



## Local residents nail it with new DIY skills

Local residents have completed a six-week course, giving them new skills and confidence to carry out basic DIY tasks in their homes.

Swindon Borough Council's Adult Community Learning and Tenant Academy teams have been working in partnership with a steering group made up of tenants to deliver the DIY course, run by training provider Renew, at Enterprise Works (EW). Having worked to organise the training, a dedicated space where the courses could take place was created, with contractors HSL kindly providing a bathroom installation and EW providing training booths for practical experience.

Learners on the course learnt valuable skills including basic decorating, putting up shelves and curtain rails, fixing leaking taps, unblocking sinks, changing a toilet seat and fixing cupboard doors, all in a safe and supportive environment.

Yesterday (4 June), the Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Janine Howarth, congratulated the learners who completed the course during a celebration event.

During the ceremony, tenants shared their experience of the course. Tony Bastings, who used his new-learned skills to repair a bench in his garden, said: "It was very interesting and educational. I learnt more in this short period of time than I thought I would.

"All of what I've learned has helped me with the work I've got at home.

"It's not going to overtax you, you don't need a degree, it's something everyone can do. Anybody who takes part will get something out of it which will help you."

Councillor Adorabelle Amaral-Shaikh, Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Education, said: "This new DIY course is a fantastic addition to our portfolio of Adult Community Learning courses. It will help our residents complete everyday repairs they couldn't do previously.

"I hope they now have the confidence to carry out minor repairs to their homes. Learning is a skill for life, there should not be any barriers to developing new skills and I am so pleased to see them succeed in being more confident after completing this course"

Councillor Janine Howarth, Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, added: "I'm very pleased to see our tenants get the most out of this course and they'll be so much more confident in doing work in their own homes thanks to it.

"While our housing repairs team undertake a lot of work, there are some jobs which residents can do themselves. Providing them with this course, and other opportunities to learn how to make repairs, can only be a big benefit to everyone.

"Well done to everyone for their hard work."

The next course will begin on Monday, 9 June, with further DIY courses set to take place later in the year. Tenants who are interested in taking part in future courses can find out more [here](#).

Anyone who has the skills but not the resources, can also take advantage of the Council-run '[Library of Things](#)'. Set up by EW Timber & Fencing Suppliers, the 'Library of Things' allows residents to borrow DIY equipment, such as drills and lawn mowers, just like a library book.

Since its launch in February, 685 people have signed up to borrow equipment, with carpet cleaners and pressure washers being the most popular borrowed items.

'The Library of Things' is based at Enterprise Works at Unit 1A, Gipsy Lane (SN2 8DT). The Council is also looking to grow the library. Anyone who has unused DIY equipment can contact [libraryofthings@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:libraryofthings@swindon.gov.uk) to find out their wish list for donated items.

In addition to the DIY course, the Council's Adult Community Learning team provides a range of free courses for [eligible](#) adult residents including English, digital skills, cookery, health and wellbeing and maths. To find out more, email [acl@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:acl@swindon.gov.uk) or visit [www.swindon.gov.uk/adultlearning](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/adultlearning).

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**Notes to Editors:**

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Images:

Picture 1: Participants with their certificates (Left to right: Councillor Janine Howarth, Wai Yu Belinda Hau, Tony Bastings, Lindsey Neilan, Kevin Prosser)

Pictures 2, 3 and 4: Work during the six-week course