

Hello!

Welcome to the twenty-fifth 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 – DECEMBER 2021

AGM Notice

On Saturday 18th December we are planning to hold our AGM at the Black Cultural Archives, 1 Windrush Square, Brixton starting at 12 pm. All are welcome. If you would like to attend please email us at gpfoodcoop@gmail.com

Remembering Gordon Hutchins

Gordon Hutchins died on Friday 1st October at King's College Hospital. He was 87 years old. Gordon was a member of the gardening group at Jennie Lee, KCH having started very soon after we opened the garden in 2015.

I had tried many times to find out more about Gordon's life but was always rebuffed. He was a very private man. He was an enthusiastic gardener and really was the heart of the group along with his friend Millicent, both of whom were Dr David Wickstead's patients at Corner surgery.

I have many photos of Gordon, my favourite being him poring over the NHS Wormery at Jennie Lee of which he was the proud keeper.

After Gordon had passed away, then the truth came out. Gordon is hero of the anti-apartheid struggle and I will briefly describe his political involvement with the African National Congress (ANC). One of his closest friends told us Gordon's story.

He was born into a poor working class family in London. Once able to he joined the merchant navy landing up in New Zealand where he was involved in anti-racist activity with the Maori community in the 1950's. Gordon was recruited in London to secretly visit South Africa at the height of the anti-apartheid struggle in the mid 1960's and carry out clandestine political actions on behalf of the then banned ANC. This involved dangerous work including the detonating of harmless 'leaflet bombs' in areas like Soweto to ensure that people knew that the ANC, led by Nelson Mandela, was alive and active. Gordon was never caught. His story was included in the recent publication "London Recruits" which honours the many volunteers who left London for South Africa with the sole aim of undermining the then racist regime which finally happened in the early 1990's.

We all have personal histories and Gordon although reluctant to share his with us will always be remembered as someone who was much, much more than a 'patient'. His life will be celebrated by his friends, comrades and fellow gardeners in the Jennie Lee garden which is a fitting place to pay our deepest respects to our friend.

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

Update from Ed

I think our readers may be interested to learn about our work with refugees and asylum seekers in Lambeth, especially as this issue is very much in the news. A partnership arrangement was agreed between the Brixton based Health Inclusion Team led by two GP's based at the Pavilion Surgery and ourselves led by Dr Liz Williams to deliver a joint Mindfulness Gardening Project to a pilot group of clients which ended on October 22nd.

Weekly sessions were held at the Katakata garden at Brixton Hill and included a Mindfulness session led by an NHS Wellbeing lead from Pavillion surgery, followed by a gardening session led by Hilda Castillo- Binger. The sessions would end with a communal vegetarian meal at the Katakata restaurant. The 3 month pilot project is being evaluated by staff from the partnership with a view to continuing the delivery of gardening sessions next year.

On Sunday 15th August we welcomed a group of volunteers from the Vauxhall Labour and Co-operative Party who spent the morning with us at the Grantham surgery garden in Stockwell where they helped tidy up the garden. I want to thank David Brindle for organising this very helpful event and Jonathan Wilmshurst from the surgery who brought his young son along on a Sunday to green along with us.

Lambeth GP Food Fo-op is proud to be a community partner organisation with King's College Hospital in the lunch of their Sustainable Healthcare for All-a Green Plan for King's launched in September. Having joined in 2 zoom discussions with Kings's staff during the run up to the launch we are looking forward to contributing to further action in the new year. We will be planning to work with some of the 50 plus Green Champions as they implement the greening of the hospital with a focus on becoming a model of good practice. We were delighted to be able to renew our working relationship with Medirest, who hold the catering contract at Kings beginning with reactivating our vegetable stall which is now located in the Golden Jubilee Wing. I want to thank Graznya, Chrissy, Greg, Tom, Shuo, Hilda and Zikra and Ade from Corner surgery for getting the stall off to a successful start.

We have been sharing our experience with food growing with several external organisations over the past months with Dr Shuo Zhang and Tom Price- Ogunbiyi co-presenting to the NHS Forest Conference in September. Hilda Castillo- Binger presented to South London Botanical institute and congratulations to Hilda in being appointed as a Trustee at Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses. The Royal College of General Practice, North East London Faculty held its annual London Health Equity Festival in late September on zoom. I was pleased to have an opportunity to present our work to a wide audience of GP's across London and to also learn more about the important work taking place in nearly 100 London based surgeries which are addressing a shared agenda of improving health equity at this critical time. Dr Tamsin Ellis's article which follows reports on this work in progress.

Lambeth GP Food Co-op will celebrate its 10th birth day in the summer of 2022. More news about this soon.

In the meantime we wish everyone a Happy Holiday and a better New Year.

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

Welcoming Zikra

Hello!

My name is Zikra and I have very recently joined the Lambeth GP Food Co-Op (LGPFPC) team as the new Project Manager. I'd like to start off by first thanking Ed, who has given me great insight into the development of LGPFPC, as well as Kiu, the former project manager, who introduced me to LGPFPC and has been supporting the various work streams over the past year. I am really keen to get involved with all the different projects that form part of LFGPC and also really look forward to getting to know the wider LGPFPC community.

My professional background is in nutrition and I have just completed an MSc in Nutrition for Global Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). During the past year, I was able to delve much deeper into areas of nutrition such as food systems and sustainability. We also gained insight into current issues surrounding climate change and environmental health, such as the major global impact on health and wellbeing. It was also really interesting to learn about the strong interactions between food and nutrition and health and wellbeing, which opened my eyes to the growing need to optimise diets and food-systems to become healthier and accessible for all. I was reminded of the determinants of health and wellbeing, and the many factors which impact individuals at the individual, social and environmental level. I am therefore really grateful to be able to work as part of an organization which is focussed on improving the health of local communities through gardening and growing produce, which has numerous benefits for physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing.

I currently also work part-time in an organization called HENRY (Health Exercise Nutrition for the Really Young), which aims to support parents/carers to provide their babies and young children with the best start in life. I feel lucky to be able to work in such a rewarding and varied role and have really come to appreciate the value of holistic interventions to promote and improve health. Prior to my work at HENRY, I worked as a social prescribing buddy in the London Borough of Redbridge. There, I was able to see first-hand the impact of community interventions and the multiple benefits of holistic patient care to combat high levels of social isolation, along with improving the quality of life of patients living with long-term health conditions.

I will be supporting the various work streams of Lambeth GP Food Co-op on my working days which will be Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Alongside this I will also be trying to improve my knowledge and skills related to gardening, which I hope to put to good use!

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or are interested in getting involved in the different projects.

Zikra Khan, Project Manager, Lambeth GP Food Co-op

Greener Practice

[Greener practice](#) is a group of healthcare professionals working across London in primary care who believe in improving awareness of the climate emergency and creating greener General Practice through sharing ideas and connecting with like-minded individuals. The group meets virtually every 6 weeks to discuss themed topics, such as active transport and air pollution.

The majority of the group are GPs, but also includes social prescribers, pharmacists, nurses, practice managers and staff from CCGs/federations.

With the recent COP26 UN Climate conference in Glasgow, the urgency and awareness of the climate crisis has never been greater. But, knowing how and where to start creating more environmentally friendly primary care, on top of a busy workload, can be really difficult. The group aims to help people start small and share ideas of what works.

Group members have shared stories of creating [community garden projects](#), working on 'cycling on prescription' with BAME group [Cycle Sisters](#) and the journey of 'going for gold' with the RCGP's [Green Impact for Health Toolkit](#).

Greener Practice is part of a wider national network for sharing ideas and being part of climate action, with lots of resources available on [the website](#).

Dr Tamsin Ellis, a GP and the group's chair, recently talked about stories of 'greening' care on a Radio 4 podcast [Four Thought](#) and says: 'The climate crisis is also a health crisis. As GPs we will see issues such as fuel poverty affecting those most vulnerable in our communities and increased inequalities with people breathing dirty air. The solutions are not only positive, but improve health outcomes: cleaner air, healthier diets, active transport, access to nature for wellbeing - the list goes on.'

Please email greenerpracticelondon@gmail.com if you'd like to find out more. Or, if you've got a green project up and running we'd love to hear from you!



And finally...

We are delighted to promote Sowing Roots (Caribbean Garden Heritage in South London), an exhibition at the Garden Museum which both Janine Nelson and Hilda Castillo-Binger are actively involved with. We encourage everyone working with LGPFC or associated with us to visit this free exhibition, before it closes on 20th February. For further information, please visit:

<https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/exhibitions/sowingroots/>