

NIFTY THRIFTY

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

January 2026

Welcome.

Ongoing cost-of-living pressures continue to place added financial strain on many households.

This newsletter brings together information about the support available across Torfaen to help with managing finances and coping with rising living costs.

We hope it helps you find useful advice, practical support, and guidance when you need it.



5 WAYS TO WELLBEING



TALK & LISTEN,
BE THERE,
FEEL CONNECTED



DO WHAT YOU CAN,
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,
MOVE YOUR MOOD



REMEMBER
THE SIMPLE
THINGS THAT
GIVE YOU JOY



EMBRACE NEW
EXPERIENCES,
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,
SURPRISE YOURSELF



Your time,
your words,
your presence

What's available in your community?

Connecting you to
your community.

Your online hub for activities, support and
volunteering across Torfaen.

Search Connect
Torfaen

Browse events
calendar

Find volunteer
opportunities

Sign in to your
account





Cost of Living Support

Residents across Torfaen can access a range of support to help with the cost of living. Local services, activities, and advice are available to provide practical help and community support.

HEATING AND ENERGY ADVICE

Get information on managing energy bills, improving home energy efficiency, and accessing available grants or government support schemes.

FINANCIAL AND WELFARE SUPPORT

Advice and signposting are available for benefits, food banks, and other local services to help ease financial pressures.

WARM HUBS & COFFEE MORNINGS

Warm Hubs are safe, welcoming spaces where residents can stay warm without worrying about heating costs. They offer a chance to socialise and feel connected.

COMMUNITY LUNCHESES

Community lunches offer a nutritious meal and a friendly atmosphere, helping residents stay well-fed and socially connected, particularly during the colder months.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Support and guidance are available to help residents stay healthy over winter and access local health services where needed.

HEATING & ENERGY

With energy bills putting pressure on all our budgets this winter, there's no better time to take control of our energy use.

TOP TIPS TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR ENERGY BILLS

Energy Saving Trust are sharing simple ways you can save energy throughout your daily routine.

Visit energysavingtrust.org.uk to find out more.



If you are looking to improve your home efficiency you may be entitled to a fully funded grant that could include measures such as improved insulation, a new boiler or heating controls.

To learn more about these grants please visit gov.wales - Nest warm homes programme, or Torfaen Council - ECO4 Flex Scheme.

LOCAL SUPPORT

LEAP Energy Advice Project



Worried about heating bills this winter?

With the colder weather here, many people are feeling anxious about the cost of keeping their homes warm.

Our LEAP Energy Advice Project is here to help. We offer free, impartial energy advice to help you reduce bills, improve energy efficiency, and stay warm at home.

Get in touch to find out how LEAP can support you. Phone: 01495 762946



Age UK Warm Homes Programme



As part of the Age UK Warm Homes Programme, you can receive a free home energy check.

Home Energy Check:

A trained handy person will come and discuss your home energy needs as well as install free energy efficient equipment such as light bulbs and reflective radiator panels. This will help make your heating more efficient.

You can organise a Home Energy Check by contacting the Help at Home team today on:

01495 360159
helpathome@agecymrugwent.org



Older Not Colder



Older Not Colder is a new service from Care & Repair that supports older people to keep their homes warm and energy bills down.

The service has Home Energy Officers working across Wales who visit and assess homes for free. They offer expert advice and can help you find funding if repairs or improvements are needed to keep a home warm.

Who is the service for?

To be eligible, you must be living in Wales, be over the age of 60 and own your home or privately rent.

Our Home Energy Officers are ready and waiting to visit your home and support you with your home energy needs.

Local Agency: Care & Repair
Monmouthshire and Torfaen
Phone: 01495 745936
Email: enquiries@crmon.org.uk

FINANCIAL & WELFARE SUPPORT



Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice are a charity that improves people's lives by giving free, independent, confidential, impartial advice.

We have a number of local projects that offer a range of services to the residents of Torfaen.

- Find out which benefits may apply to your personal situation.
- Providing advice on energy efficiency, energy schemes and reducing fuel poverty along with income maximisation and energy debt advice.
- We can support you with any housing related query through our New Start project, funded by the Housing Support Grant..
- Our projects cover many areas where we can help you locally.

For more information, visit catorfaen.org.uk or call 01633 876121

In Wales, there is money available to help you pay your Council Tax.

Advicelink Cymru from Citizens Advice offers a free helpline to help you check what support you may be entitled to.
0800 702 2020 (free)
www.gov.wales/claimwhatsyours

A quick check could put more money in your pocket.

Carer Support Fund

Unpaid Carers can now apply for grants for essential items, including supermarket vouchers. For more information, visit the Carer Support Fund South East Wales page or contact louise.hook@torfaen.gov.uk

Gateway Credit Union

Save Local, Grow Smart with Gateway Credit Union!

If you're looking for a safe, local, and easy way to boost your savings:

- **Local & Trusted:** The organisation is a not-for-profit financial cooperative, run by and for its members.
- **Easy Access:** Members can save their way—online, in person, or by phone.
- **Affordable Saving:** People can start with whatever they can manage, as every pound is a step toward their goal.

Support for Bills and Debt is also Available

Gateway Credit Union acknowledges that many people struggle with bills or debt and emphasizes that no one must face this alone.

Get **FREE, confidential, and expert financial advice** today from services like MoneyHelper and Welsh Government. Taking this first step can help you take back control of their finances.

Start here:

<https://tinyurl.com/GCUFinancialSupport>

For more information, visit gatewaycu.co.uk or call 01495 832111

Clothing

& Baby Bank



LOCAL HELP FOR GROWING FAMILIES

Newborn Starter Kits - Baby boxes and the trend for a baby shower celebration, we can provide expectant mums with a 'newborn starter kit'. Our newborn starter kits contain essential items for mother and baby to help with those difficult early months. From clothing and bedding to nappies and wipes, we collect it all and pack it into a Moses basket and baby bath.

Clothing Bundles - We provide bundles of clothes for babies, toddlers and even children up to the age of 16 (occasionally up to 18 years). But we don't just provide clothing for children, we also donate maternity and nursing clothing for expectant and breastfeeding mothers.

Essential Supplies - We hold a selection of baby items such as cots, pushchairs, bottles and slings. These are donated upon specific requests from referring agencies.

Costume Bank - Whether it's for fancy dress, school theme days, or children's parties, residents are welcome to borrow from the wide selection of costumes available and simply return them once they're finished.

With the rising cost of clothing, costumes can be difficult to afford. As an organisation committed to reducing landfill and encouraging reuse, our Costume Bank provides an affordable, sustainable alternative

We're open **Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm** at Circulate, Unit 14, Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate, Blaenavon NP4 9RL

info@garnsychan.org.uk
or call **01495 774453**



Lending Library

Torfaen's Sports Lending Library makes it easy to get active.

Borrow sports equipment - just like books - from Cwmbran, Pontypool, and Blaenavon libraries. From football, pickleball and boxing packs, to badminton and tennis sets, it has you covered.

To borrow the items free of charge, just present your library card (or sign up on the day). Equipment can be borrowed for up to 21 days.



COMMUNITY KIT ROOM



The Community Kit Room provides free sports clothing and footwear for children and adults who may find it difficult to purchase new items. This includes football and rugby shirts and boots, gymnastics leotards, and more. To find out more or to collect some kit, simply drop into one of the locations listed below.

If you have good quality sports clothes or footwear you no longer need, you can donate them to the Community Kit Rooms at:

Garnsychan Partnership

- Address: Circulate Recycling Centre, Blaenavon, NP4 9RL
- Phone: 01495 774453

Blaenavon Town Council

- Address: 101 High St, Blaenavon, NP4 9PT
- Phone: 01495 790643

Cwmbran Community Council

- The Council House, Ventnor Road, Cwmbran, NP4 3JY
- Phone: 01633 849070



Bike Repair Stations

The new bike repair stations will be strategically located at key points across Torfaen, ensuring accessibility for all cyclists.

Each bike repair station will be equipped with essential tools, including pumps, spanners, and other repair equipment, allowing cyclists to perform basic maintenance and repairs on the go. The tools are attached to extendable cables, making them suitable for bikes of all sizes.

Additionally, each station will feature a QR code that, when scanned with a mobile phone, directs users to a website with helpful repair instructions.

These new stations aim to support the growing community of cyclists and promote sustainable transportation options. They will provide a valuable resource for both recreational cyclists and those who use bicycles as their primary mode of transport.

- Blaenavon World Heritage Centre Church Road, Blaenavon, NP4 9AE
- Pontypool Park outside Pontypool Active Living Centre NP4 8AT
- One Stop shop, Station Road, Griffithstown, NP4 5JH (NCN 49 + 492)
- Cwmbran Stadium, Henllys Way, NP44 3YS
- Cwmbran Boating Lake, opposite The Boat House Café, NP44 8HT



Circulate Recycling Centre

Circulate Recycling Centre in Blaenavon is a community-based re-use and recycling hub that collects, repairs, and redistributes affordable furniture and household items, helping both the environment and local residents.

**Circulate Recycling Centre,
Blaenavon, NP4 9RL
Phone: 01495 774453**





Warm Hubs and Coffee Mornings

Stay Warm, Stay Connected This Winter

Winter can be a difficult time, especially with rising heating costs and shorter days. Warm hubs and coffee mornings offer a welcoming, heated space where you can relax, enjoy a hot drink, and spend time with others. Staying warm helps protect health, and a friendly chat can make all the difference. Whether you need a warm place to sit for a while or simply want to pop in for a cuppa and conversation, everyone is welcome.

coffee mornings

Coffee Morning	Bethlehem Chapel	Monday	9:30 - 12:00
Coffee Morning	St Peter's Church, Blaenavon	Thursday	10:30 - 11:30
Coffee Morning	The Ebenezer Centre, Hanbury Road	Wednesday	10:30 - 12:00
Coffee Morning	Pontnewynydd Methodist Church	Thursday	10:30 - 12:30
Coffee Morning	Siloam Baptist Church,	Tuesday	11:00
Cuppa & A Chat	St Mary's Church, Croesyceiliog	Tuesday &	10:30 - 12:00
Community Living Room	Forgehammer CIC, Greenhill Road	Friday	10:00 - 16:00
Carers Coffee Morning	CCYP	Thursday	12:00 - 14:00
Feet Up Fridays	Noddfa Church	Friday	10:00 - 12:00
Coffee & Craft	St Gabriel's Memorial Hall	Wednesday	14:00 - 16:00
Coffee Morning	CoStar, Fairhill, Cwmbran	Friday	10:00 - 12:00
Tea, Toast & Tech	Thornhill Community Centre	Wednesday	10:00 - 11:30
Coffee Morning	Hope Methodist Church, Pontnewydd	Friday	10:00 - 12:00
Men's Coffee Morning	Pontrhydyrun Baptist Church	1st wednesday	10:30 - 12:00
Coffee Morning	Trosnant Baptist Church	Monday	14:00 - 16:00
Coffee Morning	Crane Street Baptist Church	Wednesday	10:00 - 12:00
Coffee Morning	Crane Street Baptist Church	Friday	13:00 - 16:00
Coffee Morning	St Mary's Church Hall, New Inn	Wednesday	11:00 - 12:00
Coffee Morning	Pontymoile OAP Hall	Tuesday	9:30 - 11:30
Coffee Morning	Trinity Methodist Church, Abersychan	Tuesday	10:00 - 12:00
Coffee Morning	New Inn Congregational Church Hall	1st & 3rd Monday	10:30 - 12:00
Senior Moments tea for 60+	New Inn Congregational Church Hall	Last Thursday	14:00 - 15:30

warm hubs

Warm Space	Cwmbran High	Wednesday	15:00 - 18:00
Warm Hub	Richmond Road Baptist Church	Tuesday	11:00 - 13:00
Warm Space	Fairhill Methodist Church	Tuesday	10:00 - 13:30
Soup & Roll	Co-Star	Monday	12:00 - 13:00
Tasty not wastey	Llanyravon Methodist Church	Tue - Sat	10:00 - 11:30
Warm Hub	Canddo, Panteg House	Wednesday	10:00 - 13:00
Warm Hub	Garndiffaith Millennium Hall	Monday	17:00 - 18:00
Community Hub	Salvation Army, Pontypool	Friday	10:00 - 12:00
Warm Hub	St Hilda's Church Hall	Tuesday	11:00 - 13:00
Wellbeing cafe	Llanyravon Methodist Church	Thursday	11:00 - 12:00
Warm Hub	TLC Church	Wed, Thurs, Fri	10:00 - 12:00
Sporting Memories	Cwmbran RFC	Thursday	10:30 - 12:30
Warm Hub	Ponthir Village Hall	Wednesday	12:00 - 14:00
Warm Space	Cwmbran RFC	Monday	19:00 - 21:00
Warm Space	Ebenezer Evangelical Church	Monday	14:00 - 16:00
Community living room	Forghammer CIC	Friday	10:00 - 15:00
Warm Hub includes Lunch	Thornhill Community Centre	Friday	13:00 - 16:00
Warm Hub	St Cadoc's Church	Monday	10:30 - 12:00
Warm Hub	Bethlehem Chapel	Mon & Thurs	09:30 - 12:00
Warm Hub	Garndiffaith Millennium Hall	Monday	11:00 - 12:30
Warm Hub film club	Garndiffaith Millennium Hall	Wednesday	13:00 - 16:00
Family film club	Garndiffaith Millennium Hall	Saturday	11:00 - 14:00
Wellbeing renew café	Griffithstown Baptist Church	Tuesday	13:30 - 15:30
Warm Hub	Hill City Church	Thursday	11:00 - 14:00
Sandwich Bar	Salvation Army, Pontypool	Tuesday	11:00 - 14:00
Community Cafe & Shop	Sharon Church, Pontypool	Tue, Wed & Sat	10:00 - 14:00
Warm Hub	Age Connects Torfaen	Monday - Friday	09:00 - 15:30



community lunches & shops

The Pantry

The Pantry at Garnsychan Partnership is a community initiative for people living in North Torfaen and nearby areas.

For £7, local residents can access a whole range of good produce. You will be able to choose a guaranteed 12 items from a huge variety of groceries, fresh fruit and veg, plus all the usual store cupboard favourites (including all essential toiletries).

The average shopping basket is worth more than £20 at a retail value, saving you over £780 on your food bill each year. Additionally, alongside the Pantry Shop we are offering use of our fully equipped commercial kitchen.

We know with rising energy bills that the cost of using gas and electric to cook meals are becoming increasingly costly so, why not use our kitchen to batch cook the produce you have purchased from our Pantry?

We're open Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm at Circulate, Unit 14, Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate, Blaenavon, Pontypool NP4 9RL

For more information contact us at:

info@garnsychan.org.uk
or call 01495 774453



Victory Grocery Store

- Quality food at low-cost
- Shop for as little as £5
- Leaving nobody behind

Individuals and families are facing the biggest rise to the cost of living for generations, and for many, this will mean choosing between essential things like food, heating and paying their bills.

Victory Grocery Store has been established to help local families who are being hit-hard by the sudden rise in costs. Members can shop twice a week, for as little as £5 and this includes everything you need to put food on the table for your family.

Call in during the opening hours to see what groceries are available!

Opening Times:

Tuesday: 10am - 4pm
Wednesday: 10am - 4pm
Thursday: 10am - 4pm
Friday: 10am - 4pm

Tasty Not Wasty

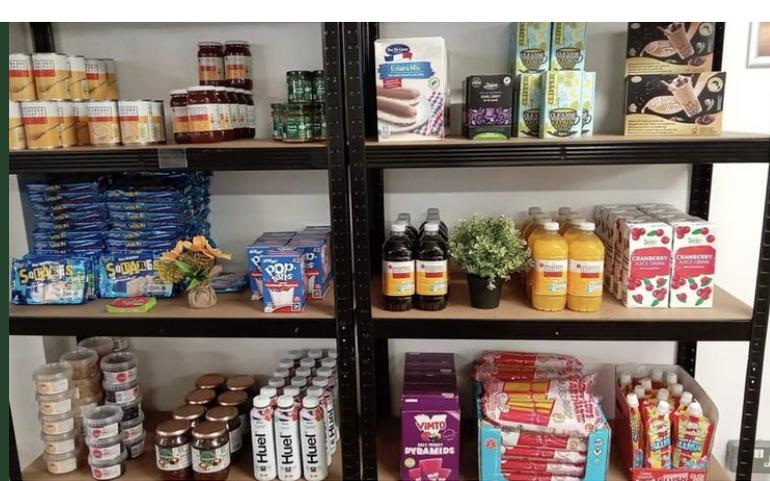
Tasty Not Wasty is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit community organisation in Cwmbran that rescues surplus supermarket food and redistributes it through a community fridge, helping to reduce waste while supporting local families. They also run a welcoming pay-as-you-feel café twice a week, offering affordable meals and a friendly space for people to connect.

Opening Times:

Tuesday 10-11.30am
Wednesday 10-11am
Thursday 10-11.30am
Friday 10am-2.30pm
Saturday 10-11.30am

Where: Llanyravon Methodist Church

Email: tastynotwastycic@gmail.com



Greengrocer Pantry

Fresh. Local. Simple. Sustainable.

We're excited to open a brand-new pantry filled with locally sourced fruit and veg — all available in the exact amounts you need. No pre-packed bundles, no unnecessary waste, just good food that supports local growers and helps our community shop smarter.

It's just £5 a week and will help save money on your weekly food budget.

Come see us and be part of something greener, at **CoStar Hwb, Fairwater Shops.**

Call us on **01633 357244** for more information



community lunches



Breakfast Club	Co-Star, Greenmeadow	Tuesday	11:00
Lunch Club	Co-Star, Greenmeadow	Wednesday	12:30
Lunch Club	Co-Star, Greenmeadow	Thursday	12:30 - 14:00
Free Lunch	Salvation Army, Cwmbran	Monday	12:00 - 14:00
Lunch Club	United Reform Church	Last Sat of month	13:00
Age Connects Lunch	Ponthir Village Hall	Tuesday	11:30 - 13:30
Talking Tables	Thornhill Community Centre	Tuesday	12:00 - 14:00
Help Yourself Breakfast	Thornhill Community Centre	Monday	10:00 - 12:15
Tea, Toast and Tech	Thornhill Community Centre	Wednesday	10:30 - 12:30
Lunch club	Thornhill Community Centre	Friday	12:00 - 15:00
Lunch Club	Victoria Village Hall	Thursday	11:30 - 13:30
Meet and Eat	Bethlehem Chapel	Thursday	12:30 - 13:30
Lunch Club	Talywain RFC	Tuesday	12:00 - 14:00
Grub Club	Cold Barn Farm	Friday	17:30 - 19:30
Breakfast (Mens group)	Victory Church Blaenavon	First Sat of month	10:00 - 11:00
Pontnewynydd Lunch Club	Pontnewynydd Social Club	Wednesday	12:30
Age Connects Lunch Club	Zion Hill Community Centre	Monday	12:00 - 14:00
BISTRO	Widdershins	Mon - Fri	09:00 - 16:00
Age Connects Lunch Club	Widdershins	Thursday	12:00 - 14:00



North Iorfaen



fareshares

Garnsychan Partnership, Blaenavon	Thursday	10:00 - 17:00
Bethlehem Chapel, Blaenavon	Thursday	9:30 - 11:30
Helping Hands R Us, New Inn - 0777 586 3977	Monday & Friday	9:00 - 12:00
Panteg Community Fareshare, Panteg House	Tuesday - Saturday	10:00 - 11:30
Hope for the Community, Sharon Church	Tuesday, Wednesday & Saturday	10:00 - 12:00
Cold Barn Farm, Trevethin	Contact - 01495 742818	

foodbanks

Victory Church, Blaenavon	Thursday	13:00 - 15:00
Hillcity Church, Pontypool	Monday	18:00 - 19:00
Hillcity Church, Pontypool	Wednesday	13:00 - 15:00
Salvation Army, Pontypool	Friday	10:00 - 12:00

Food vouchers are available from Citizens Advice, JobCentre Plus, GP surgeries, health visitors, and social workers. These vouchers can then be used at your local food bank.

South Iorfaen



fareshares

TLC Community Church	Wednesday, Thursday & Friday	10:00 - 12:00
CoStar Hwb, Fairwater Shops	Monday - Wednesday	10:00 - 14:00
	Thursday	10:00 - 15:00
	Friday	9:30 - 12:30
Thornhill 4 U Too, Thornhill Community Centre	Monday - Friday	12:00 - 14:00
	Friday	12:00 - 15:00
Tasty Not Wasty, Llanyravon Methodist Church	Monday - Saturday	10:30 - 12:00
Victory Church, Cwmbran	Tues, Wed, Thurs & Friday	10:00 - 16:00
	Thursday	11:00 - 18:00
Croesyceiliog Foodshare Hwb, Woodlands Social Club	Monday - Friday	10:00 - 12:00

foodbanks

Salvation Army, Cwmbran	Wednesday	13:30 - 16:00
Pontrhydyrun Baptist Church	Friday	10:30 - 12:00
Fairhill Methodist Church	Tuesday	10:00 - 11:30
Ebenezer Church, Pontnewydd	Monday	15:00 - 16:00
Thornhill 4 U Too, Thornhill Community Centre	Monday - Friday	12:00 - 14:00



Health & Wellbeing

Looking after your health and wellbeing is important because it influences every part of your life — how you feel, how you function, and how well you can support others. Here's how:

Your body works better

Healthy habits like good nutrition, regular movement and proper rest help your body:

- ◆ fight off illness
- ◆ recover from stress
- ◆ stay strong, mobile and independent

Your Mind Stays Clearer

Wellbeing also supports your mental and emotional health by helping you:

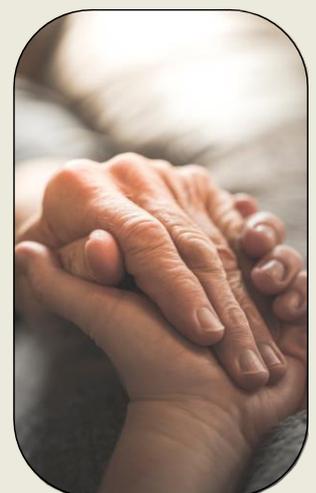
- ◆ manage stress
- ◆ think clearly
- ◆ stay motivated
- ◆ cope with challenges



You Can Support Others More Easily

When you feel well, you're better able to support family, friends and your community by:

- ◆ having more energy
- ◆ avoiding burnout
- ◆ offering stronger, more consistent support



Your Quality of Life Improves

Investing in yourself leads to:

- ◆ better relationships
- ◆ more enjoyment in daily activities
- ◆ a stronger sense of purpose

It Protects Your Future

Healthy habits reduce the risk of long-term conditions and help you stay well for years to come.



Resources



Free self-help for your mental health and wellbeing

Melo includes:

- Over 30 topic pages related to mental health and well-being, including Anxiety, Low Mood, Depression, and Feeling Lonely.
- Over 370 free approved self-help resources, access to 60 free self-help courses, details of over 80 helplines and services and signposting to non-digital self-help resources.
- Signposting to local opportunities to improve emotional and mental wellbeing, and services which support people with their mental health.

melo.cymru



Connecting you with Your community

Whether you're searching for activities for yourself, your family, or friends, Connect Torfaen offers around 380 community listings each month. You'll find everything from craft and photography groups to parent-and-child sessions, as well as a wide range of health and wellbeing activities.

You can easily discover what's happening in your area using the events calendar or interactive digital map. You can also explore volunteering opportunities that match your interests.

connecttorfaen.org.uk

Torfaen Wellbeing Friends



Looking to stay informed, connected, and inspired?

Torfaen Wellbeing Friends is a vibrant Facebook community where local residents share updates on health, wellbeing, and what's happening across Torfaen.

[Find us on facebook - Torfaen Wellbeing Friends](#)

5 ways to look after your mental wellbeing

There are five steps we can all take to protect and look after our mental wellbeing. They are called the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

<p>CONNECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for a walk with a friend (bonus points for Be Active!) Call your loved ones Text your friends <p>melo.cymru</p>	<p>BE ACTIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for a walk Do a workout Join a yoga class Dance in the kitchen <p>melo.cymru</p>	<p>TAKE NOTICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try a guided meditation Go for a walk and listen to the sounds around you Remember: Spring is just around the corner <p>melo.cymru</p>	<p>KEEP LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try one of Melo's free online courses Read a new book Attempt to learn a new language <p>melo.cymru</p>	<p>GIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer, if possible Have a clear out and donate to charity Leave a kind review for a small business <p>melo.cymru</p>
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