



# EBBSFLEET GARDEN CITY

Cultural Infrastructure Prospectus



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**“WE ARE WORKING WITH RESIDENTS, PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO HELP FACILITATE CREATIVITY AT EVERY LEVEL”**

**Simon Dudley**  
Chair of Ebbfleet Development Corporation

# An Introduction From The Chair



"As Chair of EDC, I am committed to ensuring that Ebbsfleet Garden City is a great place to live, work and visit, offering a variety of things to do and places to go for our residents from the early stages of development. We have been delighted to work with our partners at DCMS, Arts Council England, and Creative Estuary to explore opportunities for arts and culture to contribute to our ambitions for the Garden City to be a forward looking, inclusive place, and a focus for creative industries within the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

We are working with residents, partners and stakeholders to help facilitate creativity at every level: through provision of community infrastructure; supporting community projects and events; and creating the right conditions, including workspace, for cultural and creative businesses to thrive here. We welcome the cultural and creative industries to Ebbsfleet to help us shape the identity of a 21st Century sustainable and vibrant Garden City."



**Simon Dudley**

Chair of Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

## Endorsements



"Arts Council England has long supported the focus of Ebbsfleet Development Corporation on creative and cultural development within their plans for the new town. Ebbsfleet Garden City presents an exciting opportunity at the heart of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, and we are pleased to welcome the approach of this infrastructure report with its emphasis on both community-led collaboration and global ambition."



**Sir Nicholas Serota CH**

Chair, Arts Council England



"It's easy to see the vision behind the Ebbsfleet Cultural prospectus, it's about aspiration and realising a place where individuals and families can live and thrive – it clearly offers unique advantages to businesses, its proximity to London, excellent transport links, and the River Thames itself – a hub for the import and export of the raw material for creative output... Ideas."



**Ray Mia**

Private sector Board Lead for The Digital Estuary & The Production Corridor - Thames Estuary Growth Board



"We are very proud to have supported the development of the cultural and creative sectors in both Ebbsfleet and the wider Thames Estuary region through the Cultural Development Fund. We know that a vibrant cultural offer can boost local growth, increase visitor numbers, foster talent, and attract investment, and this prospectus sets out how Ebbsfleet will excel in all of these ways."



**Emma Squire CBE**

Director for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

# Introduction

Ebbsfleet Garden City is the ideal place to establish or expand your creative business. A sustainable community set within a rich and varied landscape, Ebbsfleet Garden City is a smaller, greener, healthier, and walkable place that is no less connected – both physically and digitally – to some of Europe’s largest markets for content, capital, and creative talent. We have the space, infrastructure, and support services to suit creative businesses of any scale – from the freelancer and start-up to established businesses looking for new or additional premises in an exciting environment. Ebbsfleet has an ambitious vision and a long term landlord that appreciates the value of creativity. We are inviting cultural organisations, creative businesses, artists, and freelancers to join a fast-growing community of experiential and digital innovators.



# Ebbsfleet Garden City

Ebbsfleet Garden City will be the first new Garden City for 100 years.

Up to 15,000 new homes, a vibrant mixed-use city centre, two secondary and eight primary schools, seven city parks and a range of community and leisure facilities are planned across four new urban districts by 2035.

Building on a striking, post-industrial landscape of riverbanks and chalk cliffs, Ebbsfleet Garden City will be a healthy and dynamic place of active citizenship, inclusive growth, and seamless connection to green space and nature.

The Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) was established in 2015 to deliver the Garden City, which brings together the four development areas of Ebbsfleet Central, Swanscombe Peninsula, Northfleet Riverfront, and Whitecliffe, as well as embracing the

existing communities of Swanscombe and Northfleet. EDC is backed by government to forward fund the infrastructure and invest in growing communities. Ebbsfleet Garden City assets will eventually find a home with Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust, a charitable landlord with a vision for long-term stewardship of land and facilities which will support the growth of engaged, empowered, and cohesive communities.

Residents, workers, and visitors will enjoy a rich arts, culture and leisure scene that is co-created with partners and participants – a place of things to do, as much as things to see. A place in which culture is conceived, produced, and shared with communities on-site, off-site, and online.

## Development Timeline



	New Homes (number of)	Commercial & Leisure (sqm) *	Community & Schools (sqm)	Residents (numbers of) **
Development completed up to 2021	2,300	8,586	9,500	5,500
Development for completion by 2025	5,000	38,500	40,000	12,000
Development potential by 2035	13,000	837,000	74,000	31,000

\* Excluding The London Resort  
\*\* Numbers are approximate



# The Opportunity

## The potential for arts and culture in Ebbsfleet is extraordinary.

It is a strong location, with easy connectivity to London and Europe, ambitious partners, and a supportive funding, planning and development climate, surrounded by a backdrop of chalk cliffs sloping toward wide open riverbanks.

Ebbsfleet Garden City sits at the heart of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, a regional partnership – stretching from East London through the Kent and Essex coasts – that promotes investment in creative and cultural production.

With the support of Creative Estuary, a consortium of public sector and cultural organisations dedicated to delivering the Production Corridor vision, the region will be transformed into one of the world's most exciting cultural production hubs. A strong network of anchoring facilities exists in places such as Chatham, Thurrock, Purfleet, and Dagenham spanning film, artists and makers, digital and creative media, theatre and dance, with additional sites and opportunities being developed. Ebbsfleet is positioned to deliver significant new production facilities within the estuary while joining a growing ecosystem which will create opportunities across the creative industries.



## THE REGION WILL BE TRANSFORMED INTO ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST EXCITING CULTURAL PRODUCTION HUBS

**Image:** An aerial view of Ebbsfleet Garden City







Cultural organisations and creative individuals have easy access to large markets in London, Europe, and the rest of Kent. It is just 19-minutes by High Speed Rail to London St. Pancras International from Ebbsfleet International Station, which also has direct connections to Paris, Brussels, Bruges, and Amsterdam.

Ebbsfleet is the ideal environment to accommodate organisations of any size to operate in different ways, at multiple levels – the chance to be hyperlocal and purpose-led, while still accessing a global market. It is a place that allows collaborative innovation with local communities that can still reach audiences at a regional, even international scale - a place where product and programming is co-created with the community, refined through experiment and collaboration, and promoted worldwide through physical experiences and digital reach.



**EBBSFLEET IS THE IDEAL ENVIRONMENT TO BE HYPERLOCAL AND PURPOSE-LED, WHILE STILL ACCESSING A GLOBAL MARKET**

Image: Hip hop workshop at Cloud9 Festival 2021



The vision for culture in Ebbsfleet is backed by the Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust, which ensures long-term community involvement in the stewardship of land and assets and universal access to facilities, guided by cultural and community development outcomes and accountability measures. Ebbsfleet Development Corporation and Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust are together creating a place for people to fully engage with arts and culture – where every plan and policy is geared to support ‘active Ebbsfleeters’ who are encouraged and enabled to connect with cultural programming as active participants.



**THE EBBSFLEET  
GARDEN CITY TRUST  
ENSURES LONG-  
TERM COMMUNITY  
INVOLVEMENT IN  
THE STEWARDSHIP  
OF ASSETS AND  
UNIVERSAL ACCESS  
TO FACILITIES**

Image: Puppets with Guts at Cloud9 Festival 2021

# Why Here?

Ebbsfleet has always been a crossroads.

It is the gateway between London and Kent, between Great Britain and Continental Europe, between city and country, industry, and ecology.



## A GATEWAY BETWEEN THE REAL AND THE VIRTUAL

This crossroads identity has defined the history and heritage of Ebbsfleet, as well as its current form and function. That story is written into the archaeology of Anglo Saxon settlements and Roman roads, in tales of travelling saints and Norman conquest, from Elizabethan harbours and Georgian villages all the way through the Industrial Revolution and the modern marvel of High Speed One. It is distinguished by the confluence of road, river and rail and the changing relationship between people, nature,

and technology. Ebbsfleet Garden City is the next chapter of that story.

Through investment in next-generation production and data infrastructure, and the co-location of cultural, creative, and technical talent, Ebbsfleet will connect the local and global, physical product and digital reach, personal experience, and mass participation.

It has the scope, the creative energy and technical skill to be a gateway between the real and the virtual – a coming-together of access and engagement in physical and digital space, finding new forms and expressions to enrich our physical-digital hybrid lives. This is a role that has become increasingly important since the Covid-19 pandemic, where culture, civic engagement, and active participation is carried out in equal measures on- and off-line. Even the slowest adaptors have reckoned with the need for both digital and physical programming – where each is different, but of equal importance.

Ebbsfleet is a place of soul and inspiration. A proud industrial heritage of open quarries and man-made canyons is the canvas for re-wilding

projects and a playground for exploration of history, landscape, and the natural environment. Lush green fields and tidal waters are punctuated by docklands, shipping cranes, disused kilns, and cliffside tunnels. Artists find inspiration in this flourishing scenery and rich heritage. Children have space to roam and play. Everyone is able and encouraged to participate in its planning, design, and stewardship.

For cultural organisations that have made a priority of people and community, health, and environment, Ebbsfleet is the ideal location. It is – as it has always been – a gateway and a crossroads, connecting people, places, and ideas.



## EBBSFLEET WILL CONNECT THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL





## Blueprint Arts



"We as an organisation have grown since moving to Ebbsfleet three years ago and are so excited about the future and opportunity here. I had an inkling that Ebbsfleet would be a fantastic place to establish Blueprint Arts and develop new projects with the existing and emerging communities. I have now worked with Ebbsfleet Development Corporation on a number of projects - they are an incredibly supportive organisation, both concerned with our organisational needs and the needs and desires of the local community. All of our contacts in the local creative network - community centres, schools, artists, cultural organisations - are friendly, approachable and many go above and beyond to support the communities they work with."

**Laura Kavanagh**

Artistic Director, Blueprint Arts



## DEVELOPING NEW PROJECTS



# Why Now?



## Now is the time for investment in Ebbsfleet.

The pandemic has revolutionised the ways in which people engage with and participate in cultural activities. It has accelerated consumer trends that combine the intimate, visceral experience of 'the real', with the convenience and connectivity of the digital world. Digital identities are more important than ever to participate in civic life and join new communities through social media platforms and virtual worlds.

From theatres and cinemas, through museums and galleries, to yoga studios and teaching kitchens, workplaces and schools, we have learned that it is possible to engage people at a familiar, community scale in physical space, while reaching a limitless audience online. It is the dance company launching a digital education platform, the music venue that makes every gig a streaming event, or the explosive growth of artists producing content in their homes for distribution and sale through social media.

Ebbsfleet is the place for cultural organisations of all types to push the boundaries of a new paradigm, defining a new model of engagement. A place in which the borders between arts and culture and new technology are eroded by putting artists, creatives, and technologists in a shared environment, confronting common problems and finding new opportunities.



## THE PLACE FOR CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS OF ALL TYPES TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES, DEFINING A NEW MODEL OF ENGAGEMENT

It has the spaces and places, the people and skills, the hardware and software, and – most important – stakeholders with the appetite and drive to realise this vision. Ebbsfleet Development Corporation is delivering the cultural and community facilities that will support and empower residents and workers, creating the interdisciplinary environment that encourages collaboration between different artforms and industries.

Ebbsfleet can be an exciting next-generation cultural production base, with Creative Estuary driving the vision for a Production Corridor and the Thames Estuary Growth Board backing regional development and infrastructure plans. Together with our pipeline of co-produced programmes and co-designed spaces, this coordinated approach sets the scene for a cultural hub of substance, scale, and quality.

We welcome the participation of partners that share this ambition.

We want to work with creative talent and cultural operators who thrive in a collaborative and innovative environment – leaders in the principles of co-creation who take inspiration from the input and involvement of their neighbours, stakeholders, and communities.





## Cohesion Plus



## NEW OPPORTUNITIES



"We are very excited about the new opportunities available for creatives and cultural organisations in Ebbsfleet. If you consider the geographical location, the diversity of the area and the support on offer from not just EDC, but also community and local authority partners it is an ideal location for organisations like ours to develop and thrive."

**Gurvinder Sandher**

Artistic Director, Cohesion Plus

Images: Cohesion Plus

# Progress & Plans



The civic and cultural infrastructure is already in development.

Ebbsfleet is a healthy and dynamic place, with seven major parks and green corridors that will run throughout the Garden City, combining formal and informal recreation space linked by a network of walking and cycling routes. A health and education campus is planned, along with a vibrant city centre, with Ebbsfleet International Station as a focal point. A fast track shuttle gives every neighbourhood easy access to Ebbsfleet International, Bluewater, other residential villages and business centres, while high-speed fibre broadband and wireless networks throughout keep businesses and residents connected.

Residents are diverse and talented, attracted by Ebbsfleet's promise of equal access to urban amenities and natural environment. With a

varied and characterful landscape, people are already reclaiming green spaces and getting involved in growing and garden projects, participating in horticulture and food production and taking an active role in the stewardship of public spaces.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation has committed to bring joy and inspiration to their residents' lives through participation in 'everyday arts and culture', seeding cultural programmes with meaningful civic involvement and establishing a creative partnership to lead cultural programming in the city. Meanwhile uses to build up cultural infrastructure and activities will test new projects and markets, support businesses to grow, and create affordable and inclusive spaces for culture.

Ebbsfleet neighbourhoods are built around co-located civic infrastructure which provides flexibility and adaptability to local needs and preferences, integrating cultural uses in community facilities. This brings together diverse but complementary uses, such as health and performing arts, religious spaces and community halls, co-working space and studios.

Cultural facilities will support creative businesses to experiment and innovate, building on a local network of skilled

collaborators in co-located business hubs, allowing for planned and serendipitous connections between different disciplines, artforms, uses and users. Our spaces will foster a collegial, silo-busting environment that invites people with complementary skills to conceive new product and programming that is finely tuned – as needed – for local, regional, national, and global markets.

These hubs are the nucleus of a cluster of creative individuals, businesses, and

studios, who are accustomed to working with each other, their stakeholders, and the community. It is a multi-disciplinary environment, that is not defined by artform or industry, but unified by a collaborative culture. Traditional art forms like music, dance and visual art inventively combining with coders, filmmakers, and technologists to continuously experiment with new forms of engagement and participation.



**A COLLEGIAL, SILO-BUSTING ENVIRONMENT THAT INVITES PEOPLE WITH COMPLEMENTARY SKILLS TO CONCEIVE NEW PRODUCTS**





# Cement Fields

WELCOMING, SUPPORTIVE AND  
OPEN TO COLLABORATION



"Cement Fields was drawn to Ebbsfleet Garden City to explore the particular histories and the pioneering, utopian spirit of the Garden City movement as a context for our work with artists. There's a great deal for artists to explore in Ebbsfleet - the extraordinary landscape and the rich, layered industrial and social histories. All of our partners have been extremely welcoming, supportive, and open to collaboration and it has been an excellent place to make things happen!"

**Sue Jones**

Director, Cement Fields

**Left image:** Ania Bas, A New Career In A New Town, 2018. Photo: Nathania Hartley

**Top right image:** Ania Bas, Gen Z trip to OOMK, 2019. Photo: Jane Packham

**Bottom right image:** Shepherd Manyika, Do you have Snapchat? Mapping The Fleet, 2021. Photo: Samuel Taylor



# What Next!

GET IN TOUCH TO FIND OUT  
MORE ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES  
AT EBBSFLEET GARDEN CITY,  
AND HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE  
OF THE FIRST NEW GARDEN  
CITY IN A CENTURY.

Contact the placemaking team on:  
[contactebbsfleetdc@ebbsfleetdc.org.uk](mailto:contactebbsfleetdc@ebbsfleetdc.org.uk)

r c k a

**FOURTH  
STREET**  
A PLACE CAPITAL GROUP COMPANY

 **EBBSFLEET  
GARDEN CITY**

 **Ebbsfleet**  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**CREATIVE  
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Supported using public funding by

  
Department for  
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ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

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**EBBSFLEET IS COMMITTED TO  
BRINGING JOY AND INSPIRATION  
TO PEOPLE'S LIVES THROUGH  
PARTICIPATION**

Peace Poem light installation by Emergency Exit  
Arts at Ebbsfleet Winter Gathering, 2020.