

## THAMES ESTUARY ENVOY KATE WILLARD HONOURED IN QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY LIST

**12 October 2020:** Kate Willard, the Thames Estuary Envoy, has been recognised for her contribution to Transport and the Economy. Commenting on the honour, Kate said: "This is such a wonderful honour and I still can't quite believe it's happened. Like really!

"I've loved my jobs helping to make brilliant infrastructure, growth and creative stuff happen. The best bits are always the amazing businesses and dedicated, talented and passionate people you get to work with. And I'm genuinely lucky enough to work with some of the nicest and best.

"I understand this honour recognises my services to Transport and the Economy. But nothing comes without teams, so I'd like to thank and acknowledge all those fabulous people who have worked so hard and so tirelessly with me to help make good stuff happen. Thank you lovelies. I share this terrific privilege with you."

Since December 2019, Kate has been the driving force behind ambitious plans to transform the Thames Estuary. As Thames Estuary Envoy and chair of the Thames Estuary Growth Board she is overseeing plans that could add more than £100 billion to the UK economy by 2050.

In addition, she is senior advisor to Stobart Group and an independent consultant working on a diverse portfolio of infrastructure and growth projects.

Born in Hertfordshire, and now based mainly in Cumbria, Kate has had a colourful career with roles across Europe.

She went to drama college in Bexley, and is a trained actress and director. She is passionate about the arts and an expert on the role of creative industries as a catalyst for growth.

Kate has lived and worked in Hungary, France and Belgium working as an independent regeneration expert with the European Commission on major transnational projects in employment, social cohesion and regional development.

Kate was CEO of the UK's first rural regeneration company, Rural Regeneration Cumbria, and during that period was headhunted by Stobart Group where she has worked for more than 12 years.

During her time with Stobart Group, Kate had a number of roles and was responsible for re-launching commercial services from Carlisle Lake District Airport for the first time in over 25 years.

In addition, Kate has a number of non-executive roles, including Chair of Arts Council North and also sits on the Arts Council's National Council.

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Please contact [ThamesEstuary-PR@msgpartners.com](mailto:ThamesEstuary-PR@msgpartners.com) / 07588 123 160 for further information

### Notes to Editors

In 2018, The Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission published an ambitious vision for growth in the area of east London, north Essex and south Kent to unleash its potential. An exciting and ambitious vision, it is regarded as integral to the future of the UK economy.



Kate Willard has been appointed by the Government to drive this vision, leading a dedicated Thames Estuary Growth Board. The Growth Board has set out its action plan, entitled “The Green Blue”, to realise the amazing potential of the Thames Estuary. With plans for developments over the next two years, looking ahead across the next ten, The Green Blue is about making great things happen.

We call our plan “The Green Blue” because we are creating good, green, sustainable growth using the important, blue waterway of the Thames that connects the UK with the rest of the world.

The Thames Estuary Growth Board will deliver and support existing projects which will lead to job creation; housing solutions; new transport and digital infrastructure, ultimately contributing billions to the economy by 2050.