

**TRANSFORMING
PLYMOUTH
TOGETHER** 
CHURCH ACTION FOR A FAIRER CITY



Energy & Money Saving Ideas

With special thanks to Centrepont, Food is Fun CIC,
Plymouth Energy Community and IFANk

Transforming Plymouth Together

Church Action For A Fairer City

Transforming Plymouth Together is a charity working with churches, faith communities and support organisations to tackle poverty and inequality in Plymouth.

This fuel & money saving booklet has been created to help households with the cost of living increases, in particular food and energy prices.

With special thanks to the following groups who gave permission for their resources to be included in this leaflet.

Centrepoint

www.centrepoint.org.uk

Food is Fun CIC

www.foodisfun.org.uk

Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)

www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk

Plymouth Energy Community -

www.plymouthenergycommunity.com



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Places of Welcome is a network of safe places where people can **connect, belong and contribute.**



There are a growing number of churches and community groups in Plymouth opening up their buildings as Places of Welcome. Offering free hot drinks, snacks and company, you will always receive a very warm welcome. To discover out more, or find your nearest location, visit this website and search for Plymouth.

www.placesofwelcome.org.uk/locations



Cooking Tips

- Try to cook from scratch and avoid processed ready cooked meals where possible, as this can offer a significant saving.
- Slow cookers start from around £15 and are great for stews and soups, saving preparation time and fuel costs. They're also great for cooking cheaper cuts of meat as slow cooking will help to make increase the tenderness.
- By planning meals and ingredients you will have less leftover food.
- Taking turns to cook for a neighbour or friend is a good way to enjoy company whilst saving on energy costs.
- Some of the tastiest and quickest dishes can be from leftover foods. Don't be afraid to put odds and ends of leftover cooked vegetables into a pan with some olive oil and herbs to create a stir-fry. Serve with a cooked egg for some added protein.
- Having days in the week without meat or fish is a great way to save money.
- Pulses, beans, lentils and peas are healthy and packed with protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals. Use to bulk out meals.
- Bread is the most wasted household food so consider freezing whole loaves and just take out the slices you need for the next day. Frozen bread can be easily toasted too.
- There are lots of money saving groups online, including Food Buddies South West
www.facebook.com/groups/2900272496729153
and Jack Monroe's recipes on Cooking on a Bootstrap
www.cookingonabootstrap.com/category/recipes-food

Scrambled Micro-eggs

✓ **Microwave only**



Equipment:

- Bowl or mug
- Fork
- Microwave

Ingredients for 1 portion:

- 1 tsp butter or oil for the dish
- 2 eggs per person
- 1 tbsp milk (optional) or water per person
- Seasoning of your choice

- ✓ **Gluten-free**
- ✓ **Dairy-free**
- ✓ **Vegetarian**
- ✓ **Halal**

Steps:

1. Coat the cup or bowl with oil or butter so the eggs don't stick.
2. Crack in the eggs and mix with the fork to combine.
3. Add the milk or water and whisk lightly with the fork. Season according to taste.
4. Microwave on high for 1 minute and then stir the eggs with the fork. If the egg is solid all the way through then stop cooking.
5. If not, heat for another 30 seconds then stir, repeat this until they are ready.

Microwave Mashed Potato

✓ **Microwave only**



Equipment:

- Bowl
- Fork
- Tin opener if not using ring pull tins

Ingredients for 1 portion:

- ½ small tin of potatoes
- A splash of milk (dairy or dairy-free)
- Optional: splash of oil or butter
- Seasoning of your choice
- e.g. salt, pepper, dried herbs

- ✓ **Halal**
- ✓ **Gluten-free**
- ✓ **Dairy-free**
- ✓ **Vegan**

Steps:

1. Open the tin and pour the potatoes and water into a bowl
2. Microwave on a high heat for 5 minutes
3. Carefully take the bowl out of the microwave, and tip out the water
4. Use the fork to mash the potatoes, then add a splash of milk and oil or butter if using
5. Add seasoning of your choice and enjoy!
6. Tip: goes well with baked beans

No Pan Pasta

✓ Kettle only



Equipment:

- Kettle
- 1 mug per person
- Spoon
- Bowl
- Small plate

Ingredients for 1 portion:

- ½ a large mug of dried pasta (regular or gluten free)
- Toppings of your choice e.g. pasta sauce, pesto, sweetcorn, tinned tomato, cheese, tuna.
- Seasonings of your choice e.g. dried herbs, garlic, chilli, paprika

- ✓ Halal
- ✓ Gluten-free
- ✓ Vegetarian

Steps:

1. Put the pasta into the mug to fill it halfway.
2. Boil the kettle and pour the boiling water over the pasta in the mug and cover it with the small plate.
3. Leave for 20 - 22 minutes or until it has gone soft.
4. Drain away water when pasta is soft, and pour the pasta into the bowl.
5. Add toppings and seasonings of your choice.
6. Eat as it is, or keep in the fridge to enjoy later.

Kettle Couscous

✓ Kettle only



Equipment:

- Large bowl
- Plate
- Spoon
- Mug

Ingredients for 4 portions:

- 2 mugs of couscous
- 2 stock cubes OR 4 tbsp. soya sauce
- 6 tbsp. tinned vegetables e.g. sweetcorn, olives
- 2 handfuls of seeds or nuts
- Lemon juice if available
- Olive oil if available
- Seasonings of your choice e.g. dried herbs, spices

- ✓ Halal
- ✓ Dairy-free
- ✓ Vegan

Steps:

1. Boil the kettle.
2. Tip the couscous into the bowl. Cover with 4 mugs of boiling water and crumble in the stock cube – stir in.
3. Cover the bowl with a plate and leave for about 5 minutes or until the couscous is soft and has absorbed all the water.
4. Drain the tinned vegetables and add to the couscous along with any seasonings and nuts/seeds
5. Top with lemon and oil if available and enjoy!

Tomato Mackerel

✓ No cook



Equipment:

- 4 plates or bowls
- Fork

Ingredients for 4 portions:

- 3 tins of mackerel in tomato sauce
- 2 pouches of microwavable grains e.g. rice or quinoa
- Optional: seasoning of your choice
- 1 tin of vegetables e.g. sweetcorn or spinach

Steps:

1. Open the pouches of grains and divide them between the plates or bowls. Break them up with the fork.
2. Open the tins of mackerel and divide over the grains.
3. Add the tinned vegetables on the side and any other seasonings if using.
4. Enjoy it cold, or microwave on high for 2 minutes if you want it hot.

- ✓ Halal
- ✓ No cook
- ✓ Dairy-free
- ✓ Gluten-free

Tuna Bean Salad

✓ No cook



Equipment:

- 1 bowl
- 1 cup
- 1 tablespoon

Ingredients for 4 portions:

- 4 tsp olive or vegetable oil
- 4 tbsp lemon juice or vinegar (if available)
- 1 tin of sweetcorn
- 1 tin of beans (any)
- 2 x 160g cans of tuna
- Salt and pepper
- Optional: 4 tsp of mustard
- Optional: any fresh or dried herbs e.g. parsley, coriander

✓ Halal

✓ Gluten-free

✓ Dairy-free

Steps:

1. Drain the beans, sweetcorn and tuna and mix together in the bowl
2. Mix together the oil, lemon juice/vinegar, and mustard if using in a cup
3. Add a pinch of salt and pepper to the cup.
4. Pour this over the sweetcorn, beans and tuna and mix everything together
5. If you have herbs, add these and mix in.
6. Enjoy!

Breakfast Yoghurt Pot

✓ No cook



Equipment:

- Glass or jar per person
- Spoon

Ingredients for 1 portion:

- 2 handfuls of muesli or granola
- Plain low fat yoghurt (1 small pot or 4 tbsp)
- ½ tin of fruit e.g. berries or peaches
- Optional: drizzle of honey

✓ Halal

✓ Vegetarian

Steps:

1. Drain the juice out of the tin of fruit.
2. Layer the glass with yoghurt, muesli and tinned fruit
3. If using honey add a drizzle on top.
4. Keep in the fridge or eat straightaway.

Overnight oats

✓ No cook



Equipment:

- Glass, mug or jar (1 per person)
- Tablespoon

Ingredients for 1 portion:

- 5-6 tablespoons of oats
- ½ glass of milk (dairy or dairy-free)
- Small handful of raisins or other dried fruit
- Optional: cinnamon
- Top with tinned or fresh fruit

- ✓ Halal
- ✓ Gluten-free
- ✓ Dairy-free
- ✓ Vegan

Steps:

1. Tip the oats into the glass, add the milk and raisins and mix in. Add the cinnamon if using and mix in.
2. Put in the fridge and leave overnight or at least for 3 hours.
3. Top with fresh or tinned fruit if available.
4. Enjoy!

Shopping Tips

- Get to know everything you already have in your cupboards. Try to get into the routine of using the oldest dates first. Herbs, spices, tinned pulses and a variety of stock cubes can all add flavour to simple meals.
- Check before you write your list to ensure you don't double or triple up on larger goods.
- Try to avoid shopping on an empty stomach or you'll be tempted to buy food you don't need.
- Don't be tempted with BOGOF offers unless it's on the list. It's only cheaper if you were planning on buying two of the items in the first place. Remember to check the sell-by dates though.
- Switch from branded foods to shop's own brands.
- Buy fruit and vegetables sold by weight, in smaller quantities. This means you'll have fresher produce and less waste.
- Try frozen fruit and vegetables. They come ready to use and are just as good for you as non-frozen food.
- Seasonal fruit and vegetables are usually much cheaper.
- Consider buying cheaper cuts of meat. These can take a little longer to cook but using a slow cooker can help. Buying a whole chicken and cutting into portions to freeze often works out cheaper than supermarket prepared smaller portions.
- Supermarkets often reduce fresh items towards the end of the day. Shopping at the right time can often save money, so keep a look out for yellow stickers or designated areas for reduced food.

Plymouth Energy Community

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Reduce energy waste to lower your bills

Here are a few do-it-yourself ideas that can cost nothing...



Heat your home to meet your needs. 18 - 20 degrees is perfect for most. 20 - 22 degrees for people with health conditions, older occupants or young children. More than that is £65 per year, per degree!



Turn Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRV) up and down according to your needs to save around £85 a year.



Make sure radiators are regularly "bled" - this helps them keep running at maximum efficiency.



Get to know your heating system - using the controls correctly and effectively will save money.



Open curtains in the day time to allow the heat from the sun in, and close them at dusk to retain the free heat (tuck them in behind any nearby radiators).



Make DIY draught excluders for front doors, using a pair of old tights and spare clothes or material.



Turn lights off when they are not needed could save around £20 a year.



Avoid overfilling your kettle - boiling only the amount of water you need could save £11 a year.



Shower for 4 minutes or less to save around £70 a year.



Dry clothes in fresh air or use an ailer to save around £60 a year.



Turning appliances off standby could save around £55 a year.



Microwaves are cheaper to use and faster than your oven.



Fill up your washing machine and you could do one load less a week.

Our Energy Team can provide general energy advice as well as basic measures, such as draught-proofing, LED light bulbs, hot water tank jackets and energy monitors.

✉ energyteam@plymouthenergycommunity.com

☎ 01752 477117

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Plymouth Energy
Community

Updated August 2022

...and some ideas that cost a bit



Replace old, inefficient lightbulbs with LEDs to save around £40 per year.



DIY draught proofing can be cheap and effective in reducing lost heat from gaps around doors, windows or floorboards - people who are happy to do basic DIY tasks might find this easy to do.



Best standard hot water cylinder jackets (80mm) help retain heat and save around £35 per year.



Thick, lined or thermal curtains help retain heat; a cheap way to reduce heat escaping through windows.



If you have an un-used chimney, fitting a "chimney sheep" will help prevent heat escaping up the chimney's flue.



Reflective radiator panels attached to walls behind radiators help to reflect the heat you're paying for back into the home rather than letting it escape through walls.



Slow cookers are much more energy efficient than electric ovens, using little more energy than running a traditional lightbulb.



...and some larger things you might do with some funding.



Energy efficiency measures and low-carbon heating include (but are not limited to):

- Wall insulation (cavity, external, internal),
- Loft insulation
- Floor insulation
- Heat pumps (air source, ground source)

Our Future Fit Team provide impartial advice about improved insulation or low-carbon heating specifically for your home. They can also let you know if there is any grant-funding available to you.

✉ futurefit@plymouthenergycommunity.com

☎ 01752 477990

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Further Support & Advice

Energy & Fuel Help - Tel: 01752 477117

www.plymouthenergycommunity.com

Elder Tree Befriending Service - Tel: 01752 227447

admin@eldertreebefriending.co.uk

Age UK Plymouth - Tel: 01752 256020

enquiries@ageukplymouth.org.uk

Citizens Advice - Tel: 0808 2787910

www.citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk

Plymouth City Council - Tel: 01752 668000

www.plymouth.gov.uk

Plymouth Food Aid Network

foodaid@foodplymouth.org

www.pfan.adoddle.org

Government Benefit Calculator

www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators

Plymouth Access To Housing - Tel: 01752 255889

<https://www.pathdevon.org/>

Livewell Southwest First Response - Tel: 0800 9239323

24 hour helpline for mental health crisis

National Debt Line - Tel: 0808 8084000

Free independent debt advice

Support with Illegal Money Lending - Tel: 0300 555 2222

<https://www.stoploansharks.co.uk/>

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