

# Warm welcome from Porty churches amid energy crisis worries

Portobello churches are throwing open their doors to offer a “warm space” for local residents worried about the cost of living crisis and massive rises in energy prices.

The initiative started on 3 October with churches and a community centre partnering to offer people a place to meet amid real concerns over impending rises in gas and electricity tariffs.

Glenn Innes, Pastor of Portobello Baptist Church, started the project and has enlisted church colleagues in the seaside town to open doors throughout each week. Those taking part include Portobello Joppa Parish Church, St Mark's Church, and Bellfield community hub.

Pastor Innes said: While on the face of it Porty had become a very wealthy community we know that is not true for a lot of people, and the reality of massively increasing costs of living means people have a genuine fear of how they are going to pay their bills.

“We have space in our church which is right on the High Street and is easily accessible for people, and we thought it would be nothing for us to use some of our resource to open up two days a week to create a warm space.



Glenn Innes, Pastor, Portobello Baptist Church – people have a genuine fear of how they are going to pay their bills.

“Our space will be warm in terms of keeping physically warm, but even before the pandemic loneliness was an issue for a lot of people, so if folk can come in and sit down and there are other people there, there might be some other benefits that come from this.”

The Warm Space scheme is open to anybody – including those who work from home who may want to break out of their normal routine.

Pastor Innes added: “I am very conscious there are probably

folk in Porty who are now working from home and who don't get paid an arm and a leg. They may be able to afford to live in Porty but if it's going to cost them a fortune to put the heating on every day, they might welcome the opportunity to pop out somewhere to work in a warm environment."

**Warm Spaces is open each week: Mon 10-noon Portobello and Joppa Parish Church; Tue 2-4pm Portobello Baptist Church; Wed 10-noon St Mark's Episcopal, 2-4pm Portobello Baptist Church; Thur 2-4pm Portobello Baptist Church; Fri 10-12.30pm Bellfield Community Hub.**