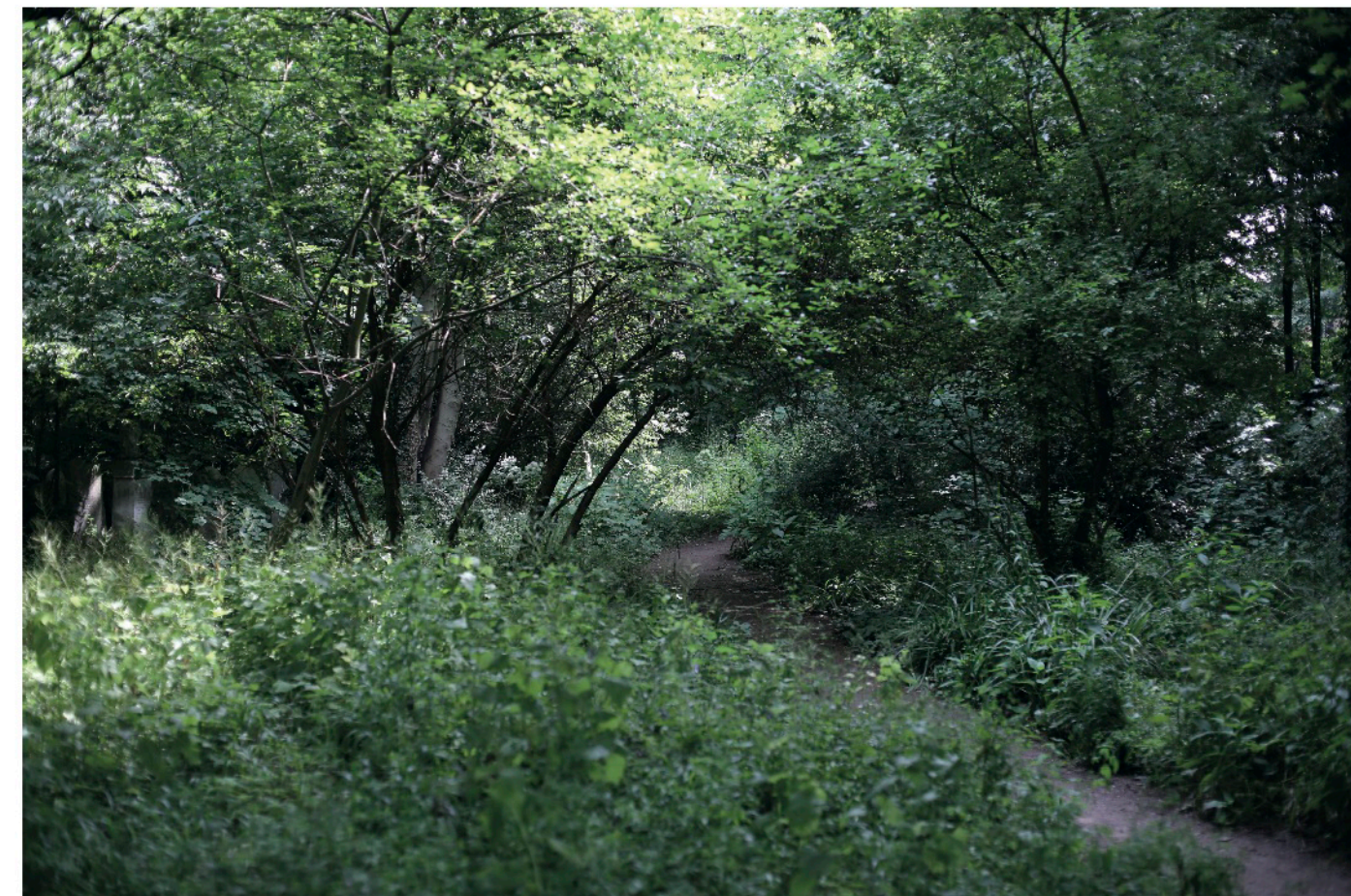


# REINVENT THE LODGE

## THE CEMETERY'S VALUE IS IN ITS MYSTERY

Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park is 31 acres of semi-wild woodland in London's Mile End. Under-used and languishing, the park is a walk-through, but few people hang out there.



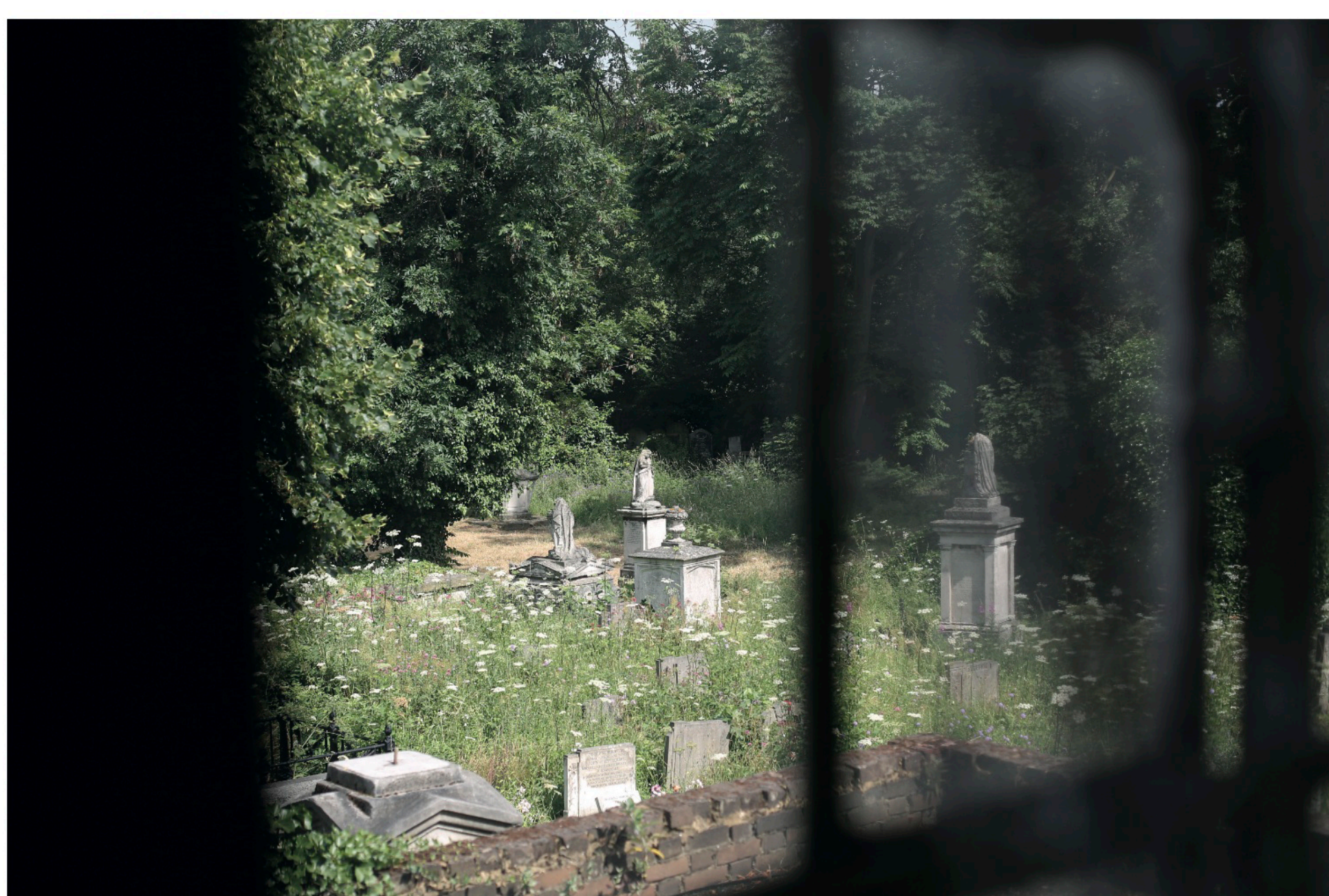
## THERE IS MORE VALUE TO BE HAD FROM ITS USE

Project re-imagines the derelict Lodge, which once housed a park-keeper, as a year-round community café and events space, with a laboratory for explorations of science and ecology. It seeks to create a much-needed hub for the park, where art, nature and traditional skills can be taught and celebrated. Uses include workshops, film screenings, education, training, science activity and cultural events.



## SHUFFLE FESTIVAL: FEASIBILITY STUDY

The hugely popular and well-received Shuffle Film Festival has been held in the park for previous two years. Ephemeral and imaginative, these events have been building up energy, forging relationships, growing capacity and generating legitimacy for permanent change. The festival has steered and moulded the project to make it what is wanted locally. The recent crowd-funding campaign has raised the full £58,000 needed.



## RATIONALE

Shuffle has been staging cultural events in the site and surrounding area for three years, bringing people in and catalysing change. Through its crowd-funding campaign, Shuffle has raised £58,000 to renovate the existing cemetery Lodge building into a unique cultural facility. Seeking to create a model that people can use again, the intention is to have a functioning business in place after three years with local people trained and running it.

Social processes that flow from this project are a mixture of formal and informal, structured and spontaneous. It draws in individuals and brings together local interest and support groups with schools, youth groups and institutions such as universities.

## THE MODEL

Revenue is generated by café and by renting out space in evening. The facility is maintained by volunteer input; the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park annually engages 3000 volunteers. The project also creates 4 to 5 new jobs, sustained by project revenue, rather than fund-raising, which would be vulnerable to cuts.

The local authority retains ownership of the Lodge, which is leased to Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park rent-free for three years, and sub-leased to in turn Shuffle.

The partnership with Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, a well-established organisation, sustains and channels local long-term engagement with the project.

The project is protected from attempts at external capitalization by its ownership by the local authority and its specificity as a historic cemetery and a nature reserve. Its partnership with Shuffle - and the 331 donors to its recent crowd-funding campaign - gives the project a voice and a constituency that will speak out protect it from any such attempt.

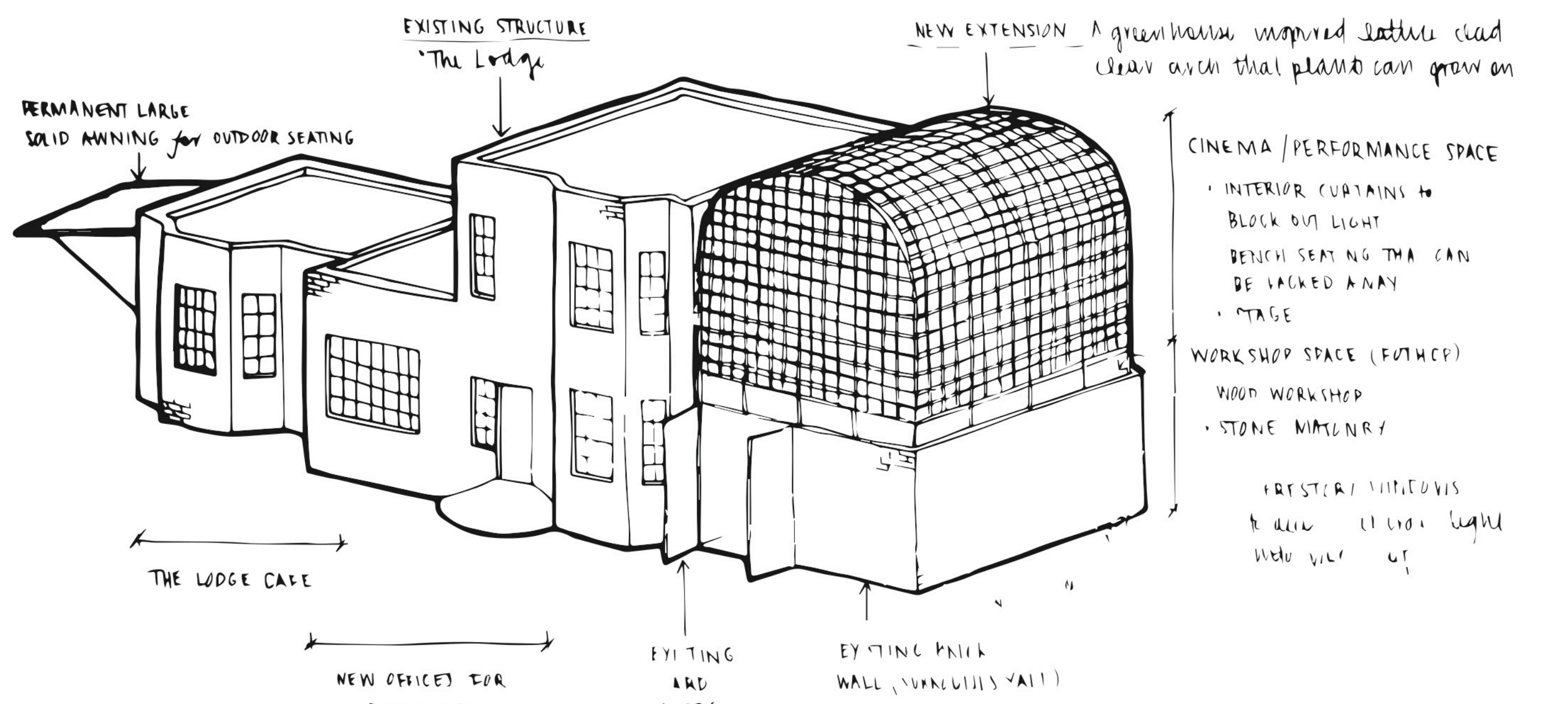
## CREATING VALUE

The value in this project is in its creation of a place to meet, a place to be and things to do. Giving people permission to inhabit this large space in new ways will help local people enjoy a greater sense of belonging and pride, a feeling of being at home.



## WHAT THIS PROCESS DOES FOR THE PARK

- drawing people in
- opening up the park spaces to local people
- encouraging the previously reluctant to enter
- bringing new value and inviting new uses
- exploring new ways to inhabit the space
- creating a place to meet and a place to be
- encouraging greater sense of ownership of this space



## COMMONING TAKES PLACE IN PARTNERSHIP

- The project is held by a partnership of:
- the landowner, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
  - Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, the charity which manages the park
  - Shuffle, a community organisation founded in 2013
  - local people

### Kate MacTiernan - Creative Director

Architecture graduate and urbanist with a passion for space, shaping the urban environment and connecting people in meaningful ways. Kate founded Shuffle Festival in 2013.

### Ken Greenway - Park Manager

Conservationist who has managed the cemetery park for thirteen years. Through the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, Ken co-ordinates an extraordinary programme of events and activities and directs the efforts of the park's 3000 volunteers.

### Lizzy Daish - Director of Strategy

A geographer deeply committed to social justice and public ownership of space, Lizzy founded Shuffle with Kate MacTiernan after becoming involved with local housing organisation East London Community Land Trust.

### Jessica Sutton - Design and Making

A theatre trained designer/maker with a background in architecture and textiles. Jess is responsible for all web, graphic and structure design for Shuffle Festival.

### India Hamilton - Food Programmer

A cordon bleu-trained chef, India creates delicious hearty festive food. She has programmed the food-related events for Shuffle Festival since Winter 2013.

### Grace Boyle - Science Director

### Maisie Rowe - Writer in Residence

Maisie is a landscape architect and writer. She worked in Hackney for regeneration charity Groundwork for four years and for fifteen years was an associate of Heatherwick Studio.

All photographs by Elena Heatherwick

# SHUFFLE

MAKING THOUGHTFUL PLACES FOR PUBLIC USE

