

01 October 2026

Cost of living autumn social media toolkit

Rising household costs can make it harder for families to manage their money and enjoy the autumn months without spending more than they can afford.

This social media toolkit includes **low-cost autumn activities** to try, **budget-friendly ways to eat well** and **information about financial support** available to residents across South Gloucestershire.

There is also information on **free school meals** and the **Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF)**, as well as details of our **Eat and Heat information events** in November.

For information about financial support, advice and local services, visit our dedicated **cost of living website** at southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

Our **One Stop Shops** in Kingswood, Yate and Patchway are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm. Residents can also call the council's **freephone helpline** on **0800 953 7778**.

Community Welcome Spaces are open across South Gloucestershire, offering a warm and friendly place to spend time, meet others and find out about local support. Some also offer hot drinks, activities and information about financial support and saving energy. Find your nearest Community Welcome Space at southglos.gov.uk/community-welcome-spaces

Support is also available to help residents **get enough to eat**, including emergency food support and Free School Meals. Find out more at oneyou.southglos.gov.uk/food

South Gloucestershire libraries are free to visit and offer a range of activities and events for children and families. Find out more at southglos.gov.uk/libraries

For information on **free school meals**, visit: southglos.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

For information on the **Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)** visit: southglos.gov.uk/HAF

Please see the suggested social media posts and images below.

We'd really appreciate your help in sharing these messages through your own social media channels.

Alternatively, you can share posts directly from the council's Facebook page: facebook.com/sgloscouncil

General cost of living advice

Text: If the cost of living is worrying you, don't be afraid to ask for help if you are struggling to pay your bills. You may be entitled to extra support.

To find out what help is available, visit www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

You can also visit a One Stop Shop in Kingswood, Patchway or Yate or call the council's freephone helpline on 0800 953 7778.

#CostOfLiving

Image:



Getting enough to eat

Text: Worried about having enough food to feed yourself or your family? Support is available.

You may be able to get emergency food support, help with essential items for children, or free school meals.

Find out what help is available and how to access it: oneyou.southglos.gov.uk/food

#CostOfLiving

Image:



Community Welcome Spaces

Text: Community Welcome Spaces offer a warm and friendly welcome and are free to use.

Some offer hot drinks, activities and facilities plus information on local financial support and energy saving tips.

Find a welcome space here: www.southglos.gov.uk/community-welcome-spaces

Image:



Free School Meals

Text: Check if your child is eligible for free school meals. There are now three ways children can receive them:

- Targeted free school meals – for children in households receiving Universal Credit or certain other benefits, with an annual household income of £7,400 or less. Eligible children can also access additional support, including the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.
- Expanded free school meals – from September 2026, for children in households receiving Universal Credit with annual household earnings above £7,400.
- Universal infant free school meals – all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled.

Find out more and apply: www.southglos.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

Image:



Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF)

Text: Looking for fun activities for children during the school holidays?

Children across South Gloucestershire can take part in a wide range of activities through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme – from discovering new interests and developing skills to learning about healthy, tasty food and making new friends.

Activities are available for children aged 5–16 who are eligible for targeted free school meals, with places fully funded.

Families can find out more about local activities and clubs and book a place at: www.southglos.gov.uk/HAF

Image:



Free and fun activities to try

Text: It's spooky season!

If you're looking for a low-cost way to keep the kids entertained, why not have a pumpkin carving competition? Challenge the family to come up with the scariest, funniest or most creative idea!

For more activity ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: Turn a chilly or wet evening into a cosy family night in. Get into your PJs, make some homemade popcorn and let everyone vote for the film.

Make it feel extra special with homemade cinema tickets, a cosy den made from blankets and cushions, or silly names for your drinks.

For more activity ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: In need of a free and fun autumn activity? Try autumn colour bingo!

Make a simple bingo card with autumn colours such as red, orange, yellow, brown and green, then head out for a walk and see how many you can spot.

For more activity ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: Don't throw away the seeds when you're carving your pumpkin!

Wash and dry them, then spread peanut butter over a large pinecone and press the seeds into the gaps.

Tie some string around the top and hang it outside somewhere you can watch the birds come to visit.

For more activity ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: Heading out for an autumn walk?

Collect some fallen conkers to take home and get creative! Paint them to turn them into pumpkins, ghosts, animals or funny characters, then use them as spooky decorations or leave them for others to find.

For more activity ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: Looking for a fun activity to do together? Make some spooky biscuits!

Bake a simple batch of biscuits and let the whole family get creative with the decorations.

Use icing to turn them into ghosts, pumpkins, spiders or monsters – then enjoy eating them afterwards!

For more activity ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: Looking for somewhere warm and free to spend an autumn afternoon? Your local library could be just the place.

South Gloucestershire libraries have plenty of books to enjoy together, as well as lots of fun activities for children.

Find out more at: southglos.gov.uk/libraries

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Make your meals go further

Text: Want to make your meals go further?

Try bulking out family favourites with budget-friendly ingredients.

Add lentils, beans or extra vegetables to mince dishes, bulk out mash with root veg, or make curries go further with chickpeas or frozen vegetables.

Using what you already have can help make a tasty meal go further and your food budget stretch a little more.

For more money-saving ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Text: Want to save money and waste less food? A few simple habits can help:

Plan ahead: Make a meal plan and shopping list.

Buy what you need: Choose loose vegetables and avoid overbuying fresh food.

Cook extra: Batch cook and freeze leftovers.

Use it all: Keep vegetable peel on for soups, stews and casseroles.

Try a slow cooker: Great for easy, filling meals and can use less energy than an oven.

For more money-saving ideas, visit: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

#CostOfLiving #AutumnActivities

Image:



Eat and Heat events

Text: South Gloucestershire Council's Eat and Heat winter events are returning soon, offering advice, information and support to help people eat well and stay warm this winter.

In partnership with Warm and Well and Age UK South Gloucestershire, the events will offer information on financial support, saving energy and keeping homes warm, as well as information on food support.

- Kingswood One Stop Shop – Tuesday 3 November
- Patchway One Stop Shop – Wednesday 4 November
- Yate One Stop Shop – Thursday 5 November

All events take place from 9am to 12 noon.

Find out more: www.southglos.gov.uk/costofliving

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Contact information

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