

# TIDAL THAMES HABITAT BANK

**THE UK'S FIRST INTERTIDAL HABITAT BANK -  
IN THE HEART OF LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST.**



# WHY CHOOSE THE TIDAL THAMES HABITAT BANK?



**200+**

Intertidal off-site units  
available at our first site



**1<sup>ST</sup>**

Intertidal habitat  
bank in the UK



**PLANNED  
EXPANSION**

Into Kent and Essex

The Port of London Authority is the landowner of 95m of tidal riverbed and foreshore. A leader in intertidal conservation and habitat creation, the PLA offers high quality, high-distinctiveness BNG units in the heart of London.

- Over 200 intertidal off-site units available at our first site in Bexley
- The first intertidal habitat bank in the UK
- Units available in London with expansion into Kent and Essex planned
- We cater for medium and large volume requests
- We maximise biodiversity impact through focusing on interdependent habitat types

## WHY PARTNER WITH THE PLA?

- Landscape scale projects in the heart of London
- Specialist team working on intertidal habitats
- Robust monitoring and high level of regulatory control over risks
- Unlike most habitat banks who lease land, we own our land and will continue to manage our habitats for longer than 30 years
- We are a credible and historic organisation, created by an act of parliament. We will be here as long as there is a tidal Thames



# INTERTIDAL MUDFLATS

Intertidal mudflats are the wide, flat areas of fine sediment that are covered at high tide and exposed at low tide. They may look quiet, but they are buzzing with life beneath the surface. They are critical but nationally scarce habitats in the UK and support a range of wildlife and ecosystem services.

## PACKED WITH HIDDEN WILDLIFE

Mudflats support an incredible abundance of creatures living within the sediment including worms, amphipods and bivalves. These animals recycle nutrients, mix sediments, and indicate ecosystem health.

## ESSENTIAL FEEDING GROUNDS FOR BIRDS

Thousands of migratory and wintering birds depend on mudflats as rich feeding grounds. Worms, shellfish, and snails provide vital energy during long migrations or cold winters.

## NURSERY HABITAT FOR FISH

Shallow, food-rich mudflats act as nursery areas for species like plaice, giving juvenile fish a safe place to grow.

## NATURAL COASTAL PROTECTION

Mudflats absorb wave energy, helping to reduce coastal erosion and protect shorelines—benefits that are increasingly valued in climate-resilient planning.

### NCA & LPA

Greater Thames Estuary /  
London Borough of Bexley

### UNITS AVAILABLE

198 BU (38.6ha)

### TYPES OF UNIT

Intertidal mudflats

### UNIT PRICE

£66k per unit, plus VAT

### MONITORING

Secured by Conservation  
Covenant with RSK Wilding



# SALTMARSH

Saltmarshes sit slightly higher up the shore than mudflats. When vegetation takes root in the mud it creates one of the UK's most productive habitats.

## INCREDIBLE CARBON STORES

Saltmarshes lock away large amounts of carbon in their soils and can store it for centuries. This makes them powerful natural allies in tackling climate change.

## FLOOD AND EROSION PROTECTION

Vegetation slows down waves and tidal flows, helping to reduce storm impacts and tidal flooding. Their natural capacity to trap sediment also helps build elevation over time, keeping pace with sea-level rise when healthy.

## VITAL RESTING AND ROOSTING AREAS

Birds use saltmarsh to rest when mudflats are covered by high tide, making the two habitats interdependent and essential for healthy estuarine ecosystems.

### NCA & LPA

Greater Thames Estuary /  
London Borough of Bexley

### UNITS AVAILABLE

4 BU (1.2ha)

### TYPES OF UNIT

Saltmarsh

### UNIT PRICE

£125k per unit, plus VAT

### MONITORING

Secured by Conservation  
Covenant with RSK Wilding



# WORKING WITH THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

The Port of London Authority is offering access to the UK's first intertidal habitat bank, built on four pillars:

The Port of London Authority is a historic agency, established in 1909 as the **landowner of the riverbed and foreshore of the tidal River Thames**. Unlike other habitat banks who lease land, we own the 95-mile stretch of the Thames from Teddington on the border of Surrey, through London, Kent and Essex and out to the North Sea.

We are **trusted, credible and here for the long-term**: given our authority is granted by Parliament, we will be here for as long as there is a tidal River Thames.

We are the UK's biggest port and have long-standing and successful **partnerships with our customers ranging from multi-national global businesses; to small, local providers**. We understand and enable their commercial objectives and work to help them achieve their aims. Given our status as a trust port, we are a commercial business but run as a not for dividend. We are experienced in understanding, navigating and helping our customers in a complex regulatory risk landscape.

We are **recognised leaders in intertidal conservation** and habitat creation. We are a trusted authority with established and respected environmental credibility and long-term ambitions for improving the tidal Thames.

We bring together credibility, longevity, experience in supporting business customers, and leadership in conservation.



# OUR EXPERIENCE AND TEAM

We are leaders in intertidal habitat conservation and have a long track record of improving and managing biodiversity on the tidal Thames. Our experience includes landscape scale improvements to saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats. We are a trusted and credible organisation, having also led government-funded projects on BNG.

Our team is made up of ecologists, hydrographers and civil engineers who specialise in working in the tidal Thames. This means we create habitat restoration schemes that result in tangible uplifts in biodiversity.

## THE TEAM

### **Grace Rawnsley – Director of Sustainability**

Grace leads the environmental division at the Port of London Authority, as well as being a member of the Executive Committee. An ecologist specialising in river ecosystems, she has wide ranging experience across a range of specialisms from biodiversity, water quality, climate adaptation and net zero transition. She is the main contact for BNG enquiries.

### **Kelda Hudson – Ecology Technical Advisor**

Kelda leads the technical element of our BNG programme as our in-house ecologist. She specialises in planning ecology and has deep experience working for local authorities and organisations assessing planning applications.

### **Mark Collier – Senior Civil Engineer**

Mark is a Chartered Civil Engineer with a track record in the safe and successful delivery of complex marine and riverside infrastructure projects, from concept through to delivery. He brings a safety-first, environmentally conscious and solutions-led approach to BNG initiatives in marine environments.





## **CASE STUDY:** **WEST THURROCK MARSHES**

West Thurrock Lagoon & Marshes is a SSSI partly within PLA ownership. The site is designated for its littoral sediment habitats, which support important aggregations of non-breeding birds. These features were identified as being in unfavourable condition when last surveyed.

We restored 600m of saltmarsh habitats with natural bioengineering solutions, native plants & brushwood fascines, to prevent further erosion and allow accretion of sediment. The brushwood fascines are biodegradable and allow water levels to rise and recede unimpeded, depositing sediment and providing a suitable environment for vegetation to establish.

Fish passes were incorporated into the design to ensure that the saltmarsh continues to be used as a nursery and refuge habitat for smaller and juvenile fish. Plug planting of arrowgrass and sea aster aimed to stimulate the establishment of saltmarsh pioneer species.



If you are a developer exploring options to purchase biodiversity units from the Port of London Authority's Habitat Bank, please reach out to us for an initial discussion. You can contact us on [environment@pla.co.uk](mailto:environment@pla.co.uk).

Please include "Biodiversity Units Enquiry – [Your Site Name]" in the subject line.

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