘gateway’ to the countryside as part of the North Kent Green Grid.



Ranscombe Farm



Thames Barrier Park

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