





## **The Moorings Underpass, Thamesmead**

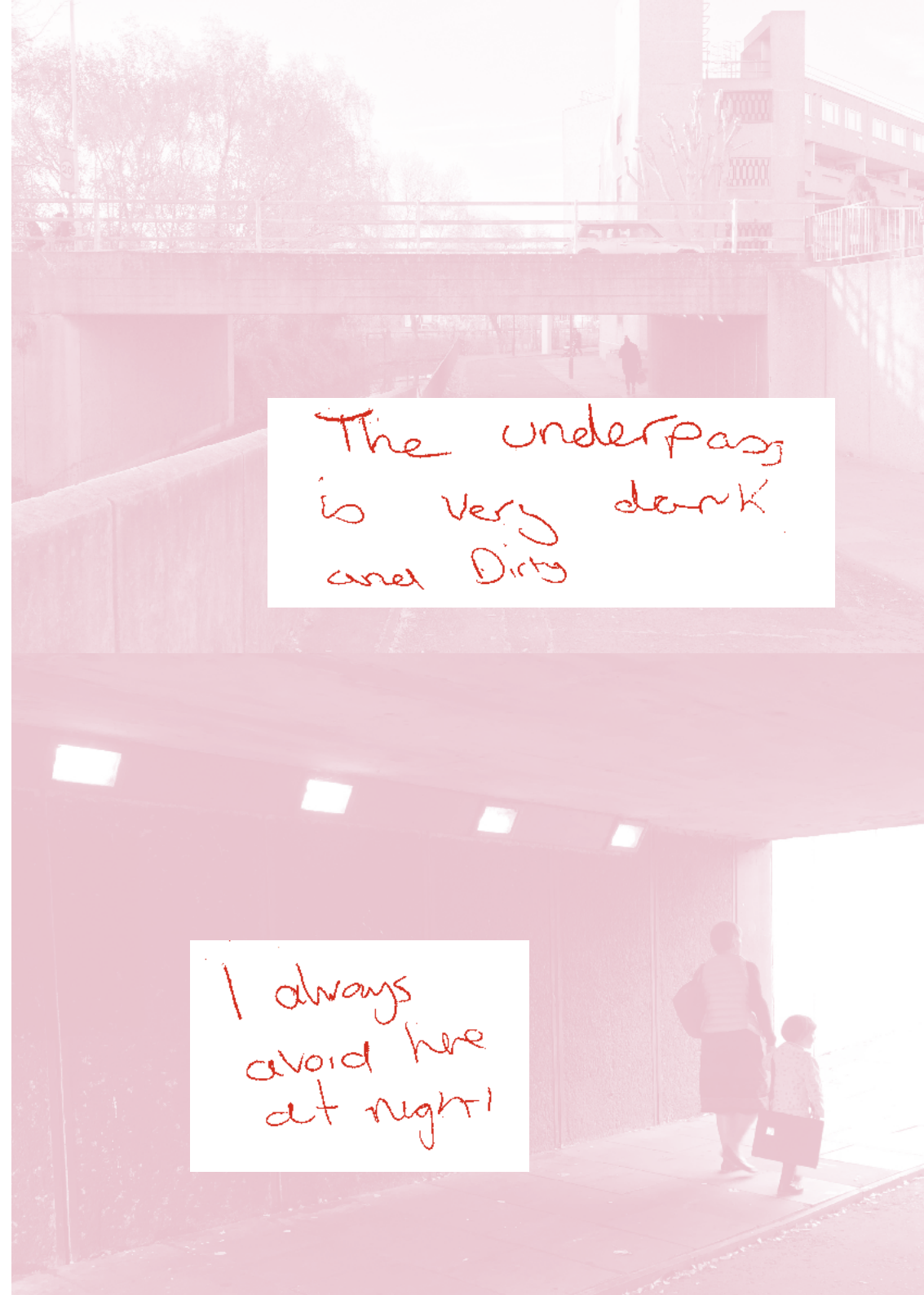
The Grantchester Pottery  
& Light Follows Behaviour



Mural designed in collaboration with young people  
at Woolwich Polytechnic & Hawksmoor Youth Club

Commissioned and funded by Peabody

Curated by Sam Skinner



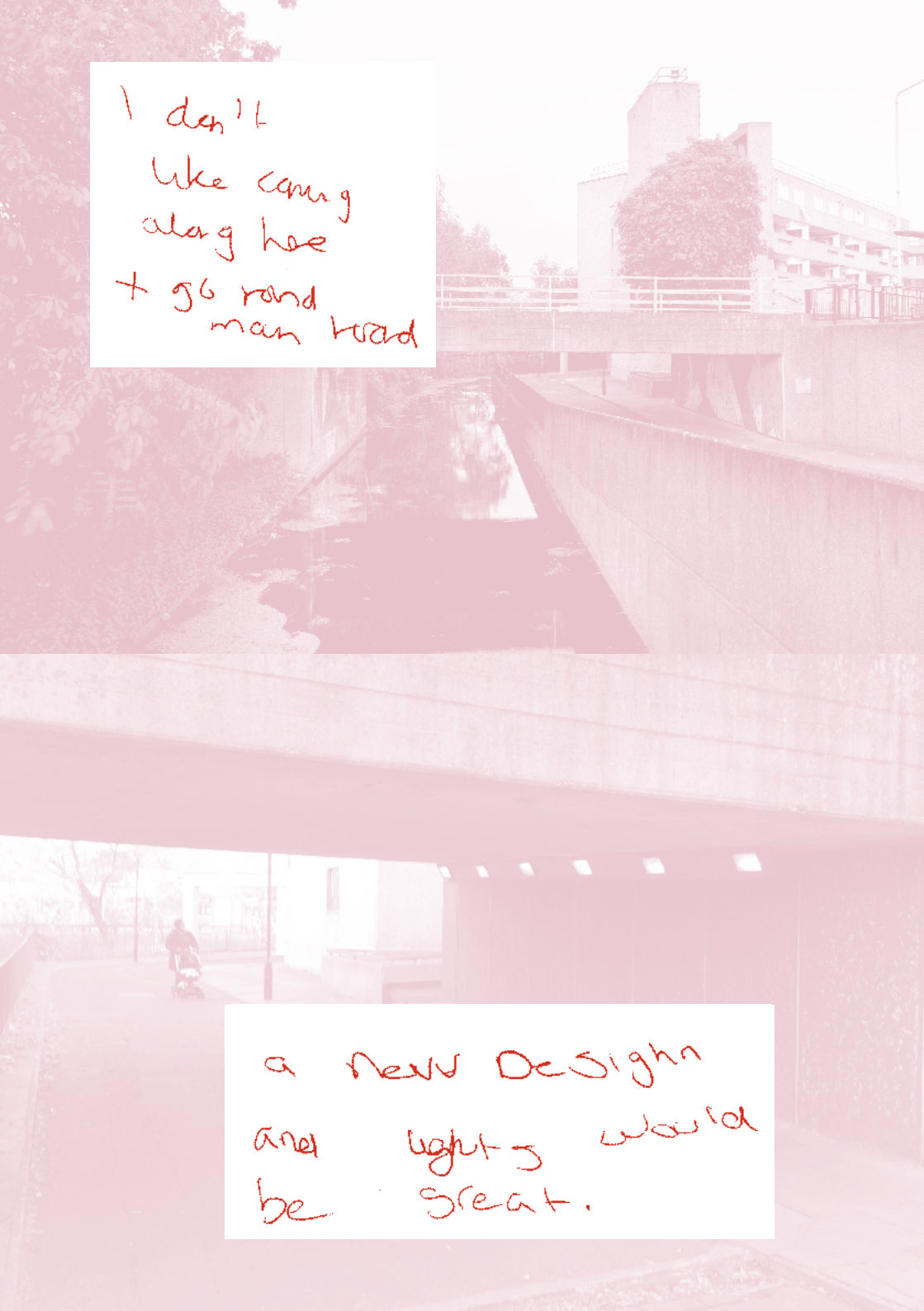
## Introduction

This publication is intended to tell the story of a new tile and lighting installation in Thamesmead, designed by *The Grantchester Pottery and Light Follows Behaviour*, and commissioned and funded by Peabody.

Underpasses are peculiar places – sometimes scrawled with graffiti, the rumbling road above and the sky obscured overhead. They are the product of a world increasingly crisscrossed by roads, squeezing out space for pedestrians.

The underpass in the Moorings is special. Beneath the road a canal passes alongside the walkway. Swans, moorhens and mallards paddle up and down, side-by-side with people, prams and bikes. Light reflects off the water onto the concrete canopy above to produce a liquid light show and at dusk or dawn you may even hear the nightingale that nests nearby.

The artists all spent time in and around the underpass, talking to residents and investigating the site's unique character.



I don't  
like coming  
along here  
+ go round  
main road

a new Design  
and lighting would  
be great.



The Grantchester Pottery ran a series of workshops with students at Woolwich Polytechnic, developing ideas for the mural and sharing their experiences of the area. They made drawings of the reed beds at Tump 53 nature reserve and produced studies of Thamesmead's architecture and infrastructure – from its communal stairwells to the circular settling tanks at nearby Crossness sewage treatment works.

Light Follows Behaviour worked with young people at Hawksmoor Youth Club, conducting a night walk around Kings Cross to explore different approaches to public space lighting, and led a workshop to develop ideas. A lighting design was developed to replace the old lighting with a central fixture to project light onto the tile mural and architectural facades, creating a more welcoming and open space. The design also included coloured spotlights and firefly lights in the trees, connecting the underpass with the wider area and creating reflections in the water.

Concept designs were presented to residents at a consultation event in the underpass and at the Jubilee Centre. Following a positive response,

designs were finalised, tiles were printed and fired, lighting fixtures were made, and everything installed in spring 2020.

Collectively, we hope that the project has delivered a collaborative project between professional artists, designers, the local community, and Peabody, who have all worked together to share skills and experiences to produce a space that is a positive addition to the neighborhood. And we hope the ducks like it too!

*Sam Skinner*



DIRTY, SMELLY, RUBBISH  
TOO MANY TREES. + RATS, SNAKES.

WE NEED CLEANING, CUTTING TREES  
LAKE NEED CLEANING.

(CHECK FACTS)

NOT GLARY.

REFLECTIVE MATERIAL (London refractors Graysey Spence)

PASSING SPACE

No drunk people to stay - other people can stay.  
No Di Seo effect.

UNDERPASS with DOTS - live in odours.

FIREFLIES ON TREES.

BLUE LIGHTS.







Lighting Installation

**Light Follows Behaviour**

King's Cross night walk with Hawksmoor Youth Club

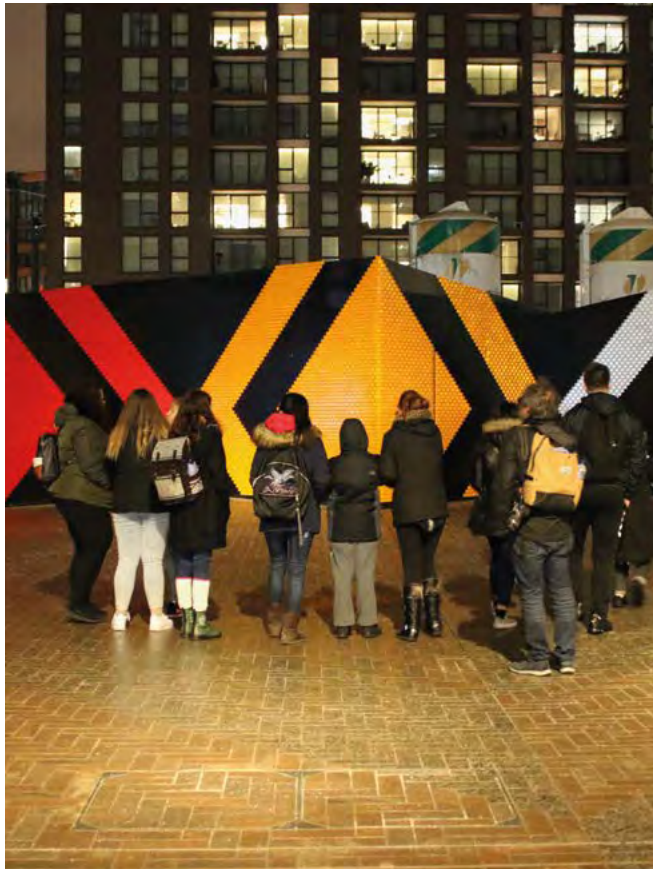


Elettra Bordonaro and her team, from **Light Follows Behaviour**, a lighting design practice specialising in co-designed projects produced in collaboration with local communities, began their research by conducting face-to-face interviews with residents and underpass users to understand their views on, and experience of, the site and surrounding area.

They studied the underpass during the day and night time, observing how the environment and people's use of it changed.



Following this first phase Elettra undertook a programme of co-design with young people from Hawksmoor Youth Club, which began with a night walk around King's Cross to explore how lighting could be used in creative and imaginative ways.



They looked at how different types of lights interacted with diverse surfaces and spaces.

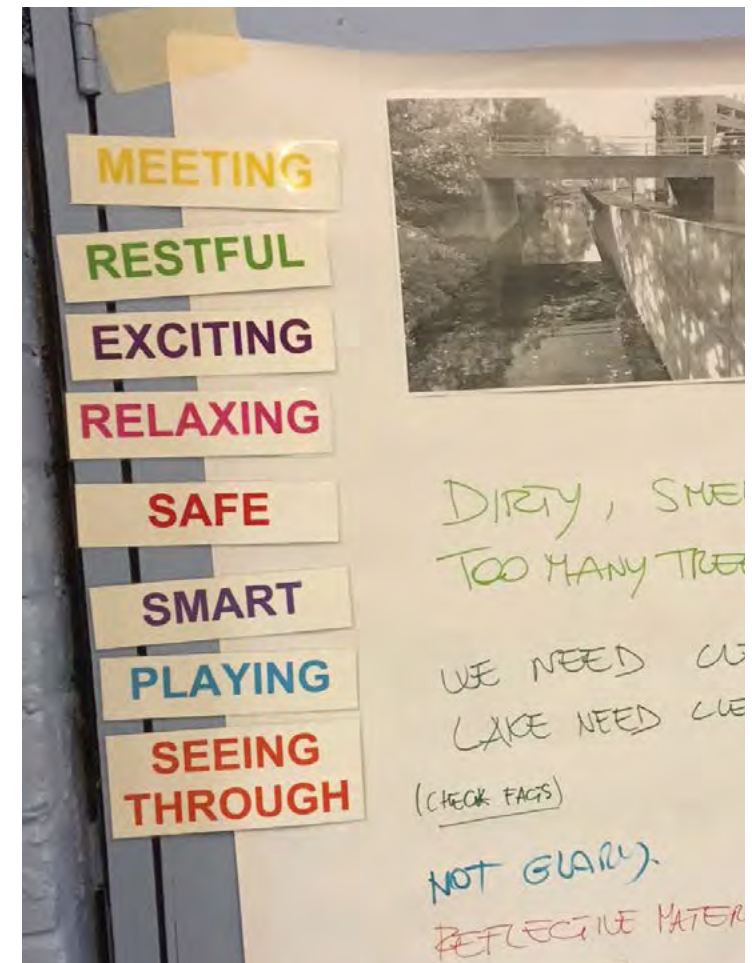


Following this site visit Elettra led a one-day workshop at Hawksmoor where participants were introduced to her initial social research findings and asked to describe the area using their knowledge of it and everyday use of the space.

The workshop then focused on exploring different atmospheres of light through a series of activities introducing contrasting lighting effects.



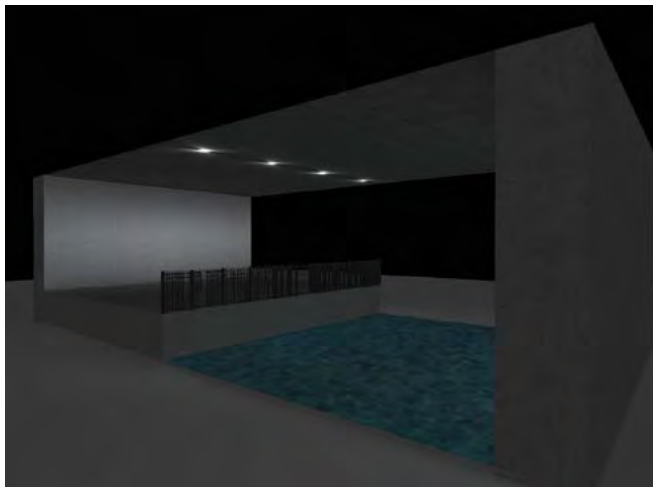
Using printed cards describing diverse lighting atmospheres (playful, romantic, elegant...) and activities (walk, play, eat...), mixed with their own ideas, young people at Hawksmoor produced an array of posters that reimagined the underpass.





One key idea developed during the workshops was to light the trees and water with colour to add a sense of wonder and connect the underpass to surrounding nature.

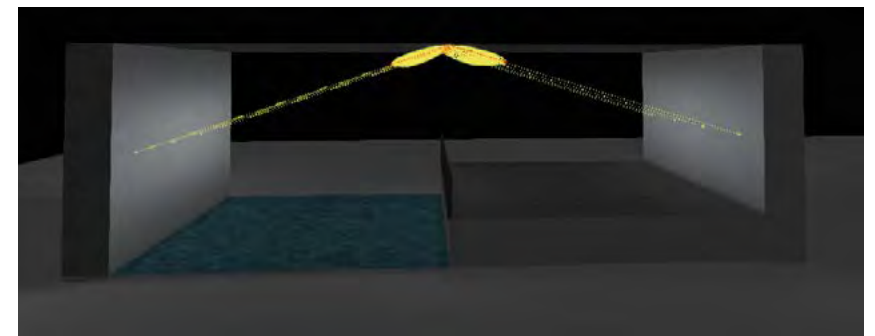
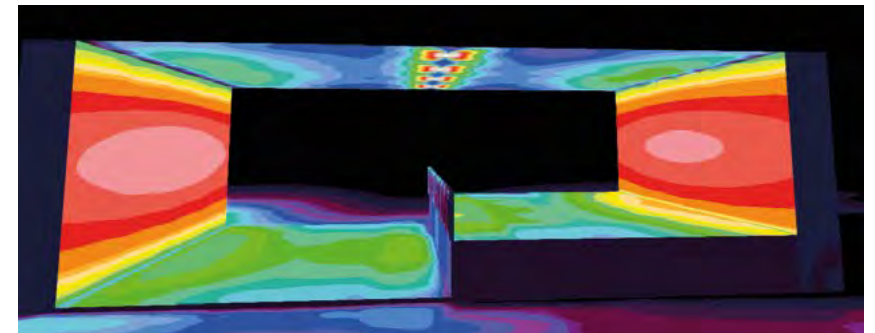
Elettra described the workshop as being “fascinating, very creative and way beyond our expectations!”. Following the workshop, developed designs integrating ideas from young people at Hawksmoor were produced, and these were displayed in the underpass during a community consultation event.



Underpass  
lighting  
calculations

The final installation removes the old lighting and comprises a central light fixture that works with the underpass architecture and lights the tile murals.

Spotlights light the trees and their blue light is reflected in the water to add to the atmosphere of the space.





Lighting installation visualisation





The Grantchester Pottery and Woolwich Polytechnic workshop

Tile Mural

**The Grantchester Pottery**





**The Grantchester Pottery (TGP)** conducted workshops with year 7 and 8 students at Woolwich Polytechnic, enabling TGP to enter into conversation with local young people about their respective experiences of the area and share their skills. Students undertook photographic research and produced collages using a technique inspired by the work of the artist Duncan Grant. Student ideas included:

**Something that is vibrant and stands out**

The river could continue into the mural

**Something that defines Thamesmead like the Hollywood sign**

River as a pattern

**It could include nature, like wild birds found in the area**

**Possibly an image of the city in the distance**

**It could be an optical illusion**

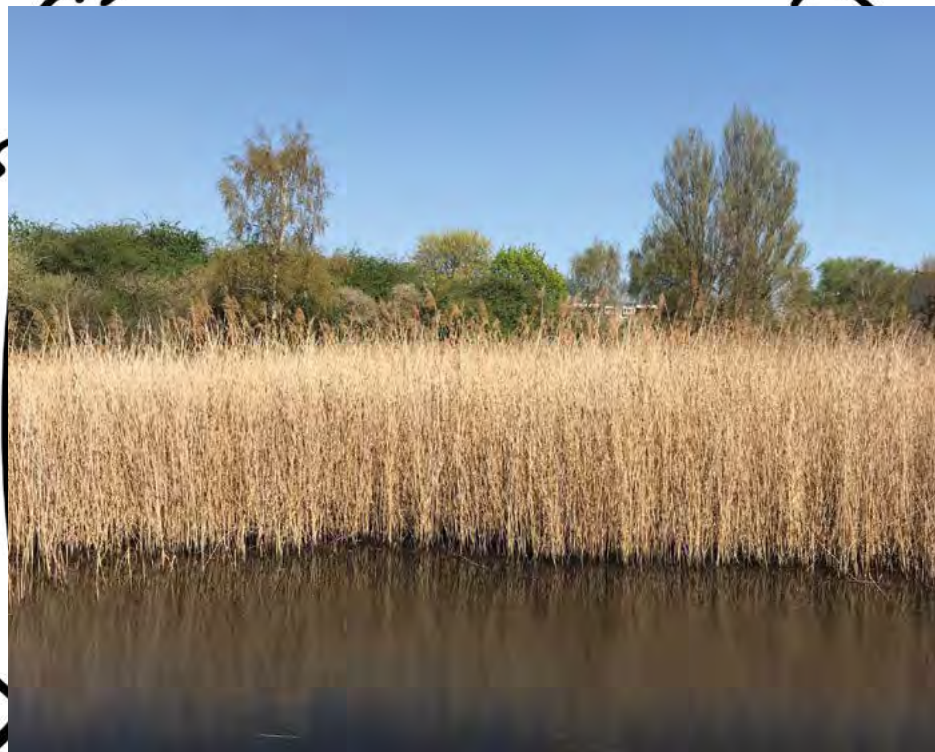
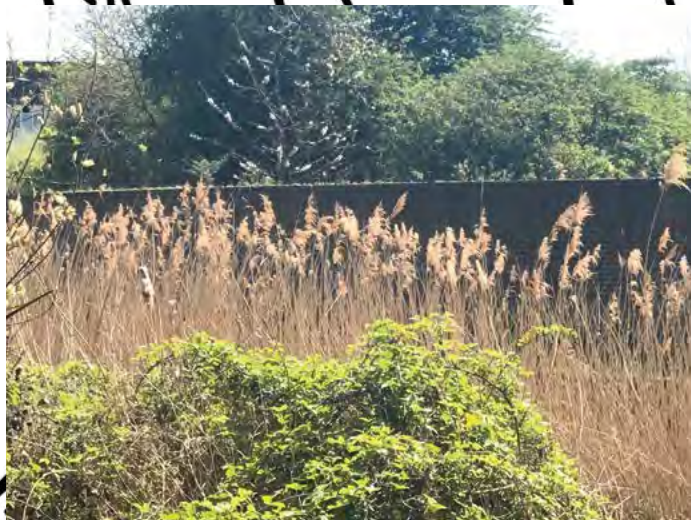
**There should be a snow machine**



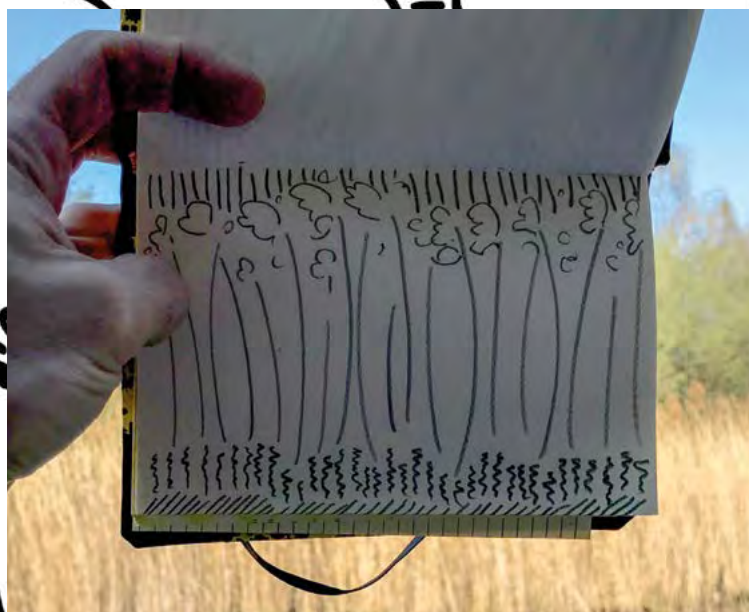


















# Installation Documentation

Angus Mill



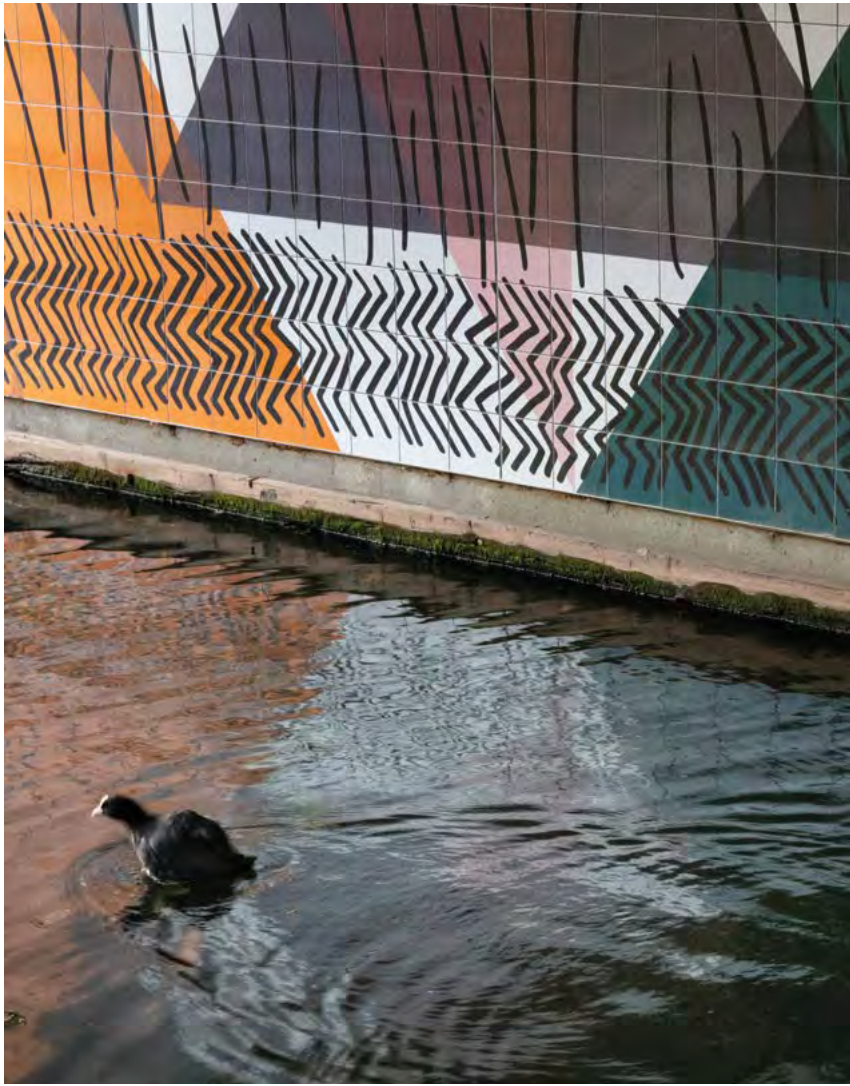
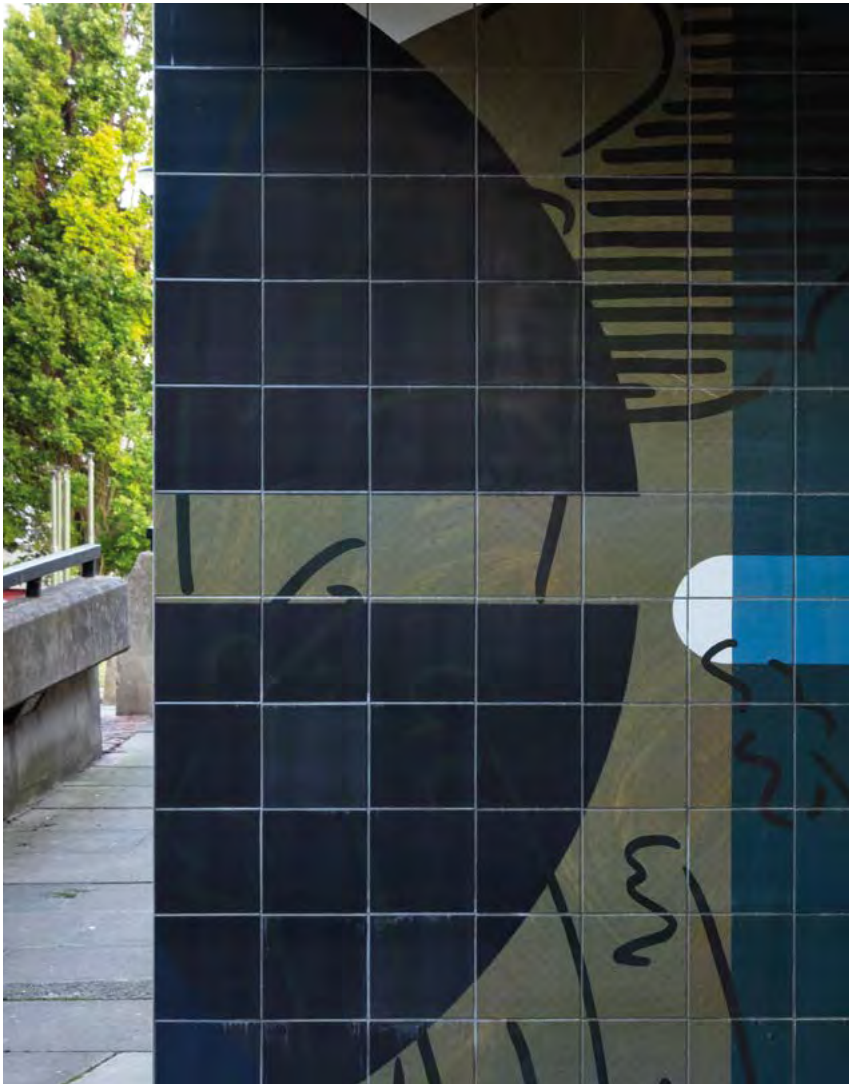


Tile mural by  
The Grantchester Pottery  
and lighting installation by  
Light Follows Behaviour,  
designed in collaboration  
with young people at  
Woolwich Polytechnic  
and Hawksmoor  
Youth Club  
2018-19.

Commissioned by Peabody









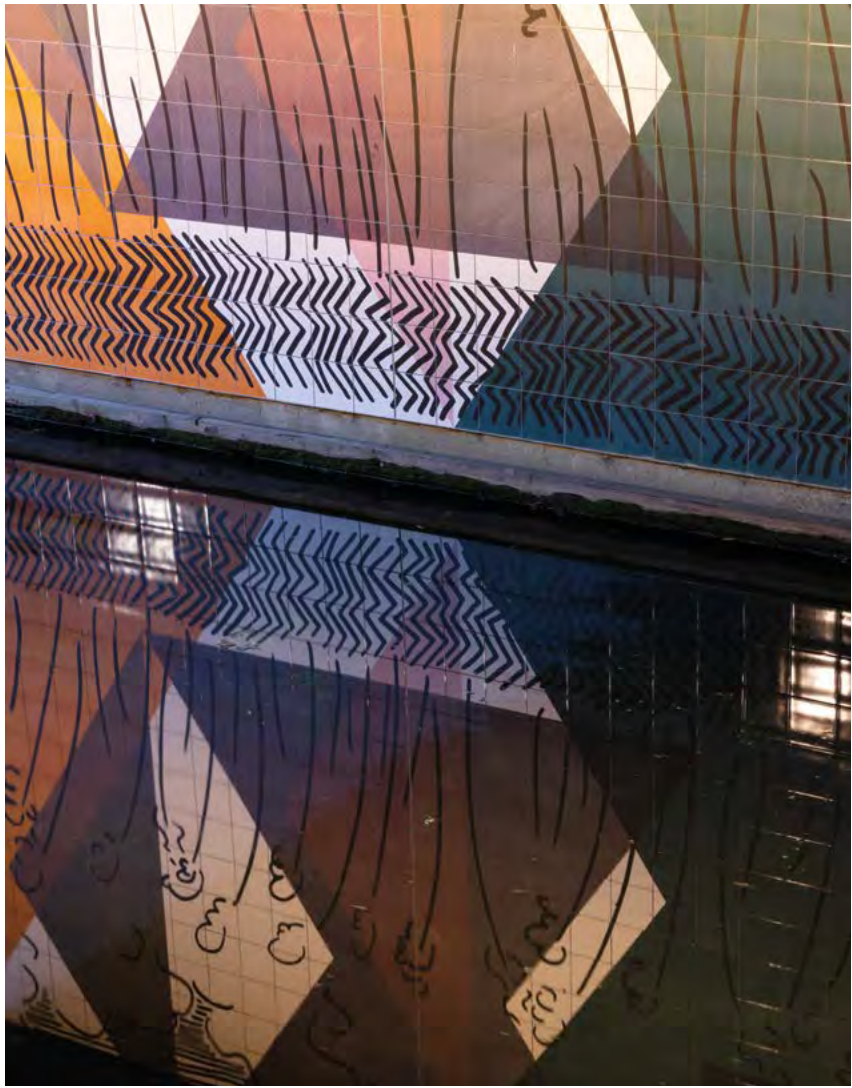






















## **The Moorings Underpass, Thamesmead**

### *Tile mural*

The Grantchester Pottery

[www.thegrantchesterpottery.com](http://www.thegrantchesterpottery.com)

### *Lighting*

Light Follows Behaviour

[www.lightfollowsbehaviour.com](http://www.lightfollowsbehaviour.com)

### *Installation photography*

Angus Mill

### *Tile printing and glazing*

Surface Design Studio, Stoke-on-Trent

### *Lighting fixtures*

LEC, Lyon

### *Installation contractor*

Baylis Landscapes

### *Peabody project lead*

Kate Batchelor

### *Project curation*

Sam Skinner

[www.samskinner.net](http://www.samskinner.net)

Thanks to Lisa Coombs-Roberts and students at Woolwich Polytechnic, Claire Hallinan and young people at Hawksmoor Youth Club, Mark Wood at Surface Design Studio, Tump 53, and Gogi's Supermarket.

### *Book design*

Mark Simmonds, Lincoln

Printed by Mixam on recycled paper

Project funded and commissioned by Peabody

**THAMESMEAD** <sup>TM</sup>





