

Produced by



Bassetlaw
DISTRICT COUNCIL
— North Nottinghamshire —



Bassetlaw
Place-Based
Partnership

On behalf of the Bassetlaw Financial Inclusion Forum

CREATING WARM PLACES

SOME INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

There is a cost-of-living crisis in the UK resulting in unprecedented pressures on people already in poverty, and this winter despite the support given by Government, thousands of people in Bassetlaw will be forced to make tough decisions about when and what they eat, what they can do in life, and when they can afford to heat their home.

WARM SPACES, WARM PLACES, WARM HUBS, WARM BANKS, PLACES OF WELCOME... WHAT ARE THEY?

Essentially they all have the same key objectives – they are publically accessible locations that are warm, safe places where residents can expect a friendly and inclusive welcome. People can come along on their own, or with a friend, and talk to others over a hot drink or maybe a hot meal. They can get practical tips and advice on saving energy costs and keeping safe and warm at home. And they can be helped to find out about more specialist advice and support for their particular problems.

WHY WE NEED WARM SPACES

The bleak reality is the cold kills. Around 12,000 people die each year from health conditions arising or worsening from having a cold home, according to National Energy Action. This year, amid the cost of living crisis and the huge spike in energy bills, millions of people will not be able to afford to turn on their heating.

Residents living in villages and semi-rural areas are particularly affected by lack of access to social events and amenities, and poor public transport. Some can go for days without seeing or speaking to anyone. Others may live in one room as they can't afford to heat the whole home, and don't prioritise their safety at home. Many have to rely on a limited bus service to go shopping or do the school run, or try to find accessible local work.

Even for those who can currently manage, being able to meet and chat with others in a warm, safe and friendly place makes such a difference!

WHAT SHOULD OUR WARM SPACE BE LIKE?

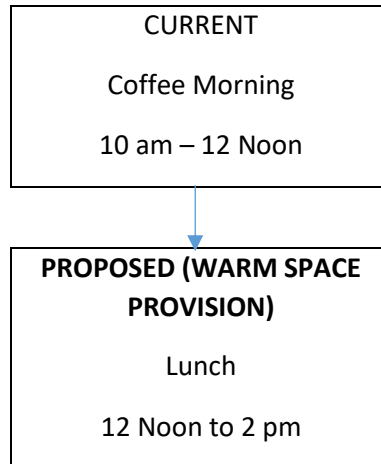
A warm space is simply somewhere that is free for people to come inside and get warm. Keep it simple: work out what you are in a position to offer and offer that. If you can only make cups of tea and coffee and provide some biscuits that is good enough. If you can offer a bowl of soup or a warm snack as well, great. If you can provide a couple of simple activities to keep people occupied while they are there, e.g. a couple of newspapers or magazines, board games, books and so on, then that is helpful. Having one or two people available to simply be a listening ear may also be a great gift.

A Warm Hub event could include a weekly coffee morning or a monthly breakfast club, a repair cafe session or a meetup for carers, a wellbeing session or a slow cooking course to help people budget for heating and eating.

Talk to people who may need the provision. We can often make assumptions about what people need and when it needs to be provided. You may have limitations about when you can offer the space, due to volunteer availability and other activities in your building, but where you can offer a choice, do so. Asking and listening can go a long way to reducing some of the indignity associated with poverty.

WARM SPACES -EXAMPLES

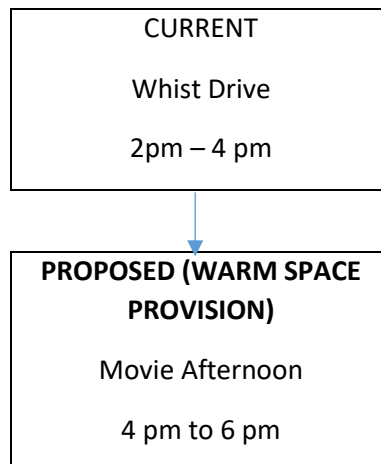
Example (1)



Implications:

- Volunteer Time
- Food provision
- Additional heating

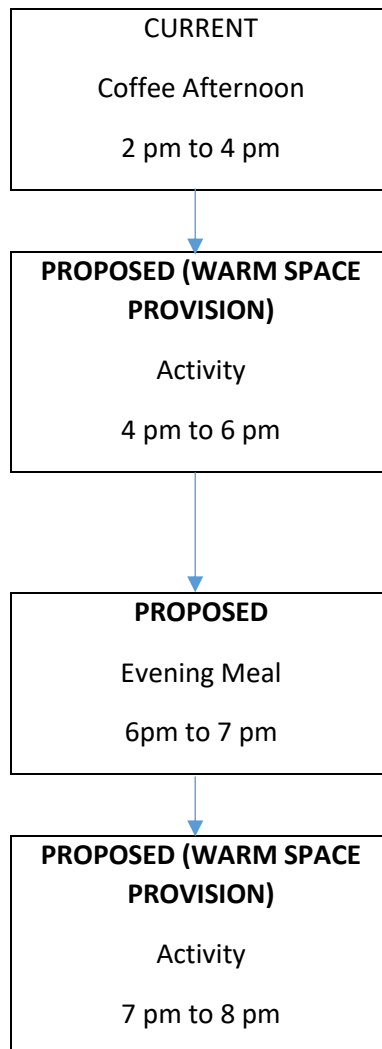
Example (2)



Implications:

- Volunteer Time
- Film Equipment / Licensing
- Hot drinks provision
- Additional heating

Example (3)



Implications:

- Volunteer Time
- Food preparation
- Providing activities
- Heating and other costs
- Returning in the dark to cold home

WRAP AROUND SUPPORT

We do not want to be intrusive into people’s personal lives and their circumstances and create any stigma around use. However we do want to be able to help people access practical support and help if they wish to do so.

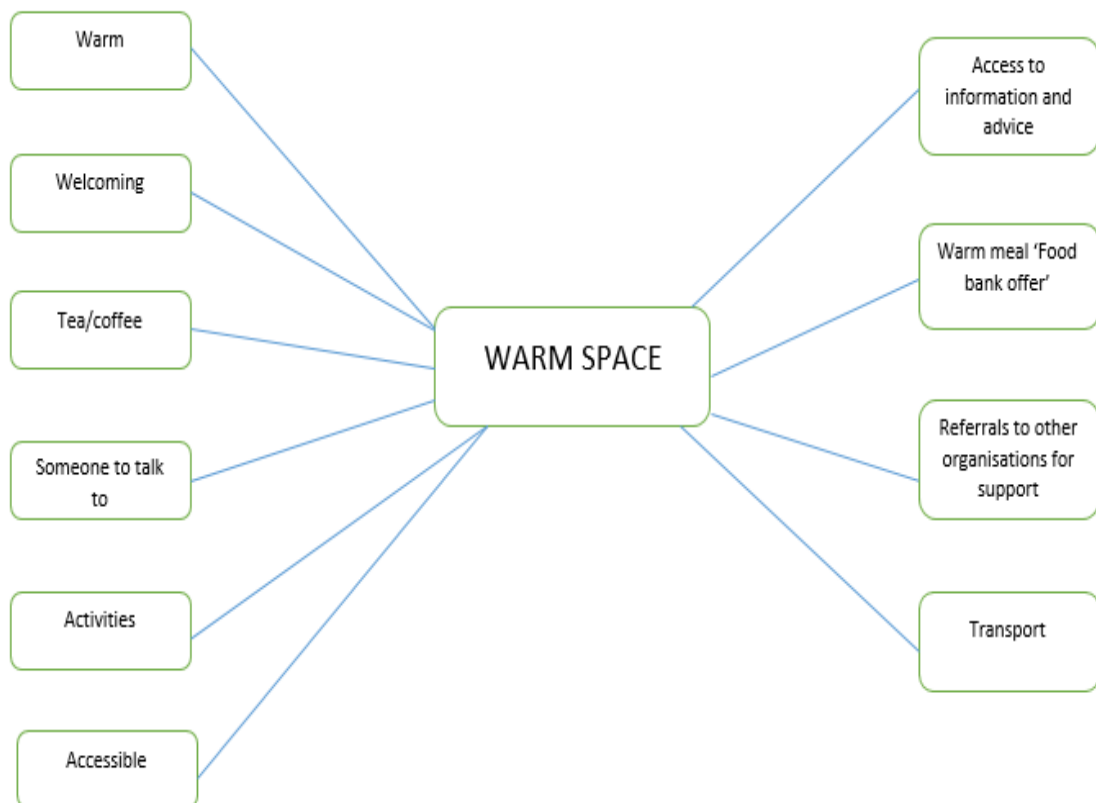
It is for this purpose that the ‘listening ear’ is so important. Just engaging

Wrap Around support could include:

- Ensuring all ‘warm spaces’ in Bassetlaw have access to a range of advice and information leaflets;
- A referral mechanism for issues that cannot be dealt with and need input from a specialist advisor, subject to the user being happy for that;
- Warm meal options – see Appendix 1 for details of support from the Bassetlaw Foodbank.
- Transport –assisting those with mobility issues to and from the facility

KEY FACILITIES

'WRAP AROUND' SUPPORT



WHAT DO WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT?

- What existing events or activities could also become 'warm spaces'?
- You will need to be clear about what you are going to offer. Will it be simply a space for people to sit and read, have a cup of coffee, etc.? Will you want to offer Wi-Fi and office equipment for people to work? What about running activities for young children? Think about different zones: quiet spaces / social spaces / board games area, etc. Consider lighting, can you make it feel 'home like'? Signposting people towards other support?
- You will need to be sure that you have the capacity to sustain the service you want to offer. Do you have sufficient volunteers to staff the warm space and how long can you offer realistically each week? Many of the people who may most need access to warm spaces are likely to be vulnerable, elderly or disabled, so will the space you are able to provide be sufficiently accessible?
- There should be no entry fee, however small charges or a contribution might be made for certain items – meals, hot drinks etc.
- You will need to complete a risk assessment and consider any additional safeguarding precautions that might be needed. An example is provided in 'A Warm Place –setting up a warm space in your community' CILIP October 2022.
- Is this something we want to do ourselves, or would we be more effective working in partnership with others? Who else in the community might be offering a similar service, are there other groups we could work with? Or if we can't do it ourselves who might we support elsewhere?

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Physical accessibility – are there any changes to the building needed? Signage, ramps, seating, toilets?
- Can we afford the extra costs of heating the building for longer?
- Inclusivity of the spaces for all; e.g. language – do we need signs in different languages?
- Are there any extra safeguarding requirements?
- How will we ensure a Covid Safe space as the winter may bring increased infection rates?
- How will we recruit volunteers, how many do we need? Is there a limit on the numbers who can attend depending on how many volunteers are available?
- How will you promote your warm spaces within the community?

- To avoid stigma, simply promote the facilities that are being provided rather than labelling it as a warm space if you don't need to. Think about the language you are using.
- Is this outside the normal work of your organisation/premises, will it require extra insurance/licencing?

HEALTH & SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDING

Warm spaces need to be safe spaces.

The safety of volunteers and guests should be primary concern. This is the responsibility of each venue.

We advise that each venue has:

1. Public Liability Insurance
2. A risk assessment (we have a template that we can share)
3. An awareness of safeguarding, preferably operating under the host organisation's safeguarding policy, so that the co-ordinator and key volunteers are aware of their responsibilities

It is really important that people feel safe and part of that means they should expect that their attendance is kept confidential. Please ensure your volunteers know not to talk about who was present to friends and family after a session, especially if they know individuals attending. No one wants to have to access a warm space: having people know you needed it adds to the indignity. This safety also comes from ensuring that no one is judged as to why they are there. Some people may be there because they need to keep warm, but some may come because they need company or for other reasons. Do not make assumptions about people's income, resources, and situation.

If you are allowing people to charge their mobile phone and you use extension cables, make sure you use ones that are PAT tested and therefore safe. If you are serving any kind of food, make sure you are complying with up-to-date food safety and hygiene regulations. This is part of making it a safe space.

WARM SPACES –FUNDING?

Bassetlaw District Council is currently assessing what financial support it might be able to provide to assist warm spaces. The Council will need to understand the service being provided, the hours of operation, accessibility, use etc.

For queries on this please contact

Stephen.brown@bassetlaw.gov.uk

WHAT NEXT?

We know that many of our partners across Bassetlaw already provide this type of facility or are looking to do so. We are finding out who is looking to progress a local offer so that we can avoid duplication and also understand where there are geographical gaps. An example is provided of the Gateshead 'Warm Spaces Charter', partners wish to consider adopting a local version.

BCVS are recording details so we can establish an informal network in the district and exchange information and advice. You can log details of your activities via the following link

<https://www.bcvs.org.uk/warmspaces>

In some areas those providing warm spaces are signing up to a set of common standards outlining the basic operating arrangements. An example – the Gateshead Charter is attached at Appendix 2.

LONG TERM?

Everyone should be able to live with dignity, which includes being warm in their own home. Warm spaces is an emergency response to a crisis, not a long-term solution to unsustainable energy prices.

And finally... Please don't be daunted by all this information. Many of the things you already do can be adapted to become warm spaces.

APPENDIX 1

Warm Spaces food options to support those offering warm spaces



As part of the Bassetlaw Warm Spaces programme BFB would be willing to offer support with providing food packages for organisations opening up warm spaces in the Bassetlaw District. We can offer the following packages.

1. Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Long life milk and biscuits. Tell us the number and we will drop sufficient supplies for your session. 50p per head minimum £10 (24 hours' notice)
2. Soup and roll, we can offer two options here, we can provide catering sized powdered soup that just requires water and heating up, along with a bread roll (this can be fresh or frozen) and provide disposable bowls and cutlery. All will be delivered on the morning of (or Friday if happening at the weekend) It will be at cost but as a rough guide a maximum cost including bowl etc will be around £1.30, if you just want soup and roll then this will reduce to approx. 90p per portion. If you let us know your exact requirements we will come up with a cost. (48 hours' notice required minimum 20 portion order))
3. Fresh home-made soup (which will be frozen in 15 person portions), will need heating up as above with roll and disposable consumables if required. Total Max cost per person £1.70 or if just soup and roll around £1.20 a portion. Again, call us for exact price based on your needs. (96 hours' notice). This will be delivered on the morning of your event or a Friday if happening at the weekend. Example of fresh soups available are, Leek and Potato, Vegetable etc.

4. Chicken, Steak Pie. Cottage pie, beef and onion cobbler etc. (veg option on request) 12 portion pies that just need cooking/reheating in an oven. Can be supplied with veg and potato's as well. Supplied with a simple dessert such as rice pudding with jam this can be at a cost of approximately £4.00 per portion (minimum 12 portions) including delivery, we would need 5 working days' notice for this service and again we can tailor the option to suit your plans. We can also provide disposable plates and cutlery if required

The food will be produced by either our in house cook and volunteer team who are fully food hygiene trained or by the Fair Share development kitchen in Nottingham, with disposable supplies coming from our wholesaler. The kitchens used are 5 star rated by the EHO. We have due diligence in place for temperature control and we will deliver the products out in chilled commercial cool bags so that you can be confident you are receiving a wholesome safe product. We will also do our best to cater to any specific dietary needs and will be able to provide a costing for this service based on any requests.

If you want any more information or want to call in at the BFB Food Hub based in Manton please drop us and email to info@bassetlawfoodbank.org or give us a call on 01909 473078 and we will be happy to have a conversation about supporting your needs.

APPENDIX 2

Warm Spaces Gateshead Charter

You'll get a warm welcome as well as Warm Space

Every time you come to a Warm Space you'll be given a warm welcome from the staff and volunteers there.

Everyone is treated equally, with dignity and respect

Everyone has a right to be warm, so everyone in a Warm Space treats people, and is treated by people, with dignity and respect.

Your Warm Space will be a safe space

Your Warm Space will stick to the safeguarding policies that it always uses, and it will stick to food hygiene rules too!

We'll not tell anyone about you needing a Warm Space

If you want to share the reasons you need a Warm Space, someone will listen, but they won't tell anyone else unless you give them permission, or they must because of their safeguarding policies.

It doesn't matter why you need a Warm Space

Every Warm Space is a non-judgemental space; whatever the reason you have for needing to come in, you'll be treated the same and never judged.

The Charter is intended to help local people who want to use the Warm Spaces to know what to expect when they step across the threshold of a Warm Space building; a guarantee of respect, dignity and warmth.

• **Understanding the Warm Space Charter**

- Things to consider in preparing your venue to receive visitors
- The importance of confidentiality in a Warm Space Understanding the Cost of Living Crisis and how this affects people
- Making Every Contact Count
- Signposting visitors to advice, advocacy, and support
- Communicating under different circumstances and managing difficult conversations.

The second training module is discretionary, it includes:

- Basic energy efficiency information and signposting
- Signposting for energy advice to include charitable grants
- Understanding the Household Support Fund and how to refer

Further, you'll receive branding guidance and a social media toolkit so you can create own materials to promote your Warm Space.

Warm Space participants will be expected to adhere to their own safeguarding policies and ensure that all staff and volunteers are briefed on these procedures

WHO ARE THE BASSETLAW FINANCIAL INCLUSION FORUM?

The Forum has been in existence for over 20 years. It is an informal network of local and national groups that meets to exchange information and developing local responses to the impacts of the cost of living and financial exclusion.

The Forum is coordinated by Bassetlaw District Council and includes. Bassetlaw Citizens Advice (CAB), Bassetlaw Community & Voluntary Service (BCVS), Bassetlaw Action Centre, Bassetlaw Foodbank, Two Shires Credit Union, Illegal Money Lending Team (Stop Loan Sharks Campaign), NCC Welfare Rights, Monday and Pensions Service, DWP, The Well (Christians' Against Poverty), St John's Church, BDC (Benefits, Housing and Customer Services).

Acknowledgements

Welcome Places

<https://www.bristol.anglican.org/new-resource-released-for-hosting-warm-spaces.php>

Gateshead Warm Spaces

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/21164/Warm-Spaces>

'A warm welcome: Setting up a warm space in your community' published by CILIP, the library and information association.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/cilip.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/cilip/information_professional_and_news/press_releases/2022_10/a_warm_welcome_2022.pdf