

Hot water bottles

Brighton, East Sussex



- 1 As the winter chill returns to the air residents of UK cities may start to see strange things appearing on their trees. Don't be alarmed if you spot hot water bottles hanging in a tree – they're not a strange message or an art installation. A group is tying hot water bottles to tree branches to help homeless people as the temperature drops. The hot water bottles are labelled with directions to nearby businesses that have agreed to provide hot water. The scheme is run by the Hot Water Bottle Network, which operates in Bristol, Bath, Leicester, and Brighton, and depends on donations of hot water bottles and participation from local businesses.
- 2 It's a kind gesture to those living on the streets, who will struggle with the cold. Each place's network has its own Facebook group where people can offer up their hot water bottles or sign up their business to offer hot water. The network is keen to expand into more cities, starting with Cardiff, and hopes to get more people involved. If you'd like to help out, search for a Hot Water Bottle Network group near you on Facebook, and if there isn't one, consider getting in touch with the organisers to start your own.
- 3 'It's already cold on the streets,' said Bristol organiser Pete Wentland. 'We are taking this action as an emergency measure to try to make the winter that tiny bit more bearable for those who face the worst of it. In encouraging local businesses to help rough sleepers we also hope for a breaking down of the barriers that separate us.'

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