**Choose Work course starts again for residents in Chichester District**

The successful Technology Doesn’t Byte course run by Chichester District Council’s Choose Work team has started again.

Technology Doesn’t Byte provides residents with the chance to improve their computer skills and help adjust to an increasingly digital world.

The Choose Work team help residents across the district who are currently out of work, offering them individual support and advice to help their personal and professional development. The team run mentoring and coaching through one-to-one sessions, as well as employability workshops and courses like Technology Doesn’t Byte.

By offering practical training, Technology Doesn’t Byte helps people progress in their lives and move into or towards employment by helping improve their IT skills.

The practical sessions provide an opportunity to gain hands-on experience using a range of IT applications in a friendly environment, while the small group size allows the course to be accommodated to each individual’s own needs and goals.

Recently, the team have been working with a client and have been able to help them make positive changes. This person had recently lost their job due to unforeseen circumstances, doing odd jobs to keep afloat. In addition, they had been given notice on their rental property.

The individual was referred to the Choose Work team, and attended the Technology Doesn’t Byte course while waiting for assistance with housing. The coach noticed their IT skills and how they were able to help others and build connections with other attendees. This helped to improve the client’s confidence, and as a result they have since gone on to do more IT coaching.

“We’re very proud of the work our Choose Work team do in helping residents continue to progress in their lives, both for their employment and in their personal lives,” said Councillor Tracie Bangert, Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Chichester District Council.

“It’s so important to continue to do what we can to make sure residents don’t feel left behind in a world that continues to become more digital and online,” Tracie continues. “This case is a clear example of how valuable the work the Choose Work team do is. This resident had become isolated and depressed after being put out of work in circumstances that they couldn’t control, and struggled to find new employment because they had become so anxious over their housing situation.”

The Choose Work team are also able to link in with other teams and signpost to other avenues of support that are available. During the client’s time on the IT course, Choose Work found that Chichester Community Development Trust ran a weekly walk in Graylingwell Park. The team referred the client to the trust where they were able to build further friendships and feel supported.

Tracie added: “The team are in an excellent position to refer people to other sources of support they might not have been aware of, and in this case, Technology Doesn’t Byte was an important first step to rebuilding this person’s confidence.

“If there are residents in the district who are feeling vulnerable and that they need some assistance in keeping up with current employment demands, we would encourage them to contact our Choose Work team who are ready to help them get the support they need.”

People can find out more about the Choose Work team and the programme of assistance they provide by visiting [**www.chichester.gov.uk/choosework**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cchawkin%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5C6PDRTENG%5Cwww.chichester.gov.uk%5Cchoosework). They can also contact the team by emailing **choosework@chichester.gov.uk** or by phone on **01243 534889**.