

Hello!

Welcome to the twenty-seventh newsletter from the Lambeth GP Food Co-operative. There's plenty of exciting news and updates from our latest activities, as well as some personal reflections and a chance to get to know our team.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. If you have any ideas for future stories or want any more information please get in touch with us by email gpfoodcoop@gmail.com, and don't forget to keep up-to-date with our activities through Twitter [@gpfoodcoop](https://twitter.com/gpfoodcoop) and our website <http://lambeth.gpfoodcoop.org.uk/>



NEWSLETTER – JULY 2022

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE NHS – 74 YEARS OLD ON 5TH JULY!

Update from Ed

Lambeth GP Food Co-op continues to attract attention and support for its pioneering work with and for the NHS and the communities in which it works.

We were contacted earlier this year by NHS colleagues who were collating examples of good green practice who have selected us to be a case study in a forthcoming NHS England Green Guide.

This accolade will be followed with the publication later this summer of an NHS England guidance document for Estates which will be distributed nationally to Directors and senior Estate management staff. Lambeth GP Food Co-op has been identified as a potential model for enabling Estates to more effectively address health inequalities. A national event with the working title "Building Health: How the NHS can use Estates to combat inequality" will highlight our work when it is held on Thursday June 30th.

Our work as a Co-operative has been noted by the wider international co-operative movement in a modest but important way. We will appear in the forthcoming International Co-operative Alliance report which will appear on Saturday July 2nd as part of the International Day of Co-operatives, which is a worldwide celebration of co-op's in action. We are honoured to be taking our place in contributing to enhancing mutual aid, solidarity and equality in our community and the local health economy.

In April we said good bye to our Project Manager, Zikra Khan, who left to join the Public Health team at Medway Council. We wish Zikra all the best in her new role and thank her for the exceptional work with us over the past year. We are delighted to welcome Mariya Papazova who began working with us as our new Project Manager in May.

Our work in Lambeth continues to evolve and grow. This includes further collaboration with Lambeth Council and its partners to design, build and service a new vegetable garden at West Norwood Health and Leisure Centre which, if all goes well, will open in early 2023. We are pleased to continue with our local NHS partners at the Pulross Centre in Brixton and with King's College Hospital. In this issue you will read a timely piece from Hannah Callingham who currently heads up the implementation of the Trust's Green Plan.

The Bromley by Bow Centre in Poplar has been a beacon of best practice in community focussed primary care which is described in Dan's piece. His work and the work of his colleagues continues to inspire us. We finally said our good-byes to Gordon in April and did so from the garden that gave him so much pleasure in his final years. His friend David Horsley pays tribute.

Ed Rosen, Project Director, Lambeth GP Food Co-op



Right: Hilda opening the events at Another Royal Party on a sunny day in Stockwell. 10 people attended including Sandra, Maria, Patricia, John, Christine, Nelson, Vincent, Audrey, Anthony and Hilda.



Above: A picture is worth a thousand words. Photo taken at King's College Hospital, 2022.

Improving Air Quality

The impact of poor air quality in the UK is an increasing health concern and is adding to the burden on the NHS. Approximately 30% of preventable deaths in England are due to non-communicable diseases which are connected with air pollution. Unless air quality is improved, the health and social care costs of air pollution in England could reach £18.6 billion by 2035.

On 16th June to mark Clean Air Day at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, we invited our staff, partners and local community to learn more about the public health threats presented by air pollution and the ever-increasing risks to our society's most vulnerable.

During the day, we hosted a number of stalls at King's College Hospital from Mums for Lungs, MedAct, SE5 anti-idling group and King's Green Champions. Throughout the day, we engaged with staff, patients and visitors to understand travel patterns through an interactive map, share our Green Plan, promote our staff sustainability network and gain feedback and ideas from staff and the population we serve.

A lunchtime webinar was held to promote awareness of air pollution and its effects on health outcomes. The webinar focussed on how individuals and healthcare organisations can make a difference to improve air quality: 'The Tragedy of Air Pollution. An Urgent Call to Healthcare Professionals to Act'. We were delighted to have Ed Rosen from Lambeth GP Food Coop sharing how the co-op is supporting reduced food miles and patient communities among our other guest speakers, Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah and Lambeth Council.

Rosamund became a clean air advocate after her 9-year-old daughter, Ella, died in 2013 from asthma. Ella is now the first person in the world to have air pollution listed as a cause of death on her death certificate.

Lambeth Council shared their progress to date to tackle air pollution. Lambeth will publish a draft Air Quality Action Plan for consultation in summer 2022 and want to hear from residents, community organisations, businesses and other stakeholders on ideas to improve air quality in Lambeth. To get involved, visit <https://cleanairlambeth.commonplace.is/>

At King's, we have recently developed a 3-year Clean Air Strategy aligned with the Clean Air Hospitals Framework. As a healthcare provider and anchor institution within our community, we have a role to play in reducing our contributions to air pollution and actively working to improve local air quality. Tackling local air pollution is a key priority of both the Trust's Green Plan: Sustainable Healthcare for All and South East London Integrated Care System. We are increasingly working on ways to improve air quality across all Trust sites and are fully supportive of the work undertaken by Lambeth GP Food Coop which continues to support the local community and our Greener NHS ambition.

Hannah Callingham, Net Zero Consultant, King's College Hospital

How LGPFC can support the development of new understandings and approaches within Primary Care

As we consider how we support transition from a health system and its organisations that were established with the almost sole purpose of treating illness in individual patients to one that embraces the function of supporting health creation at individual and community levels, models such as the Bromley by Bow Centre and the Lambeth GP Food Co-op are becoming increasingly important.

Founded in 1984, the Bromley by Bow Centre is an internationally renowned Healthy Living Centre that was established and is governed by local people with the aim of transforming the community and the lives of its residents. The Centre is based in Tower Hamlets, in an area of high deprivation and whilst providing universal services, focuses on those with greatest needs and vulnerabilities, sometimes considered the hardest to reach and engage.

For over 35 years the Centre has worked with its community, responding to its needs and aspirations, facilitating capacity building and creating opportunities. In 1987 the Centre took the initiative of building a new GP practice as part of creating the first integrated healthy living centre in the UK. The intention being to co-design a comprehensive model that included: primary care; community health services; social care; public health and community based mental health programmes; together with a wide range of services to meet immediate social needs and improve longer term socio-economic determinants of health.

The model reimagines the relationship between organisations and communities, professionals and residents, as relational rather than transactional, with on-going processes of coproduction informed by community research and a community/practitioner devised outcomes framework.

Bromley by Bow Centre and change within Primary Care

The Bromley by Bow Healthy Living Centre model also sought to bring about a profound re-imagining of the purpose of Primary Care and its transformation, adopting health creation approaches. This included fundamentally reframing the relationship with patients and community, expanding the range of staff roles required, co-designing processes and activities, and rethinking physical estate in which primary care is delivered.

A decade ago we created a population health team within Primary Care to work with patients and the community, developing projects and partnerships to support health enhancing behaviours, the management of long term conditions and build community resilience and resourcefulness.

We are what we eat, we are what we do!

As the organisations of the health system explore ways to move towards a health creation model it is critical they find concrete approaches to adopt that will make that transition tangible. Tangible for their model, their staff teams and patients as a way of reframing purpose and the relationships needed to deliver against that purpose.

The value of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op is that it represents an example of a tangible initiative that primary care staff can take, to co-create with their patients, that epitomises health creation, promoting wellbeing and community engagement.

Significantly it is also based on the principles of co-operativism and sustainability and the idea that the health system, its practitioners and patients together, might engage in activity that makes them healthier and in doing so also contribute to the supply of healthy food to NHS hospitals.

Dan Hopewell, Director of Knowledge & Innovation, Bromley By Bow Centre

Remembering Gordon Hutchins: Humanitarian and Gardener

On Wednesday 27th April, Jennie Lee Gardens hosted the commemoration of the life of Gordon Hutchins who died aged 87 last year on 1st October. It was fitting that the event was held on this site, because he was a most keen member of the gardening group set up by the Lambeth GP Food Co-Op. As a close friend of Gordon for the last ten years he often told me about the time he spent in the garden and sometimes gave me vegetables he had grown.

I originally met Gordon as we were both members of Lambeth Pensioners Action Group and we developed a good friendship over the years. We would meet once a week at cafes in Brixton, Stockwell and Clapham and over cups of tea, talk about current events and football. He was a modest and humble person and once our friendship grew closer, he told me a little about his life.

A merchant seaman as a young man, he settled in New Zealand in the 1950s and aware of inequality and racism. He joined the Communist Party where he and his comrades supported the Maori people of New Zealand in their struggle against racial oppression. Gordon returned to Britain in 1960 and as a communist became active in trade union work and in the ongoing fight against racism.

In 1971, he was approached and asked if he was prepared to travel to apartheid South Africa posing as a tourist to distribute African National Congress (ANC) leaflets and pamphlets. With the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela and his comrades in the 1960s and many members of the liberation movement having to leave the country, Oliver Tambo, the ANC leader in exile, suggested white radicals and activists in London be recruited to go to South Africa to distribute ANC material to show the people that their organisations were not dead. The women and men who volunteered for their dangerous missions were warned that if captured they would be tortured and imprisoned, which did happen to two of them, but all approached, agreed to go.

Gordon and a comrade undertook their mission to St Elizabeth in the summer of 1971 and his spellbinding account alongside 30 others are in the excellent book "*London Recruits: The Secret War Against Apartheid*" by Ken Keable, published by Merlin. The volunteers became known as the London Recruits, and after apartheid their work was acknowledged throughout South Africa where they are seen as heroes for their unconditional solidarity with the South African people.

As I wrote earlier, Gordon was modest and humble about his outstanding life. He was also courageous despite health problems. He had Parkinson's Disease, but never dwelt on those matters. When he was admitted to King's College Hospital last year and his health declined, he showed the same courage but also great dignity when he grew closer to death. Hearing of his death, the Veterans League of the ANC said in a message:

"Our people owe a great deal to internationalists such as Comrade Gordon Hutchins and their courageous solidarity in action which played a significant role in assisting our people in overthrowing the brutal apartheid regime."

The celebration of his life in Jennie Lee Gardens, a place he loved, was attended by colleagues from the gardening group, his sister and cousin, members of Lambeth Pensioners Action Group, old friends and by a representative of the South African Embassy. The latter on behalf of the South African people said "From the bottom of our hearts we are grateful".

David Horsley