

## Hello!

Welcome to the eleventh 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](mailto:gpfoodcoop@gmail.com), and don't forget to keep up-to-date with our activities through Twitter [@gpfoodcoop](https://twitter.com/gpfoodcoop) and website [www.lgpfc.co.uk](http://www.lgpfc.co.uk)



**NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2017**

### Update from Ed

Since we began the project in 2013 we have celebrated NHS Sustainability Day by launching a food growing garden at a Lambeth GP surgery. This year we launched at two – the Grantham Practice and Beckett House surgery in Stockwell.

The launch was attended by several patients who are interested in joining the gardening group as well as colleagues from hospitals in South West London who came to learn about our work. We also welcomed colleagues from NESTA, Lambeth Council and King's College Hospital, as well as LGPFC Board members.

Councillor Sonia Winifred, representing Lambeth Council, made an opening presentation in which she praised our work as an important and valued contribution to improving community health and wellbeing across the Borough. Sonia looked forward to closer ties with Lambeth GP Food Co-op in the future and we welcome enhancing our relationship with the Council in the future.

At the time of writing we are in discussions with Dr Nico Scaravilli from Crown Dale Surgery about building a food growing garden on site and future newsletters will report on our progress.

The monthly fresh vegetable stall is back in business at King's College Hospital on the last Thursday of the month. The stall is managed by Millicent and Grazyna from Corner Surgery, who have established good relationships with our regular 'customers' many of whom are medical consultants from the Trust. Our partnership with David Morgan and Lisa Baker at Medirest are at the heart of our work at King's and we are very grateful to David's team for supplying fabulous refreshments at our launch in Stockwell.

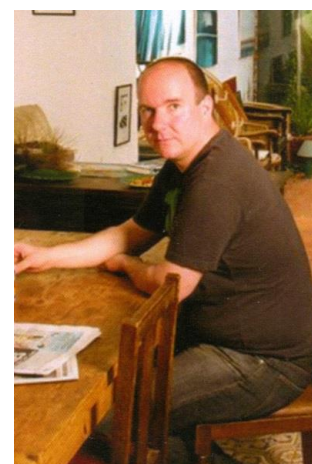
We are honoured to be working with Rosie Oglesby, National Director of Feeding Britain, who describes our emerging work together in her newsletter piece. We will report on this work in our next newsletter. At the end of May we returned to the BMA for the second year where we contributed to the Chelsea Fringe event which is led by Daniela Sikora and Mark Stuart from the British Medical Journal. Daniela has also contributed to our newsletter.

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

### Sad news – Grant Burford

Grant was one of the wonderful people who worked behind the scenes to make the Lambeth GP Food Co-op a success. Although Grant, who has died suddenly, was employed by the NHS as the IT Lead at Clapham Park Group Practice he also doubled up as our webmaster, a role he took on last year and continued until his death last month. I first met Grant over two years ago when we met at Clapham Park to firstly build a food growing garden in the surgery, spending many hours with him and his colleagues as we set about recruiting patients to the group, planting vegetables and keeping an eye on how they were all flourishing. Grant enjoyed spending time pottering around the garden with a cup of tea in one hand and a trowel in the other. I will remember his lovely smile, his hospitality and his humanity.

We would like to remember Grant with planting an apple orchard in the garden at Clapham Park Group Practice. He loved apple trees. We have learnt that there is an apple tree called Burford Red, which seems just the tree he might have loved. (by Ed Rosen)



## Feeding Lambeth

Following a successful launch meeting in January, organisations working to combat hunger and food poverty in Lambeth have begun working together as Feeding Lambeth. Feeding Lambeth is part of the Feeding Britain initiative, which aims to eliminate hunger and its underlying causes in the UK. Set up by Frank Field MP and a cross party group of MPs and peers, Feeding Britain is working in 12 areas of the UK. Lambeth is our first pilot in London.

The Lambeth pilot is coordinated by the Lambeth GP Food Co-op and the Lambeth Food Partnership, and brings together a wide range of organisations working in the borough, including food banks, community food projects, GPs, hospital nutrition teams, London Ambulance Service, and academics. They will be working together to reduce hunger in the borough, and address the underlying causes.

At the latest meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March, the following priorities were agreed for Feeding Lambeth:

**Lambeth Health and Hunger project:** Feeding Lambeth will work with 3 GP Surgeries (Lambeth Walk Practice, Grantham Practice and Crown Dale Medical Centre) on a pilot project. If successful this could later be rolled out to other GP practices in Lambeth. The pilot will:

1. Using the existing Lambeth Larder as a basis, develop a simple leaflet that will allow GP practices to sign post people with confidence to a range of food projects.
2. Work with GP practices, patient engagement groups to disseminate information about support available within the community
3. Increase understanding and awareness of nutrition among GPs
4. Pilot social prescribing in Lambeth
5. Explore making fruit and vegetables available in GP waiting rooms and hospitals.
6. Adapt the resources so they can also be available through food banks and hospital services to refer people on to wider support around food

**Access to healthy food:** piloting and scaling up initiatives to help people access healthy food, particularly in areas identified as 'food deserts' or 'food swamps'. These will include, in particular, support for older people and other at-risk groups.

**School holiday food provision:** helping scale up and secure sustainable support for projects providing food and fun activities to children during the holidays. School holiday are, for many families, a time of particular strain on household budgets, as children no longer have access to the free school meals, breakfast clubs and after school clubs that are available during term time. For more information on this issue, the *Hungry Holidays* report, recently published by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger, may be of interest.

**Local authority action:** exploring ways to replicate successful initiatives taken by other local authorities around the country to combat hunger, including:

- Automatic registration for free school meals, to unlock additional Pupil Premium funding
- Use of regulations for private rented sector landlords, to ensure the provision of cooking facilities
- Increasing uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, including facilitating participation of local market traders

The next Feeding Lambeth meeting will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 9.30-11.30am, and is open to any organisations working on food poverty and hunger in Lambeth. For more details, please contact [feedinglambeth@gmail.com](mailto:feedinglambeth@gmail.com)

Rosie Oglesby, National Director, Feeding Britain

## Support from Lambeth Council

As the Labour Councillor of Knight's Hill Ward, Lambeth Council cabinet member for equalities and a member of the Lambeth Health and Wellbeing Board, I have taken a keen interest in improving the health of local residents particularly those on low incomes struggling to eat healthily.

Lambeth is the food flagship borough, working to involve the community in food growing initiatives that help Lambeth residents develop a love of healthy and sustainable food. We want local people to gain knowledge and skills to grow, and enjoy food with family friends and the wider community.

Above all, we want to improve the health of residents; addressing poor health and childhood obesity which is at an alarming rate in Lambeth.

Since its launch in March 2013, the Lambeth GP Food Co-op has taken forward this health agenda, delivering a programme which reaches the wider community. The Lambeth GP Food Co-op continues to bring together an inter-generational model of community cohesion through food growing gardens. Bringing together those who have long term health conditions, and who may be isolated and lonely. The food growing gardens help local people make social contacts and form new friendships. The Lambeth GP Food Co-op has contributed to the NHS National Sustainability day by organising an event in primary care or general practice to raise awareness of the important role of community focused health care and its connection to the wider sustainability agenda.

I firmly believe that gardening is the universal language of all peoples cutting across language barriers and cultural boundaries.

The launch of the new garden at Grantham and Beckett House surgeries supported by Hyde Housing partnership is further testament of the need to continue this health agenda providing shared activities for residents. We are all familiar with the term "Use it or lose it".

We all need to keep active to sustain good health and wellbeing. I know, having spoken with Ed that one of the challenges we face is sustainability, to ensure this project will continue to deliver the much needed health and wellbeing activities for all in our communities but more so, for the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Councillor Sonia Winifred, Lambeth Council



Councillor Sonia Winifred speaking at the launch of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op at Grantham Practice and Beckett House Surgery – it was a rather cold and blustery afternoon!

## Plant, nutrition and gardens for healthier people

These three themes are inspirational and are the guiding principles and work of Lambeth GP Food Co-op. The British Medical Association (BMA) in Tavistock Square is taking part in its second Chelsea Fringe event. This year we want to probe and deepen our understanding of what range of plants can be easily grown and offer 'nourishment - as medicine'. We welcome the return of our friends Lambeth GP Food Co-op, UCL School of Pharmacy, together with first time guests; Progress, Grounded Ecotherapy, Arup, and London-wide LMC for GPs.

We are seeing growing numbers of large and small organizations and passionate individuals who are making such gardens happen in the midst of our cities. This, in my opinion, is clearly part of the story in developing the vision of '2020 Healthier Cities', set up by the World Health Organization (WHO):

"The WHO Healthy Cities project is a global movement. It engages local governments in health development through a process of political commitment, institutional change, capacity-building, partnership-based planning and innovative projects. The Healthy Cities movement promotes comprehensive and systematic policy and planning for health and emphasizes:

- the need to address inequality in health and urban poverty
- the needs of vulnerable groups
- participatory governance
- the social, economic and environmental determinants of health.

This is not about the health sector only. It includes health considerations in economic, regeneration and urban development efforts." ([www.euro.who.int](http://www.euro.who.int))

The productive urban garden offers an extraordinary overlap between three areas; health, social and environment and should be taken evermore seriously as part of these wider policy initiatives and decisions.

I'm reading at the moment 'A Curious History of Vegetables' by Wolf D. Storl. It truly is a delightful ramble in folk tales, garden tips, recipes, and medicinal plant references. Equally fascinating are the references of certain key vegetables in both their past and future impact in terms of shaping our history and culture. For example, an excerpt about Green Amaranth (*Amaranthus lividus*, photo right):

"For the Aztecs amaranth grain was one of the most important *cereals* ...[as it ] contains high quality nutrients ...leaf proteins, vitamins and minerals... In modern times the seeds of New World amaranth varieties have attracted attention as a possible means of feeding the ever-increasing world population."

Daniela Sikora, BMA House Gardener



# The BMA Garden for Health & Wellbeing

*London Open Garden Squares Weekend*

*Saturday 17 June 2017*

*10am – 6pm*

*BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR*

**Book now [www.opensquares.org](http://www.opensquares.org)**

The picturesque garden of the British Medical Association (BMA) Headquarters is a hidden secret in central London, designed by architect Sir Edwin Lutyens and on the site of Charles Dickens' own house and garden. Our 2017 planting explores medicinal herbs and their historical role in health and nutrition.

This year, through interactive exhibits and onsite experts, our garden will showcase local community organisations using gardens to improve health, wellbeing and nutrition of patients and communities in London.



# 2017 Community Showcase

## University College London Pharmacy School Forgotten Plants for Medicine and Nutrition

Throughout the day students and teachers from the UCL School of Pharmacy will provide guided walking discussions to explore the scientific and nutritional aspects of medicinal plants, particularly those growing in the BMA Garden. Guests to the garden can learn about the history of botanical medicines, and their role in modern day medicine and nutrition.

## Yoga and Wellbeing Sessions Gardens for Mindfulness and Wellbeing

The garden can be a therapeutic place of peaceful relaxation and reflection. Yoga and wellbeing teacher, Carol Stuart will offer guests a unique sanctuary within the garden to explore the concept of mindfulness and relaxation through participating in guided meditation and simple yoga and breathing exercises that can be incorporated into our busy lives or to compliment the care for patients.

## Charles Dickens Museum London The Culinary Garden of Charles Dickens

Our garden is built on the site of Tavistock House, the home of Charles Dickens from 1851 to 1860, where he wrote Bleak House, Hard Times, and Great Expectations. Experts from the Dickens Museum will be on hand to talk about his interest in plants and food. Of particular curiosity is the little-known cookbook What Shall We Have for Dinner? written by Mrs Charles Dickens under the pen name of Maria Clutterbuck, featuring foods that may have grown on this site.

## Grounded Ecotherapy London's most unique horticultural therapy project

Grounded Ecotherapy offers recovery for people and places, helping those who have suffered mental health, substance misuse issues or homelessness, to get back on their feet. Meet the members of this unique project who create thriving green spaces from neglected urban environments, with extensive knowledge and skills in horticulture.

## Thrive UK Gardens Changing Lives and Improving Health

Gardening can help rebuild a person's strength after an accident or illness, and can provide a purposeful activity for someone coping with a difficult period in their life. It can lift moods and help people to connect with others, reducing isolation by forming friendships and improve communications skills. Meet the members of Thrive UK who are using gardening to change the lives of disabled people.

## Urban Growth Project – Jobs in Mind Horticultural Training to Improve Mental Health and Wellbeing

Urban Growth helps individuals with severe and enduring mental health issues develop personal and vocational skills through horticultural training. Meet the members of Urban Growth who use practical and therapeutic work-based programme training to help participants improve their mental health, wellbeing and learn valuable vocational skills.

## Lambeth GP Food Co-op Gardens Uniting Patients, GPs and Community

Meet the team from the Lambeth Food Co-op, co-operative of patients, doctors, nurses, and Lambeth People who have created a network of food growing gardens across the NHS in Lambeth. We build gardens in GP surgeries, where patients, especially those with long term health conditions learn how to grow food in a safe and secure environment. Lambeth GP Food Co-op was awarded 'Celebrating Excellence in Patient Participation in Healthcare' by NHS England in 2016.

## Progress Empowering People and Communities through Gardens

Progress engages people from the local community by organising horticultural activities in areas in need of regeneration. Meet the members who teach participants about gardening skills, with the aim of developing mental and physical wellbeing and positive transferable skills through such practices. We are also working with agriculturalists in Italy, to share sustainable practices across continents.

## Londonwide LMCs Improving Patient Care through GP Practices

Londonwide Local Medical Committees (LMCs) is the voice of GPs in the capital, representing 7,000 GPs and over 1,300 practices in London. They ensure that London GPs and their practices have access to the support they need to help them provide the best possible service and excellent care to their patients.

*The 2017 BMA Garden for Health and Wellbeing project has been a curated by Daniela Sikora, BMA Gardener, and Mark Stuart, BMJ Clinical Lead for Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health.*



Londonwide LMCs  
The professional voice of London general practice

