

New phase for moon powered public art project

Sustainable landmark to cast new light on East London

Development of the world's first tidal powered moon clock moved a step forward this week. The fully sustainable sculpture, which would be made from recycled glass and steel and powered by the Thames tides, has secured funding for the next phase of development – opening up the project to the private investment needed to make it a reality.

The ALUNA moon clock concept charts the cycles of the moon and the movement of the tides. Standing at 13m high by 40m wide, it would light up part of the East India Dock Basin using power generated by the flow of the river. As well as a visitor attraction and providing potential flood warnings, ALUNA could generate enough power to light nearby homes. The rings will be built from glass recycled by the East London community and the project will be an international showcase for the best of British engineering and sustainable technologies in time for the 2012 Olympics.

London's Deputy Mayor Nicky Gavron said: "ALUNA is an innovative and imaginative project to build the world's first tidal powered moon clock in London. It would provide a unique landmark in the Thames Gateway, creating a focal point for the community and a new visitor attraction. We must make sure this excellent plan becomes a reality."

Testing of the project is now complete and the latest funding will enable the team to investigate the proposed site next to the historic East India Dock – just south of the Olympic Park – as well as work on the technical design. This work will be part funded by a £85,000 contribution from the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (LTGDC), the Mayor of London's office and Sir Robert McAlpine Ltd, in partnership with the Renewable Energy Systems Group.

Peter Andrews, Chief Executive of LTGDC commented: "LTGDC is committed to engaging with stakeholders and the local community to drive creativity in the Gateway, not only in terms of infrastructure, but also cultural and educational development to create interesting and vibrant places where people want to live and work.

"Back in April 2007, the Gateway Futures Group, made up of independent industry experts, recommended that the London Thames Gateway would benefit from an iconic public building which promotes wider recognition of the area. Innovative initiatives such as ALUNA are a good example of the type of creative thinking we are looking for in the area."

Gavin McAlpine of the Sir Robert McAlpine Group's subsidiary Renewable Energy Systems said: "The ALUNA project has the potential to develop further people's understanding of the critical issues of our time – climate change, renewable energy and regeneration. In its simplicity it will be incredibly powerful and would substantiate the necessity for effective communication in this era of global challenges and local fragmentation. Being located in the Thames Gateway regeneration area it would be important symbolically, as well as being a further catalyst for change. This is an exciting project to be associated with and we hope now that others will share this enthusiasm and the ALUNA vision."

The ALUNA team is now seeking developers and financiers to fund the next stages of the project. For more information about the project www.alunatime.org

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Notes to editors

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1. ALUNA has the backing of **Lord Martin Rees** (Astronomer Royal and President of The Royal Society), **Dame Jude Kelly** (Chair of Culture, Ceremonies and Education London 2012), **Sir Terry Farrell** (Architect and Thames Gateway Master Planner), **Jim Fitzpatrick MP** (Poplar and Canning Town), **Dr Usama Hasan** (Islamic Astronomer and Muslim Council of Britain), **Brian Eno**, **Sir Patrick Moore**, **Denise Jones** (Leader, London Borough of Tower Hamlets), the Science Museum and Docklands Light Railway, amongst others. **Jim Fitzpatrick MP** said: *"ALUNA is the perfect landmark to represent London and the nation in 2012 because it unites people on a global and local level. It will provide a shared public space for the people of East London, and act as a beautiful reminder of our maritime history. By using glass recycled by Londoners ALUNA will be both a product of, and a long term legacy for, local communities."*
2. ALUNA project director and **Hackney artist Laura Williams** said: *"The moon allows us to understand the rhythms of our blue planet and has been important to religions and cultures from around the world since the dawn of time. Many of London's festivals are still timed by the moon. ALUNA will mean something to all ages, faiths and communities. We are seeking members of local organisations to join us in developing ALUNA and the surrounding area, to allow all cultures to make use of the waterfront space it will create for celebration and relaxation."*
3. Aluna Limited is a registered not-for-profit organisation delivering the Aluna Project and establishing The Aluna Foundation, a charitable foundation for the advancement of long-term thinking, environmental sustainability and global cultural harmony.
4. The Renewable Energy Systems Group (RES) is one of the world's leading renewable energy companies and has been an established presence at the forefront of the wind energy industry for more than two decades. It is part of the British Sir Robert McAlpine group of construction and engineering companies and is a holder of a Queen's Award for Enterprise.
5. The second report of the Gateway Futures Group featuring the ALUNA project can be viewed at www.ltqdc.org.uk/gatewayfutures