

7 May 2026

## One Ocean 2026

Turner Contemporary announces *One Ocean 2026*: A weekend of free talks, workshops and screenings on art, adaptation and the future of our oceans.

19–21 June 2026



Turner Contemporary announces *One Ocean*—a three-day gathering exploring humanity’s relationship with the ocean.

Supported by the UK National Commission for UNESCO, the inaugural edition brings together artists, scientists, policymakers, innovators and community leaders, including Helen Scales, Nicholas Hardman-Mountford, Joycelyn Longdon, and Suzanne Dhaliwal.

Taking place from **19–21 June 2026** in Margate—a coastal town on the frontline of environmental change—the event will address the urgent challenges facing marine environments and examine how artists’ unique perspectives can powerfully amplify and reframe these issues, fostering awareness while inspiring connection, care, and adaptation.

Conceived as a pilot edition, *One Ocean* is intended to develop into a biennial programme of global significance.

## A coastal town reflecting global challenges

Margate's position on the edge of rising seas and coastal erosion makes it a powerful setting for this international dialogue. Building on Turner Contemporary's four-year Art+Environment programme, *One Ocean* connects local lived experience with global environmental discourse.

Rooted in UNESCO-IOC Ocean Literacy principles, *One Ocean* positions the ocean not only as a physical ecosystem, but as a vital cultural, social and economic force—one that connects communities, sustains life and livelihood and carries deep histories and identities.

James Bridge, Secretary-General of the UK National Commission for UNESCO said: 'The ocean connects us all, yet its future depends on how well we understand and care for it. Initiatives like *One Ocean* embody the spirit of UNESCO's Ocean Literacy framework by bringing together culture, science and education to inspire collective responsibility and action. In this 80th anniversary year of the founding of UNESCO in the UK, we are proud to support a programme that places communities and creativity at the heart of ocean stewardship.'

## A dynamic, cross-disciplinary programme

Over three days, *One Ocean* will present a rich public programme of talks, documentary and artist film screenings, workshops and community activities.

Through collaboration across disciplines—including art, science, storytelling and technology—the programme will translate complex environmental issues into accessible, emotional and action-driven experiences.

Highlights include:

- A **Schools Day** engaging over 150 young people in creative workshops on the beach
- An **Opening Reception** convening key decision-makers, and community leaders
- **Public talks and panel discussions** on Margate's coastal identity, ocean and human health, the rights of the ocean, and youth for the climate, among more
- An evening of **curated film screenings** by international artists
- Outdoor screenings of **ocean-focused documentaries** including 'Ocean with David Attenborough' (2025) and 'Seaweed Stories' (2024)
- A closing day focused on **youth activism and creative action** for ocean protection

Contributors include marine biologist and writer Helen Scales, environmental technologist Joycelyn Longdon, ocean leader and policy specialist Nicholas Hardman-Mountford; artists Poulomi Basu, Embassy of the North Sea, Andy Hughes and Christopher Tipping; campaigners Suzanne Dhaliwal, Fatima Ibrahim (Green New Deal UK), Louisa Casson (Greenpeace and Our Youth 4 The Climate); and local leaders Polly Brannan (Open School East) and Dan Thompson (Marine Studios).

*One Ocean* will establish Turner Contemporary as a global ideas' hub addressing ocean health, biodiversity and climate resilience, as well as sustainable ocean economies and innovation. It will also explore ecological, cultural, and social responses to environmental change, alongside the vital role of art in shaping public understanding and, inspiring action, adaption—and implementation.

Toby Parkin, Head of Learning & Participation at Turner Contemporary said: '*One Ocean* reflects our belief that art can play a vital role in how we understand and respond to the climate crisis. By bringing together diverse voices—from Margate's communities to international leaders—we are creating a space for hope and for collaboration. This is about empowering people, especially young people, to see themselves as part of the solution.'

The programme is designed to inspire environmental stewardship among children and young people, strengthen connections between local and global perspectives, and support wellbeing through creative and sensory experiences. It will highlight generational place-based knowledge systems, while fostering collaboration across sectors to drive meaningful change.

## One Ocean 2026: The future of our Oceans. The frontline of environmental change.

Curated by Emma Lewis, Curator and Toby Parkin, Head of Learning and Participation.

*One Ocean 2026* is supported by the UK National Commission for UNESCO and the Peter Dubens Family Foundation, alongside a wide network of regional and international partners.

A community-led public programme *The Margate We're Dreaming Of* will run alongside *One Ocean 2026*, inviting residents of Margate to explore ways to improve everyday life, through creative workshops, events and a community garden. *One Ocean* will provide a platform for local ideas to help shape *The Margate We're Dreaming Of*.

## Notes to Editors

*One Ocean 2026*

19–21 June 2026

Turner Contemporary, Rendezvous, Margate, UK

Open: Tuesday–Sunday, & Bank Holidays, 11am–5pm

## Press contacts

For all press enquiries about *One Ocean 2026*, contact:

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## About Turner Contemporary

Turner Contemporary is one of the UK's most visited contemporary art galleries and part of the town's vibrant creative community. Opened in 2011 and designed by David Chipperfield, the gallery presents an ambitious programme of exhibitions, events and learning opportunities inspired by JMW Turner's legacy and his enduring connection to Margate. In 2026, Turner Contemporary marks its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since opening, the gallery has played a pivotal role in the region's cultural and economic regeneration, welcoming over 5 million visitors and contributing more than £100 million to the local economy.

[TurnerContemporary.org](http://TurnerContemporary.org)

## About The Margate We're Dreaming Of

Residents in Margate are invited to take part in *The Margate We're Dreaming Of*, a community-led programme rooted in care for people, place and nature. In Thanet, where access to green space is limited, health outcomes are poorer, and many face rising living costs, small, practical changes can make a real difference. Led by Naturehood Thanet, the programme brings people together to explore ways to improve everyday life, from access to fresh food to staying comfortable in hotter summers. Activities include creative workshops, public events and a community garden. *One Ocean 2026* will provide a platform for local ideas to help shape *The Margate We're Dreaming Of*.