

Welcome to the April edition of the Green Gazette!

## NHS Sustainability Day 28th March 2012

There were some great ideas that came out of the NHS Sustainability Day, including:

- Agree in your area to have a no heating day.
- Agree in your area to have a "lights out lunchtime" ...or longer!
- Choose to take the stairs rather than the lift for the day so long as you are fit and able to do so.

In addition there was a theme around planting, whether it be a tree via NHS forest, a tree on our site, an apple tree for us to enjoy, or a vegetable swap event.

Thank you for your ideas and please keep them coming so that we can make this more than just a one day event!

[Click here](#) for further information.

## Earth hour 2012

Did you take part? There was another huge response to this global event - [click here](#) for some pictures from 2012.

## Food glorious food!



As many of us prepare and start to grow our vegetable plants for the summer crops, it is an interesting time to consider our consumption of food and what we do with that leftover food waste.

The NHS in England spends around £500 million on food and serves 300 million meals every year. The food waste can either be sent to landfill, which is expensive, or it can be macerated which involves chopping it up and flushing it down the drain. Maceration is bad for the environment and is facing increasing regulation because of the high carbon and biological oxygen demand present in the liquefied food.

There are some interesting solutions being presented to help tackle the issue of food waste, all worthy of a mention to help us consider how we can improve in this area:

## Video

[Click here](#) for a stunning video showing the beauty of our natural world and the process of pollination. Enjoy!

*Did you know!*  
An estimated 20 to 40% of UK fruit and vegetables are rejected even before they reach the shops - mostly because they do not match the supermarkets' excessively strict cosmetic standards.

- To help save money, improve sustainability and to meet future legislation Stockport NHS Foundation Trust near Manchester has replaced its food macerators with two food waste digesters. Buying the digesters will save the Trust money, will comply with legislation should there be a ban on disposing food waste down the drain and it is also making a positive environmental commitment.
- FoodCycle is a Bristol based organisation of volunteers who mainly cycle across the city collecting surplus food from supermarkets, restaurants etc. The idea is simple. Food retailers throw out millions of tons of edible food every year due to supply overstock. The aim of FoodCycle is to redirect this food so it can be used to cook nutritious meals for people in the local community.
- Epsom and St Helier hospitals have joined a new recycling initiative that sees food waste from the hospitals being turned into rich fertiliser for local farms. Just five months after the Trust joined the scheme, more than 12 tonnes of waste has been diverted away from landfill sites and 'ploughed' back into the earth. In addition, the company which turns the waste into compost, Vertal, is based in Mitcham - meaning that the Trust's food waste doesn't have to travel far before being recycled!

## Green Spotlight

DR ANNIE ELKINS

This month the green spotlight is on the Severn Deanery's newly appointed GP Sustainability Scholar, Dr Annie Elkins. Annie is keen to share what her role involves and her plans for the future.

Can you explain more about your role as a sustainability scholar and what this involves?

*I am the Severn Deanery GP registrar Sustainability Scholar. This involves a months extension to my ST3 final year which allows time over the year to become involved with Sustainable Healthcare. I have considerable free reign and can take this opportunity any way I choose!*

What are your plans for the role?

*I have signed my GP practice up to the NHS Sustainable Day of Action, set up a patient education board in the waiting area and signed us up for Fones for Forests a scheme which plants a tree on an NHS site for every old mobile phone donated. Staff are taking part in an Active Travel week, trying to travel more sustainably to the practice.*

*My main project is to write a report about the feasibility of cycling as a GP, concentrating on barriers, benefits and practicalities through interviewing various GPs. I intend to publish this to try and promote the notion that it is possible to cycle as a GP and as well as the environmental benefits sends out a positive message to our patients!*

Do you have an ideas for the Deanery staff on how we can be more sustainable?

*I understand that the Deanery are incorporating Sustainability into postgraduate curriculae which is vital. Spreading the message is probably one of the most important things to do.*

Thank you very much for your contribution Annie.