

Hello!

Welcome to the fifth newsletter from the Lambeth GP Food Co-operative. There's plenty of exciting news and updates from our latest activities, including some new opportunities for next year.

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).



NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2015

Welcome to new board member Maryam!

We are delighted to welcome Maryam Zonouzi who has recently joined the Lambeth GP Food Co-op Board of Directors. Maryam is a social entrepreneur, academic, disability activist, business and technology innovator. Maryam has deep experience of working in the voluntary sector before moving into social enterprise as a way of accelerating change for individuals with care and support needs.

Maryam has been associated with the project since its beginning in 2013 and will contribute to Lambeth GP Food Co-op's transition into becoming an independent social business. Maryam has co-authored 'Personalisation and Social Work' and 'Community Health Nursing', where she extended and revised a chapter written by the late Professor Bob Sang on co-production and patient and public engagement. The Lambeth GP Food Co-op is a practical realisation of Bob Sang's interest in social enterprise, mutuals and co-operatives which are areas of interest which Maryam shares. Maryam holds a number of academic posts including a research post at the Tilda Goldberg Centre at the University of Bedfordshire researching the impact of Reclaiming Social Work.

We look forward to a creative relationship with Maryam as part of the team.



We are closing for the Christmas break from Friday 18th December and will return to work in early January 2016.

We wish all the participants and supporters of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Reflecting back on a successful 2015

This is our final newsletter for 2015. We began the year with planning meetings led by the Assistant Director of Estates and Capital projects at Kings College Hospital and his staff. We were meeting to implement a plan to enable patients from Corner Surgery in Coldharbour Lane, and others to grow food on hospital land made available for this purpose.

This was we believe, a rare example of an NHS acute trust and a local GP surgery collaborating in supporting food growing, which since the spring has gone from strength to strength. We were delighted to report in our last newsletter that a lettuce grown by patients at Jennie Lee House won a Royal Horticultural Society award. This must be a first for patient participation in NHS food growing!

We close the year with the fabulous news of a working partnership with Medirest which is described more fully in a separate piece from colleagues in this newsletter. We will report on these exciting developments in our next newsletter.

When we began the project almost three years ago we aspired to create a co-operative which was organically integrated within local community relations. We placed collaborative decision making at the heart of the organisation we were shaping together, and during our first year regular meetings were held at 336 Brixton Road which were open to everyone who actively supported the aims, aspirations and dreams of the Lambeth GP Food Co-op. These meetings enabled co-op members and friends to share their learning from the project so far, to build on common achievements and also understand together the challenges that we were experiencing. It was in this spirit that 23 people gathered at 336 on Friday 27th November to continue talking planning, and improving what we do as members of the Co-op.

We will publish the full outcomes from the November workshop in the new year. The session was facilitated by Dr Maryam Zonouzi, who has recently joined the Board. Maryam is an experienced and skilled facilitator, having recently led the Peer Exchange network. Maryam also holds senior academic posts at Buckinghamshire New University, University of Bedfordshire and London South Bank University, and will be contributing to the evaluation of our first cycle of activity 2013-16.

A few days ago on Friday 11th December we held one of our regular cooperative members training workshops for patients, GP's and nurses. This was held at Mawbey Health Centre, where the Lambeth GP Food Co-op has been supported for the past 18 months by surgery staff and other NHS colleagues. We are planning a second workshop in the new year for people unable to attend last week.

Our relationship with Kings College Hospital will continue in the new year when we welcome the next cohort of nutrition students on placement with us. Having student placements with the Lambeth GP Food Co-op provides us with fresh ideas, new ways of looking at what we are doing and also helps us to relate our work to a wider NHS context in which diet and nutrition play important roles in contributing to improving patient health and wellbeing. We think the students also benefit from being with us too!

Earlier this year the Lambeth GP Food Co-op was referred to in the report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger, chaired by Rt. Hon. Frank Field MP. We were pleased to attend the launch of the final report at the House of Commons on Thursday 10th December and have an opportunity to present our work briefly to one of our neighbours, the Most Revd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury. We look forward to a further conversation with the Archbishops office in the new year.

I would like to say thank you to all the people who, over the past year, and the past years have contributed their time, knowledge, skills and humanity to making the project a successful example of what we can do together to improve our lives. I would also like to thank Lambeth Council and NHS Lambeth CCG for enabling us to begin the journey and continue it into 2016 and beyond.

Ed Rosen
Project Director, Lambeth GP Food Co-op



Plenty of discussion taking place
at the GP Food Co-op AGM on
Friday 27 November

Exciting new partnership with Medirest

In April 2015 the Department of Health launched, 'The Hospital Food Standards Panel's report on standards for food and drink in NHS hospitals.' The report recommends that all NHS hospitals develop and maintain a food and drink strategy which will be underpinned by five key standards. These standards now form part of every NHS standard contract.

A key element of these standards are that hospitals need to make the hospital food they serve healthier and more sustainable, for example by increasing fruit and vegetable consumption among its customers, reducing the carbon footprint of the food sold and ensuring, where possible, fresh produce is as seasonal as possible. These standards will apply to both in-house and out-sourced catering operations within NHS hospitals.

Medirest, the specialist healthcare arm of Compass Group, provide food for patients, visitors and staff at over 30 NHS trusts in the UK, including King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill. With the Hospital Food Standards forming an integral part of Medirest's operating principles, it was with great interest that we heard about the work being carried out by the Lambeth GP Food Co-op.

We are very lucky here at Denmark Hill that the Trust have supported a garden being set up at Jennie Lee House where eight planters have been installed allowing the team to grow fruit and vegetables. We felt that the work going on within the gardens of Jennie Lee House was so simple yet inspired and we wanted to harness this good work in a way that would also benefit others who were not directly involved in the project. We have therefore invited Lambeth GP Food Co-op members to hold a weekly fruit and vegetable stall at one of our Medirest units here at Denmark Hill, where the locally grown fruit and vegetables will be sold to patients, staff and visitors. All profits will go back to the Co-op so that they can invest and grow the project. However, providing a weekly stall will require a ready supply of delicious fruit and vegetables and we will be providing the project with some additional resources to see them on their way. We cannot wait to try the fruits of their labour!

The launch date for the fruit and vegetable stall at Denmark Hill will be March 24th 2016 – NHS Sustainability Day.

As the Hospital Food Standards highlight, health and wellbeing is a key priority for government, businesses and the NHS but amidst all the mandatory guidance, best practice guidance and press stories, it can sometimes be hard to remember what we are all trying to achieve. The partnership between Medirest and Lambeth GP Food Co-op will demonstrate the requirements in practise – supporting the local community and offering access to healthy produce.

We are hopeful that from this other opportunities will also arise and Medirest look forward to working with the Lambeth Food Co-op to grow the project. Look out for further communication over the coming weeks and months!

David Morgan, Medirest Operations Manager, Denmark Hill
Lisa Hunter, Medirest Catering Dietitian, Denmark Hill