

## Area Board Briefing Note

<b>Service:</b>	<b>Cost of Living</b>
<b>Date prepared:</b>	<b>8 Jan 2025</b>
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### Cost of Living

All community areas are reminded that there is a wide range of support for those who need it over winter to help with the cost of living, stay warm, socialise and access services.

Financial support is available to some groups and more than £2.7m has been allocated from the Government's Household Support Fund to support low-income households that would otherwise struggle to buy food, pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs. This funding will primarily be used to help people in crisis in partnership with local charities. More information about the Household Support Fund can be found at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/10672/HSF6-overview-eligibility-and-how-funds-can-be-used>.

There is [cost of living advice and support](#) available on the Wiltshire Council website, covering a range of topics including advice on energy costs, housing and a directory of warm spaces throughout the county.

Wiltshire Council's libraries continue to be warm spaces where residents can sit and stay, chat with the volunteers and connect with people. There are activities including board games, crafts and book chat groups available and some libraries also offer hot drinks. Library staff can also refer people to Warm and Safe Wiltshire for advice and support. All the usual library services, including free access to books, newspapers, computers, Wi-Fi and digital support, continue as normal. The council also provides a home library service for people who are housebound or struggle to get to a library. Anyone interested in this service should contact their local library.

The council's Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub continues to be available to anyone who needs it. Anyone can access the Hub, originally established during the pandemic, and it can provide confidential advice, information, and signposting from the council's friendly team. The Hub is available on normal working days Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm and Friday from 9am to 4pm. People can email [wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk) or phone 0300 003 4576.

For more details about any of the council's services this winter, people should contact their local library or visit [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries).

For more information and support on the cost-of-living crisis, people should visit [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living).