Donated unused tech – refurbishment – devices go to those who need them

Report of our October 2025 talk from Nicola Luckham of Wiltshire Digital Drive (WDD):

Do you have old laptops, phones etc. hidden away in corners, like most of us? Well a recent Climate Friendly talk would have been a great help to you. But here are the details we learnt and what a great CIC (Community Interest Company) Wiltshire Digital Drive is.

During covid, when many school children and others didn't have access to a laptop, Nicola set about asking people to donate their unused tech. And now, with one paid employee, they have 14 donation stations around the county, one of them being our own Town Council here in BoA.

Did you know that the UK is the second largest contributor to e-waste per capita in the world? And yet we have national digital poverty as well, where school children, charities, Ukrainians, children in care, older people and many more are without the laptops etc. that they need to be able to access learning, benefits, social contact and much more.

Donations are tested then wiped clean by 2 volunteers. The equipment is then refurbished, stripped for parts or recycled. WDD then matches and delivers the devises to those who need them. The devices are loaned and are given back to WDD to create a circular economy model, where they are again wiped, refurbished/used for parts or recycled. Many organisations and companies support WDD including Kingfisher, English Heritage, Autotrader and Honda, often by donating their old laptops. At present WDD has 4,000 devices on loan and have saved 9,000 from landfill.

Older devices may have Chromebook installed on them and then they are gifted as they have limited use but are sufficient for certain people.

So please hunt around your home and **take the following to the Town Council Offices**:

Laptops, tablets and mobile phones with the password clearly attached to them

DO NOT TAKE:

Printers, PCs and monitors, laptops without the password; tablets without the password; mobile phones or tablets with cracked screens; laptops with Windows 8 or below (7…); miscellaneous cables.

So here is yet another way for us all to reduce landfill and further develop a circular economy. Happy hunting and donating!

www.wiltshiredigitaldrive.org

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If you own a laptop that is now considered obsolete due to it having Windows 10, then please email climatechampions@gmail.com to see if Nigel, a Climate Friendly member and computer expert, can help by loading a system called Linux onto your device, as this could mean that your laptop may keep going for many more years.