



Cost of Living Bulletin

April 12th 2023



Hi there, I hope you have had a good long weekend and week so far. If you have any questions or anything to contribute to the Newsletter, please do contact me at mtidey@swindon.gov.uk

Advice & Financial First Aid from Citizens Advice Swindon

Please find this really useful information from the AFFA Team from Citizens Advice Swindon about upcoming sessions you can point people towards.

The Advice & Financial First Aid team, where possible, can help clients to:

- **Increase income through unclaimed benefits or grants**
- **Reduce outgoings through budgeting, accessing lower social tariffs and savvy shopping**
- **Reduce energy usage**
- **Access debt advice**
- **Access emergency food or fuel vouchers**

We will be at the following locations over the next coming months,

- Monday 17th April: The Community Fridge, Gorse Hill. 11am-2pm.
- Tuesday 18th April: Park Library, Cavendish Square. 10am-2pm
- Sunday 23rd April: Twigs Community Gardens. 11am-4pm
- Tuesday 25th April:
Swindon Seniors Forum, Pinetrees Community Centre. 1.30pm-4.30pm
- Tuesday 2nd May: Freshbrook Church. 12.30-4pm
- Wednesday 3rd May: Bakers Café, Railway Village. 10am-1pm.
- Thursday 4th May: Beechcroft Library, Upper Stratton. 10am-2pm

I have also attached a flyer with information about the brilliant online training sessions that are going on at the moment.

Find out more on the [Citizens Advice Swindon website](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/swindon/)

FREE loft or cavity wall insulation for your home

Please see below information shared by Nathan. This could be useful for you or for folk that you meet.

Get professionally installed insulation for your home

If you own or privately rent a property in Council Tax bands A-D then you could be eligible for FREE cavity wall and loft insulation.

It's available through an award-winning grant scheme called [Connected for Warmth](#) that's offering free energy-saving measures to homes across Britain.

The scheme is fully funded by National Grid and participating households can receive one or both of these measures, installed by experienced Trustmark-registered professionals.

- **Loft insulation:** up to a quarter of the heat from a poorly insulated home is lost through the roof. Many older homes have a small amount of insulation, but today's building regulations require it to be around 11 inches (270mm) thick. So a loft insulation top-up can also be beneficial. If you currently have less than 7.5 inches (200mm) of loft insulation, you may be able to get this topped up.
- **Cavity wall insulation:** this is installed in the space or 'cavity' between the inner and outer walls of a property and can typically be fitted in homes built after the 1920s. It helps to keep heat inside your home, making it more comfortable and saving on average £395 a year on heating costs.
- If you have a central heating system with old analogue controls, you may also be able to get a new smart thermostat if you have loft and/or cavity wall insulation installed too.

To enquire, [complete this online form provided by Warm & Safe Wiltshire Advice Service](#) or contact the scheme directly on **0800 292 2554** or email [**info@evolvehes.co.uk**](mailto:info@evolvehes.co.uk).

Funding approval is subject to a suitability assessment and allocated on a **first-come, first-served basis**.

Feeding Britain Network



Upcoming Webinars:

- **13th April, 3.30pm-5pm - What Next for Affordable Food Provision?** Offering expert advice and wraparound services alongside affordable food. You can sign up to attend or to receive a copy of the recording [here](#).
- **4th May, 3.30pm – 5pm – Food Banks Establishing Affordable Food Clubs.** You can sign up to attend or to receive a copy of the recording [here](#).

Webinar Recordings: If you missed our webinar on **Credit Union Services Within Food Projects**, you can watch the recording at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6LYQkywppM>

You can also watch the recent webinar on **Food Supplies**, you can watch the recording <https://youtu.be/vcMcVZrul8w>

Share Your Spare: Feeding Bradford & Keighley have set up a new initiative aiming to help allotment holders share their spare produce with food projects. Please see the attached leaflet and, for help setting up a similar initiative in your area, please email info@feedingbritain.org

End Child Poverty Youth Ambassadors Application: The End Child Poverty Coalition are looking to recruit 5 more Youth Ambassadors who will work alongside the coalition, influencing its work and developing their own campaigns such as [this recent report](#) on the cost of living crisis. These young people need to be between 16 and 25 years old; they don't need to have experience of growing up in a low income family but the coalition encourages young people who have to apply. The ambassadors must commit to the role for a year and are paid for their time and effort (with the exception of media interviews so the young people don't feel pressured into doing these). The deadline is **Monday 8th May**, whilst you can find out more information and apply [here](#). Please see the poster attached.

Affordable Food Club Impact Report March 2023: Please see attached the impact report for March 2023 (*which includes a pic of a local project*). In the three months since our last report, we have worked with regional and local partners to open **49 new settings**. This is the largest ever quarterly increase in the number of settings which means our network now consists of 275 affordable food clubs reaching approximately **46,000 member households**. To find out more, please contact Rose on rose.bray@feedingbritain.org

Community Fridge Funding Opportunity: Hubbub have opened applications for grants of £7,000 for new activities within community fridge groups linked to one of four themes: skills, affordable food, community connection, growing. The deadline for applications is **May 31st** and you can find more information [here](#).

First 2023/24 Cost of Living Payment Dates Announced: The first 2023/24 Cost of Living Payment has been announced and will be paid automatically between **25th April and 17th May**. The £301 payment will be sent out automatically and directly to recipients, meaning those eligible do not need to apply or do anything to receive it. The payment reference for bank accounts will be DWP COLP, along with the claimant's National Insurance number. This is the first of three payments totalling up to £900 for those eligible and on means tested benefits, such as Universal Credit or Pension Credit, in 2023/24. There will also be further payments worth £150 for eligible disabled people and £300 for pensioners due later this year, meaning the most vulnerable can receive up to £1,350 in direct payments. The full list of benefit recipients that qualify for the upcoming Cost of Living payment are those who receive:

- Universal Credit;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Income Support;
- Working Tax Credit;
- Child Tax Credit;
- Pension Credit

The qualifying period for this payment is between 26 January and 25 February 2023. The DWP is also encouraging low-income pensioners not already getting Pension Credit to [check their eligibility](#), as they can still qualify for the £301 Cost of Living Payment if they make a successful backdated **Pension Credit application by 19 May**. You can find more information [here](#).

Sahara Health Fair for South Asian Community

Sunday 14th May 12pm-4pm

Broadgreen Community Centre

Please find a leaflet attached with information about an upcoming event where free information about mental health, diabetes, blood pressure, financial health and more.

www.changingsuits.org

VAS-LIVE SPECIAL- Mental Health and Wellbeing

Kicking off Mental Health Awareness Week on **Monday 15th May**, this **VAS-LIVE** special will include talks from a variety of Swindon organisations that provide help around mental health and wellbeing, as well as people with lived experience of using local services.

We'll also get an update from *Swindon Wellbeing* - our local network of organisations helping to raise awareness - and share the latest information of events during the week, as well as what's happening more generally. (We're creating an info sheet with all services and contact details, so get in touch if you'd like to be included in that.)

The online VAS-LIVE event will finish with Q&A and small-group networking - we'll be using Zoom, so don't forget to register:

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/558564269767

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<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/costofliving> <https://padlet.com/SBCFood/food>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>