



Cost of Living Bulletin

January 18th 2023



Hi there, I hope you have had a good week so far and are managing to stay warm. If you have anything to contribute or need to get in touch, please do contact me at mtidey@swindon.gov.uk

This week's Bulletin has a very definite 'Energy Saving Theme'

However, to begin with...

Feeding Swindon Partnership Directory

Thank you so much to those who have contributed to the Directory so far; please find attached the first draft.

It gives you an idea of some of the organisations and groups working in the town, remembering that it is not all about food!

Please take note that some of the contact details are not for use with the general public, but will give you somebody to call if you need advice or support when working with someone.

It would be great to grow the Directory further- I know that there are many more great resources that could be useful additions.

You can input the information online at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/FSPDirectory/> or you could complete the template attached and return to me at mtidey@swindon.gov.uk

I will distribute an updated Directory each month.

Information from Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice and Energy Saving Trust are working together to help you save money on your energy bills and make sure you're getting the support you're entitled to. From having a 4 minute shower to ditching the tumble dryer - there are lots of ways you can save energy around your home. And if you're struggling to pay your bills or top up your prepayment meter, there is support available.

[Find out more.](#)

Centre for Sustainable Energy

There is a great opportunity to access support and training which will give you confidence and awareness when discussing issues around energy saving or fuel poverty- you can even pick up some tips for saving energy and money yourself.

I would highly recommend joining the network and signing up to the Energy Essentials training session. I joined the session on Monday and it was very useful.

Please see below information from CSE (Centre for Sustainable Energy)

There's an exciting new initiative that started last autumn that helps people facing the current cost-of-living crisis and sky-rocketing energy prices.

It's called the Rural Communities Energy Support Network and it is being run by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) in partnership with local organisations.

At the heart of the 2-year project is training and knowledge-sharing for frontline professionals and voluntary organisations, so that they can provide basic energy advice to the people and communities they serve.

CSE will provide a range of services to the network members, including:

- A series of short knowledge sessions to cover basics of energy advice, including basic draught-proofing, setting heating controls, and reading and understanding energy bills
- Mentoring, resources such as fact sheets and step-by-step guides, and an online forum for peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing.
- Support in running local initiatives, activities and workshops on fuel poverty. (There is a regular local 'Drop In' session in Swindon that offers support and advice)

And CSE's experienced and professional energy advisors will be on hand to take on the more complex cases that require a more in-depth response.

The training programme kicked off on 1 November with the 1-hour Energy Essentials session. Further sessions on heating controls, managing bills and engaging the community have followed and will continue.

To book your place on these sessions and access lots of useful resources, join the network by filling out this short form

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdZhKzEfHO8fOFoX0Uu3favRTY9KWQXFpNu54u7IUyJrqDA1w/viewform>

If you would like to find out more about the network, please visit the project page on CSE's website www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1396

You can also contact Jo at CSE at jo.hillier@cse.org.uk if you have any questions.

There are lots of very useful resources from CSE that you can find at <https://www.cse.org.uk/resources>

As an example, please find the 'What Uses Watt' info sheet which highlights the typical energy usage of everything electrical appliances.

Another useful page seeks to bust many myths

<https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/advice-and-support/energy-mythbuster>

or you can go to their YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/csebristol>

British Gas Post Office Pop-Ups

Thank you to Beckie at Sir Robert Buckland's office for sharing this opportunity, including a date for your diary.

What if I can't pay my energy bill? What if I'm on a fixed tariff, and do energy saving tips really work? are just some of the nation's most-asked questions around the energy crisis today. Despite the wider support available, new research reveals more than 7 in 10 people are still worried about how they'll cope financially.

To allow communities to have their energy questions answered, residents can visit the Post Office within **WH Smiths (10-12 Regent Street) on Wednesday 22nd February between 11am and 2pm** to access the British Gas Post Office Pop-Up.

This event will provide people straight answers to their most pressing questions and direct them to the independent advice available through British Gas Energy Trust, which can include accessing grants up to £1,500.

Visit the website below to find out more about the Trust and the event

<https://www.britishgas.co.uk/energy/post-office-pop-up-advice.html>

Reminder of Upcoming Feeding Britain Network Webinars



19th January, 3.30-5pm - The role of effective regional and local networks in tackling hunger and food insecurity:

In this webinar we will hear from a panel of Feeding Britain's regional and local partners on how they have developed and maintained effective networks, the benefits of this approach in tackling hunger and food insecurity, and key lessons for other areas. There will be time for questions from the audience, or feel free to submit questions in advance. Sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/yRYQwksEMGBjYJC89>

9th February, 3.30-5pm – What next for affordable food provision? Food Co-

operative Models: While continuing to support the creation of new food clubs, pantries, and social supermarkets, Feeding Britain is also launching a new webinar series to explore different approaches to the next stage of development for projects of this nature. In the first webinar of this series, we will hear from a panel of Feeding Britain's regional and local partners who are involved in food co-operatives. Typically, these projects are purchasing the majority of their food at wholesale or discounted rates, and then passing on the savings to their members. Sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/2PmMoggewYN6ur346>

Request for Laptops

Please see below a request from Sir Robert Buckland's Office...

Do you have a laptop that you no longer require and would be willing to donate to my Laptops for Local Schools and Charities Scheme? Due to the rising cost of living, and word of mouth, we are experiencing an increase in demand for devices, if you can help, please get in touch!

For more information about this campaign, please contact Robert by emailing robert.buckland.mp@parliament.uk or phone 01793 533393 or go to

<https://www.robertbuckland.co.uk/campaigns/laptops-local-schools-and-charities-campaign>

*

<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/costofliving>

<https://padlet.com/SBCFood/food>

<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/warmandwelcome>

<https://feedingswindon.wordpress.com/bitebackswindon/>