

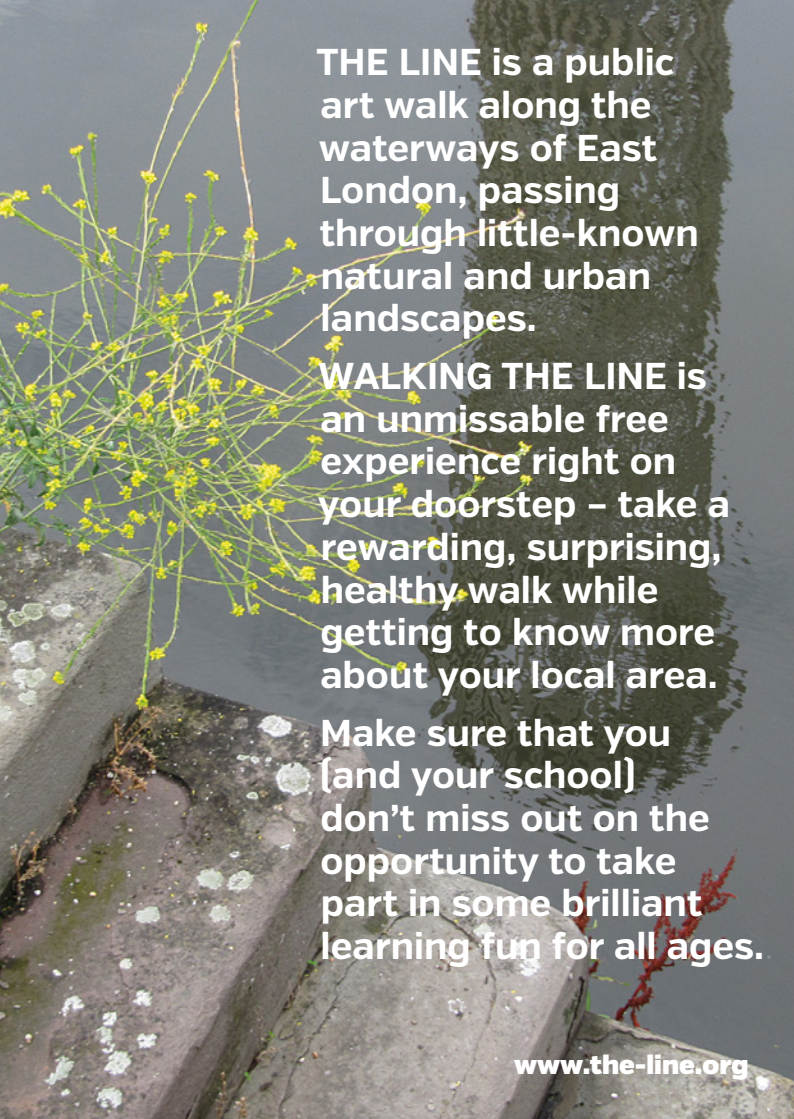


# THE LINE

with **THE HOUSE OF FAIRY TALES**

Two or three hours of fresh air and nature... not to mention art, history, geography, drama, maths and science

#TheLineLondon



**THE LINE** is a public art walk along the waterways of East London, passing through little-known natural and urban landscapes.

**WALKING THE LINE** is an unmissable free experience right on your doorstep – take a rewarding, surprising, healthy walk while getting to know more about your local area.

**Make sure that you (and your school) don't miss out on the opportunity to take part in some brilliant learning fun for all ages.**

[www.the-line.org](http://www.the-line.org)



## *The House of Fairy Tales*

...is a small boat ship flying through time and space and all 15 dimensions searching for the universal energy hotspots.

The bubbling water of The River Lea to the east side of Londinium in the land of the English is drawing new stories to it now in this 16th year of the new millennium. There are curious human sculptures appearing down its banks and travelling over the broad banks of the mighty River Thames.

There is something mysterious and historical afoot and, curious to know what is occurring, we are calling all young human Spotters to discover the stories on the banks of these ancient rivers.

Bright young eyes can often see further and higher than the rest of us.

[www.houseoffairytales.org](http://www.houseoffairytales.org)

## How to use this booklet to WALK THE LINE

The landmarks, artworks and ideas pointed out in this booklet will kickstart your exploration of a very special and historic place.

**Send us the photographs** of what you have spotted on the map. Personalise the pictures to prove you were there by putting your most precious thing in the picture – your little dog, favourite book, stuffed rabbit, crazy hat or superhero cloak...



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When you see this symbol it is a chance to use your imagination. Make sure you send us the results...

### A WATERY STORY FROM A PARALLEL DIMENSION

## The Lug Sprites of the River Lea

*The Lug Sprites had lived in the salt marshes and pools of water along the estuary forever. Although we can't see the Lugs on cloudy days, when it's sunny, their dipping and diving in the water leaves flecks and sparkles of light on the surface...*

## What is THE LINE?

### Welcome to an East London adventure!

THE LINE is London's first dedicated contemporary art walk and opened in 2015. It places inspirational sculptures along the River Lea and around the Royal Docks and The O<sub>2</sub>, and features other exciting artworks that can be seen near the route.

WALKING THE LINE is much more than a good excuse for a three-mile stroll along the Prime Meridian – it's a trip to lift the spirits as you soar high above the Thames (in the cable car) and to inspire your imagination as you dream of parallel worlds.

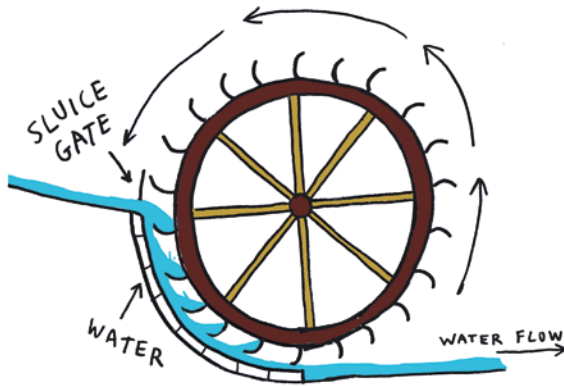
It's a journey through time and space that is as much about the ecology of the rivers, the social history of Three Mills Island and the urban regeneration of Cody Dock, as about discovering the pleasures of public art.

*... Bronze Age settlers 4,000 years ago believed in the protective powers of Lug Sprites, bringing good crops of clams and fish along the estuary. Carvings of Lugs have been found on the bronze age tools and implements...*

## Water power and energy

Renewable energy sources, with a light carbon footprint are one of the hottest topics around, and these include radical ideas like space-based solar panels or harnessing geothermal energy.

But there's nothing new about renewable energy sources, as people have been putting water and air power [from rivers, tides and winds] to good use since at least Roman times.



... The Romans renamed the Lug Sprites and gave them their full name Spirituslux Explendesco Lumen Salvum which translates to 'Sprite of light that reflects and protects', which is a real mouthful!...

## Mills and wheels

The principles of hydro power are relatively simple: the force generated by a stream of running water turns a wheel, which then rotates other wheels and cogs that can be used to perform an action, such as grinding grain into flour between millstones.

Along the River Lea, watermills have existed for over a thousand years – we know that because eight tidal mills on the River Lea are mentioned in the Domesday Book, which was a nationwide survey ordered by William the Conqueror in 1086 so that he could tax the people of Britain.

While watermills are generally powered by the downstream flow of rivers, here they took advantage of tides to power their mills.

High-tide water is trapped behind a sluice gate and then released at a controlled rate to drive the mill wheel – centuries before anyone had dreamed up a novelty like steam power.

... When the Danes were chased by King Alfred, there was a terrible catastrophe as parts of the river were drained and the river changed shape. The Lugs were displaced and were not seen for a while...

## An island, three mills...

Three Mills Island was created in Saxon times when channels were dug to re-route the River Lea.

Above the channels they built water mills where corn was ground to make flour for the bakers of Stratford.

During the 17th and 18th centuries the mills also used grain to distill alcohol and became major suppliers to the gin craze of London.

The House Mill, built in 1776, was the largest tidal mill in the world, and ran successfully until 1941, when it was severely damaged in an air-raid.



## ... and many thrilling films

Since the 1980s Three Mills has become a dedicated centre for the new industries of film and television production.

The old mill is now home to London's largest film studios and the place where films like *28 Days Later*, *Fantastic Mr Fox*, *The Inbetweeners*, *Enduring Love* and *Mr Holmes* have been made.



... As time went on, the river got back its shine and Lug Sprites were soon spotted again. Lug is a celtic word for light and the water was so bright from the Lug Sprites that the villages around the estuary started to call it the River Lug, which over the years changed to Lea...

## The Great Stink...

Poo! Rotten eggs! Mouldy cabbages! Can you remember the worst stink you ever sniffed, when you tried not to breathe as it made you feel sick? 'The Great Stink' of 1858 was much, much worse, and it dragged on throughout a long hot summer.



At the time London's sewers and industrial waste were pumped straight into the Thames and the River Lea, but the summer drought caused river levels to fall so the sewage stayed where it was, stinking in the heat. Can you imagine?!

In addition to the pong, terrible outbreaks of a stomach sickness called cholera were known to be caused by polluted water, so parliament asked civil engineer Joseph Bazalgette to build a huge new network of interconnecting sewers across London – one of our unsung heroes.

... The Lea was a great place for the Lugs to socialise. The younger Sprites enjoyed long days playing on the water wheel, which you can still see now. Humans and Lug Sprites lived around the same water source and respected each other and the waterways...

## ... and 'The Cathedral of Sewage'

The ornate Abbey Mills Pumping Station, which pumped the effluent further eastwards to Beckton, was opened in 1868 and described as 'The Cathedral of Sewage.' An even more beautiful Victorian pumping station, at Crossness near Erith, still houses the original working machinery and is open to visitors.

The rather grand Victoria, Chelsea and Albert Embankments along the River Thames were built to house (and hide) the new sewer drains... so when you walk to Tate Britain or past the London Eye, you are walking over London's poo!



A Drop of  
Thames Water  
Punch magazine, 1850

... In the late evening and early morning as the sun came up and went to bed, you could hear the Lug Sprites laughing and playing in the pools and estuary waters...

## Trade, commerce, global consumers and shopping

With all the amazing inventions of the past 200 years such as navigation devices [sextants, compasses, computers...] and increasingly sophisticated types of transport, trade routes spread exponentially across the globe like an enormous firework.

London is now one of the biggest trading capitals in the world with every possible kind of product, gadget and service being sold around the clock. We have become a nation of shoppers as well as shopkeepers. This is good news for our lifestyles – we are mostly healthier, more entertained and better fed than at any time throughout history.

But this comes at a cost...

Our society is getting more unequal again – almost as if we are going back to Victorian times with the affluent classes getting ever richer while the majority of the population struggles with increasingly impossible dreams.



Can you imagine a future where we made things and repaired things instead of buying new all the time? Where there was time to learn and play instead of just work. We want to know your ideas.

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Then there is the cost to our planet's resources and our effect on the environment with the consequences of climate change affecting us all.



**Abigail Fallis**

**DNA DL90** [2003]  
steel and shopping carts

This crazy swirl of shopping trolleys is in the shape of DNA which is the genetic code that makes up all life. Perhaps she is suggesting that we are now hardwired to be obsessive shoppers. The planet has a limited amount of resources that we are busy turning into our contemporary gadgets and trinkets.

It just so happens that this sculpture is sited right next door to an Amazon warehouse!

*... However the humans started to get busy and factories started to be built along the Lea. And as more and more chemicals went into the water, the Lugs became increasingly ill, their population dropped dramatically and the water started to lose its shine...*

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## Willow trees – myths and legends



Willow is a wonder tree whose wood is used to make anything from [witches'] brooms and cricket bats to wicker baskets, wattle walls, and living sculptures. Willow has the magical ability to grow simply by poking a branch into damp soil, and to regrow rapidly after coppicing [cutting back the tree].

Willow symbolises renewal, vitality and immortality in China. In Greek mythology Hecate is the Goddess of the moon and of willow and a teacher of sorcery and witchcraft. In English folklore willows have a darker reputation, and are believed to be able to uproot themselves and stalk travellers – perhaps that influenced the Whomping Willow in *Harry Potter*.

Willow has real magic in its bark sap, which contains salicylic acid, a precursor to the modern drug Aspirin. Medicinal remedies derived from willow bark have been used for thousands of years, especially for colds, fevers and inflammations.

Look out for willows near Three Mills Island and in the gardens at Cody Dock.

... There was a brief period when the water improved during the Victorian era, just after sewage pumps such as Abbey Mills were built, and there were reports of increased numbers of Lugs...

## Cody Dock

Cody Dock is one of the success stories of community-led regeneration on the River Lea. Formerly the site of a major gas and chemical works, it is run by a charity called the Gasworks Dock Partnership (GDP) which has transformed the run-down site into a community space incorporating artists' studios and an exhibition space, a garden and a special café. They also have boats in dry dock like the *River Princess*, the Docklands Community Boat, which is currently being restored to run tours of the River Lea and the Thames.

This ties in with the GDP's aims to encourage a love of industrial heritage, learning about nature and gardening, and exploring arts, crafts and culture.





## Meridian music – Adele's River Lea

The River Lea has been abused and dammed, diverted, canalised, polluted and forced into nine channels so that today it's hard to even find all of it on the map. And yet it keeps on giving, supplying London with hundreds of thousands of litres of fresh water per day.

Here's an excerpt from Adele's song *River Lea* from her recent album 25:

*When I was a child I grew up by the River Lea  
There was something in the water, now that something's in me  
Oh I can't go back, but the reeds are growing out of my fingertips  
I can't go back to the river  
  
But it's in my roots, in my veins  
It's in my blood and I stain every heart that I use to heal the pain  
So I blame it on the River Lea, the River Lea, the River Lea  
Yeah, I blame it on the River Lea, the River Lea, the River Lea*



Write your response to Adele's *River Lea* – in which the chorus is 'Blame it on the River Lea'. Perhaps there another side to the story?

## Sea shanties

Shanties are work songs, like the blues from the cotton fields of America. Their hallmark is call-and-response, with a solo singer calling out and the rest of the workers coming in on the chorus.

The leaders, called shantymen, like today's rappers, were enjoyed for their bawdy language, lyrical wit, and strong voices. Shanties were sung without instrumental accompaniment while working, rather than as entertainment.

*What Shall We Do With The Drunken Sailor* is one of the most familiar:

*What will we do with the drunken sailor?  
Earlye in the morning?  
Put him in the scuppers with the hose pipe on him  
Hoist him aboard with a running bowline  
Put him in the brig until he's sober*

CHORUS: *Way, bay up she rises, earlye in the morning!*

*Make him turn to at shining bright work.  
Put him in a boat and row him over  
Hoist him up to the topsail yardarm  
Make him clean out all the spit-kids  
That's what you do with a drunken sailor*

## Here be monsters, birds and beasts

The industry, pollution and hardship of this area is in the past and so the present is full of nature. Wildlife is once again enjoying the fertility of the River Lea with its new reed beds home to many ducks and water birds and the nature reserves of Cody Dock teeming with life.

You're sure to see mallards and moorhens, coots, seagulls and swans. It's unlikely that you'll see any of the fish swimming in the river, but do keep a special look out for the River Lea crocodile, which is rumoured to have eaten Canada geese on the river on at least two occasions. We're sure this isn't just an urban myth...



What other creatures can you imagine living along THE LINE? Have you ever seen a dragon or how about a griffin?



## When Nature takes over

If you leave human-made things alone for a while, Nature soon starts claiming them back. Plants grow in the most unexpected places where there doesn't seem to be any soil, through cracks in the pavement and even out of the seats of abandoned cars...

So Mother Nature doesn't need any encouragement, but even so, organisations like Lea Valley Park, Cody Dock and Thames Water are keen to promote the regeneration of plants and wildlife in the city.

You don't need to have a garden to be a gardener. Join the guerrilla gardeners: keep a packet of wildflower seeds in your pocket, and spread them about wherever the earth looks a little bare. You'll add colour and help bees, butterflies and even bats to flourish.



*... But then smelly industries started polluting the water and the Lug Sprites disappeared once more. This continued until the water became contaminated with industrial dirt from the increasing number of factories...*

## Wild invaders from overseas



As you walk along the River Lea on its approach to the Thames, imagine that the river is much wider, much wilder and more powerful than the channel you can see now, surrounded by low-lying marshes.

Then imagine many Viking longships packed with warriors sailing past you and travelling upriver as far as Ware, 20 miles north of London... because that's exactly what happened in the year 894.

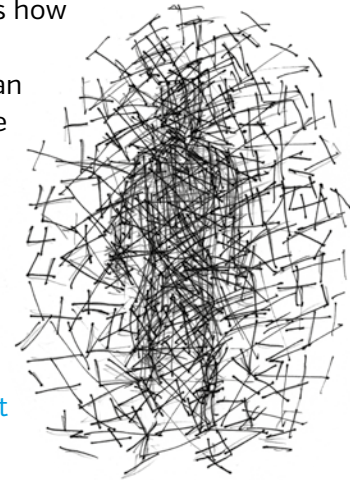
The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that King Alfred the Great of Wessex could not attack them directly, so he built two forts further downriver and diverted the River Lea into a newly-cut channel. This lowered the river's depth and left the Vikings stranded, so they were forced to abandon their ships and escape overland to Wales.

Vikings had a bad reputation for wild, aggressive and reckless behaviour as well as crazy headwear.

## Antony Gormley QUANTUM CLOUD [2000] steel

This explosion of metal has a human form at its centre. The artist is playing with ideas of science and energy. Quantum is the Latin word for amount, and the amount of a quantum is incredibly tiny – the smallest possible amount of any physical property, such as energy or matter.

This sculpture demonstrates how our individual observations (looking closely at things) can change the state of what we are observing, an idea that is significant in both art and quantum physics.



Can you imagine what the smallest possible thing might look like close up?

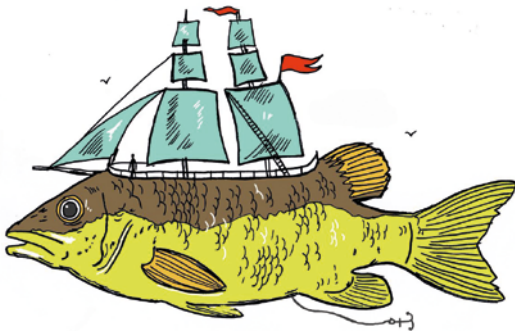
## Why is London here?

What did the Romans ever do for us, you might ask? Well, they established Londinium for a start. And the Romans were masters at establishing cities in ideal locations all around Europe.

They had already built a bridge across the Thames and realised it could become a great port as the river was tidal and deep enough for ocean-going ships, but far enough inland to deter most raiders.

London was on Britain's largest river with excellent access to the sea - so lots more fish to eat. There was also plenty of fresh water, on well-drained land with great transportation links along its rivers, such as the Lea - so trade could be easily established.

The rest, as they say, is history...



## Thomson & Craighead

**HERE** [2013] signpost



This signpost is showing the distance all around the world in a perfectly straight line back to where we are: here. This kind of measurement line is called a meridian and helps give us our mapping references.

24,859 is the distance around the world in miles (it's 40,007 measured in kilometres) along the Prime Meridian at 0° degrees longitude, so all of the places along this line will have exactly the same time on their clocks.



Can you think of a signpost that would make people think twice or teach them something?

... It is thought that during this time the Lug Sprites migrated down the river to where the Royal Victoria Docks were being built and found out about the crystal-clear foreign waters of the open sea where other Lugs had travelled...

## Navigation, time and the stars

What is the Prime Meridian?... well, you're walking along it... There are two kinds of measurement of position on the earth – longitude and latitude. Longitude is measured in meridian lines that encircle the earth. Imagine the edge of orange segments going from the North Pole to the South. Latitude is more complicated but is measured in angles from the equator.

The meridian at Greenwich is the Prime Meridian at longitude zero, and the Prime Meridian also serves as the reference line for Greenwich Mean Time [GMT]. This creates a standard measurement for how time is adjusted in 24 different time zones around the world. So everyone in the world adjusts their watches to fit in with GMT.

In the eighteenth century the race was on to improve navigation at sea. This was to make it safer to sail trade routes around the world.

This led to the development of really clever gadgets like the sextant and the marine chronometer

[or clock] by genius inventors like John Harrison, Thomas Godfrey and John Hadley. These were complex mathematical instruments carried by sailors to navigate on the open sea.

At around the same time, astronomers were developing accurate star charts that enabled navigators to use the moon and the stars to precisely plot their position. Between 1765 and 1811, Nevil Maskelyne published 49 issues of *The Nautical Almanac* based on the meridian of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. Maskelyne's tables not only made it easier to navigate, they also made the Greenwich Meridian the universal reference line... putting THE LINE on the map for the first time.



... We now know that the Lug Sprites are returning and the light and sparkle you can see along the Lea is the evidence of their return...

... Now that the river is returning to its former glory, artists are placing their work along the Lea to encourage us to remember the river and its history...



## Gary Hume LIBERTY GRIP

[2008] bronze

This sculpture is a wonderful pile-up of limbs, like pieces of a shop mannequin which have been put back together in the dark, with the cut-through pieces painted in candy pink like cartoon blood.

## Draw your own hand

The artist Gary Hume suggested a great drawing exercise that may look pretty simple... until you try it. Can you draw your own hand? It's especially hard to draw your writing hand with the 'other' hand that you don't normally use.



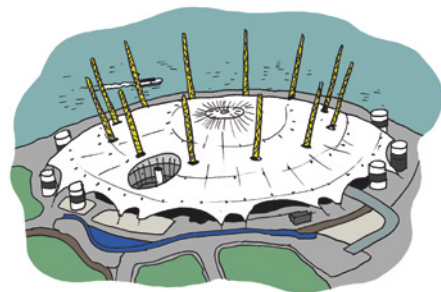
## A giant spikey tent

This extraordinary Millenium Dome (now known as the O<sub>2</sub> Arena) was designed to celebrate the turn of the millenium in 2000 – the dawning of a new age with a new set of opportunities and dangers.

Some of this moment in time was captured in a big national exhibition in a regenerated area beside the Thames at Greenwich.

The exhibition was interactive and playful for the audience, unlike traditional museums where you can't touch. It had loads of creative ideas and was a brave attempt to mark a significant milestone with an exhibition to make people think.

This enormous dome had a new tube line built to bring people to it and is now home to huge concerts and public events. So once again people travel from all over the land to visit it.

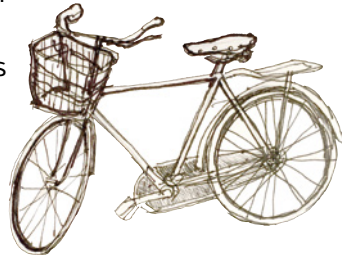


## Trains, boats and planes

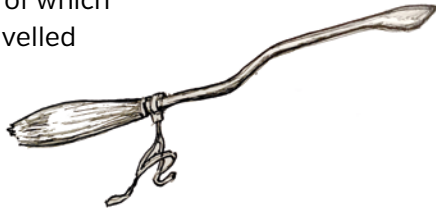


The contemporary world has so many different methods of transport. Just over a hundred years ago we all used to travel by horse or horse and carriage with sailing ships on the rivers and oceans.

In Victorian times the bicycle was



the most modern and most radical invention. With the invention of the internal combustion engine all that changed. We now have an extraordinary array of transport, some of which you might have travelled on today.



Can you think of the next inventions – will they be powered with sustainable energy such as sun or wind or plant oil? What will they look like? Send us your ideas.



## Richard Wilson A SLICE OF REALITY [2000]

The insides of this ship have been exposed from both ends, as if an invisible meridian line has sliced through it. All the galleys and the engine room are open to the elements.



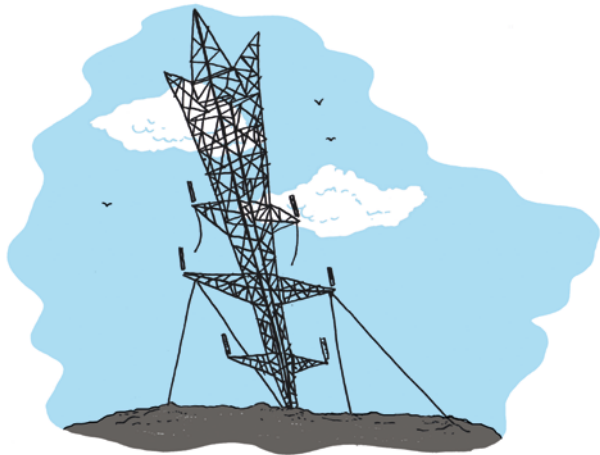
What other structures or buildings would you like to slice through?

*... These days the famous Lea Lug Sprites are helping Londoners to remember that the water must be kept clean and unpolluted to ensure their survival... and ours.*

**Alex Chinneck**

## **Bullet from a Shooting Star**

[2015] steel



Greenwich Peninsula was once home to the largest oil and gas works in Europe and the pylon looks as though it has been fired into the earth from space to recharge our power supplies.

Illuminated at night, the sculpture presents a latticed network of light and shadows.



What could we do with pylons if we stopped needing them to carry our electricity?

We would like to thank all the artists, galleries, collectors, companies and local authorities who have loaned or supported sculptures which are featured on THE LINE. Please go to [www.the-line.org](http://www.the-line.org) for more information about the artworks and future plans.

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