

## Hello!

Welcome to the sixteenth 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 our website <http://lambeth.gpfoodcoop.org.uk/>



**NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2019**

### **A royal visit to help celebrate our 6th anniversary**

We were honoured by the presence of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to our 6th anniversary celebration at the Stockwell Community Centre on 7th February.

Attended by patients and GPs from Lambeth as well as many other well-wishers from across London, Her Royal Highness kindly agreed to cut this extraordinary cake, specially-baked by Jonathan Wilmshurst, Denise, Kevin, Kimberley, Laura and Helen from the Grantham Practice.

Her Royal Highness' visit recognises the positive contributions that the Co-op has made to the health of local people living with long term conditions as well as the sustainability of the health and social care system.

In a short speech, Dr Michael Dixon, NHS national Clinical Lead for Social Prescribing drew attention to our Co-op's value to the wider NHS community as a model of social prescribing in action:

*"Food is the single most important factor in health and disease. But what you are achieving is not just about food. It is about physical activity and social interaction which are also very important for health. You are also leading the way in connecting general practice with its community and enabling it to offer something beyond pills and potions."*

Dr Ed Rosen, Project Director for the Lambeth GP Food Co-op said: "We were delighted to welcome HRH the Duchess of Cornwall to the Lambeth GP Food Coop and it was fantastic to see our work recognised in such a way, Our GP garden communities provide a space and a reason for people to socialise, learn and grow food together. People who participate are improving their own health and wellbeing. We hope to inspire others to replicate our model of community engagement elsewhere."



## Michelle's motivation

Starting in November 2018, I've now been working as Project Manager alongside Ed and others for about 5 months. My experience so far with the Lambeth GP Food Co-op has been filled with learning, culture, and exploration. It has been truly unique as never before have I carried out the same role in a company in so many different locations, with opportunities to meet new people and discover new parts of the city every week. In that respect, it has showed me the inner workings of true co-operative efforts; the importance of stakeholder commitment, open communication, and local interest.

I came to London to study a master's degree with the purpose of learning about all that goes into public health nutrition. However, I wasn't expecting to have a first-row seat on how it plays out in the real world with the ability to make immediate connections between the classroom and real patient experiences. What's more, I certainly would not have believed anybody who told me I would have the opportunity to contribute to the planning of an event welcoming a visit from the Royal Palace. I enjoyed working alongside staff members of partner organisations that were all passionate about the cause in order to put together this high-profile event. Coming from the U.S., there are a lot of similarities to draw between my home country and here, however when it comes to the Royal Family, it becomes much clearer that I am no longer in Massachusetts. It was very special to see how much that event meant to so many organisations, including the LGPFC as their hard work over the years was now being recognised and shared in a unique and extraordinary way.

A big part of my motivation for furthering my education in this field came from my experience in community nutrition and being able to see first-hand how powerful food is as a determinant of health. While that work focused heavily on what is eaten, how its prepared, and what goes into the planning and shopping for that food, this work experience has shown me another side to the same coin. That being the connection between all the positive opportunities for health and producing food. When the raw materials to grow food are brought together at a place traditionally associated with western medicine such as pills and injections, its beautiful to see how the perspective of healing changes to a more holistic one. I am confident there is much to be learned by clinical and community settings around the world and I hope to spread the interest as wide as possible.

Michelle Gilman, Project Manager



Putting the finishing touches to the LED lighting system at vertical garden Rare Diseases Centre St Thomas' Hospital

## Better Fridays at Brockwell Park

From April 26<sup>th</sup>, on Friday afternoons from 1pm to 4pm, Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses (BPCG) are offering 'Better Fridays', free therapeutic gardening sessions. This is the second year Cathy and Cat have run these sessions. They are a mix of gentle gardening, chat and cups of tea for people who have been feeling a bit low or unwell. Come from 1pm for a shared lunch – bring anything you fancy - and stay on until we have our tea break at 3.30pm.



All are welcome to come and give 'Better Fridays' a go. Last year, some of our participants said:

*'I felt so much better after coming to session today. Felt low and tired this morning but made myself come. So glad I did!'*

*'Fridays are now my Greenhouses day. I love coming here. I will still come even after the project finishes but I hope it will continue next year.'*

BPCG is in the middle of Brockwell Park between the walled garden and the tennis courts. BPCG run a drop in garden volunteering scheme, school visits, family events, courses and workshops. Mon to Thurs they are open for children's activities, Thurs to Sun for garden volunteering and public visiting. Find out what's on: [www.brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk/events](http://www.brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk/events)

Thanks to the Finnis Scott Foundation for enabling BPCG to put Better Fridays 2019 on for free.

To know more about Better Fridays or about BPCG, contact Kate by telephone 07834 343664, email [director@brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk](mailto:director@brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk) or drop in Thursday to Sunday 10am to 5pm.

The team from Essentia at Guys Hospital getting their hands dirty and taking measurements at Jennie Lee Garden as planter construction begins for the newest Lambeth GP Food Co-op garden, Pulross Centre in Brixton

From left: Barry Whale, Wojciech Janas, Jeremy Galea

