



Warm spaces open to help residents save energy costs

By John Lawrence

A number of so-called 'warm spaces' are springing up around the area to give people a place to go during the cold winter months to save on their heating bills at home.

East Finchley Library in the High Road has free access six days a week. Staffed hours are Monday from 9am to 12.30pm, Wednesday from 2pm to 8pm, Thursday from 2pm to 5pm, Saturday from 9am to 12.30pm. Self-service hours are more extensive once you have registered as a user.

On Monday afternoons from 2pm to 4pm, Age UK Barnet welcomes people to the **Ann Owens Centre** in Oak Lane, N2, for tea and coffee and a chance to chat, read or relax. Scrabble and other games are available and volunteers are on hand to help visitors get to grips with their phones and laptops.

A short journey down the Archway Road on the 263 bus, the **Jacksons Lane Arts Centre** opens its doors between 10am and 10pm Monday to Saturday, and 10am to 6pm on Sundays, for anyone who wants to walk in and enjoy the warm space. There is no need to spend any money there.

Call for warmth

Meanwhile, Barnet Council has launched a Warm Spaces scheme appealing for more local social enterprises, faith organisations and businesses that have free space to sign up and help people stay warm.

To support the scheme, the council has launched two grants



Warm welcome: Jacksons Lane Arts Centre

that not-for-profit groups can apply for. The funding is to open spaces, provide free activities and partner with local businesses to provide warm hubs.

Barnet Council Leader, Cllr Barry Rawlings, said: "As well as keeping out the cold, it's a

good way to help people avoid loneliness and involve them with their community."

To learn more about these grants and the warm spaces scheme visit barnet.gov.uk and search 'warm spaces', or contact warmspaces@barnet.gov.uk

Cost of living advice

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet Libraries have issued a book list of recommended titles to help deal with the rising cost of living. The books cover a range of themes including housing rights, making and saving money, frugal eating, growing your own vegetables, DIY, and cheap ways to make repairs at home.

Look out, too, for the Cost of Living eBook Collection. There are eBooks on money matters, zero waste, cooking on a budget, crafting, upcycling, repurposing, and much more,

which are all free to borrow on your library card. If you are not yet a member and want to join Barnet Libraries you can do so online at www.barnet.gov.uk.

Ten ways to keep warm through the winter

By David Melsome

Everyone is worried about their gas and electricity bills rocketing this winter, despite measures announced by the Government to cap prices. Here are ten of the best tips we could find to help



Do wrap up: Archie Image Mike Coles

you keep your energy costs as low as possible, plus some specific advice from Age UK and other charities about special payments you could receive to see you through the worst.

Switch off

Switch appliances off at the wall when not in use rather than leaving them on standby. This could save you £50 a year. Don't turn off your fridge or freezer, to protect your food. Turn lights off when you leave a room, but not at the expense of your safety. Keep stairs and other areas well lit to reduce the risk of falling.

Cook clever

Learn to love your microwave and consider buying a slow cooker and air fryer (each available for around £30-70). These appliances cook nearly everything you need and are much cheaper than running a main oven, grill or hob. There are plenty of cheap recipe books and meal ideas online to get you started. Cook in batches so that you only have to re-heat for some meals. Only boil as much water as you need in your kettle.

Temper your temperatures

Turn down your thermostat by a degree or two and heat just the rooms you use most. Keep radiators and heaters clear so hot air can circulate. For unused rooms, like a spare bedroom, turn off the radiators and close the doors.

Wash wisely

Wash clothes at 30°C in your machine to use around 40% less electricity over a year than washing at higher temperatures. Wash clothes less often and always use a full wash. Only run your dishwasher when you have a full load.

Ditch the dryer

Avoid using your tumble dryer. They can cost around £1.50 for a single cycle. Air drying clothes is free. Open a window if possible to avoid condensation.

Shower quickly

Keeping your shower time to four minutes could save a typical household in the region of £70 a year. Baths obviously use more water but having a hot soak once in a while won't make a major difference. And for those who remember the advice of the 1970s, you can always bath with a friend.

Tackle draughts

Check your windows and under your doors to block off any draughts that drain away heat. Draught excluder strips are relatively affordable and easily fitted. Tuck curtains behind radiators to minimise heat loss.

Dust your fridge

Dust on the coils at the back of your fridge could use 25% more energy in getting it down to the right temperature, according to Which? adding £45 a year to your bills. Also set your fridge's temperature in the 3C to 5C range, still plenty cool enough to keep everything fresh.

Use someone else's energy

Warm Hubs are springing up in some parts of the UK; they're community buildings where larger numbers of people can spend time, rather than using energy at home. There are no official hubs in N2 but East Finchley Library in the High Road has free access six days a week. Staffed hours are Monday from 9am to 12.30pm, Wednesday from 2pm to 8pm, Thursday from 2pm to 5pm, Saturday from 9am to 12.30pm. Self-service hours are more extensive once you have registered as a user.

Bigger stuff

More expensive projects that will cut your bills in the long term include replacing old windows with new double glazing and making sure any loft spaces are insulated. If you have suitable brickwork, cavity wall insulation will make a difference too. If not, it's now possible to buy insulating panels to fit to the outside of your property, which can be cut and painted.

Run the London Marathon for North London Hospice!

We are looking for people to join our running team to help us raise vital funds so that we can continue to support those who need us, whenever they need us.

Find out more here:

northlondonhospice.org/londonmarathon

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