

Could you run a Give & Take Day in your community?



The idea is members of your community bring unwanted goods and swap them for something else or donate an item they no longer require, and those who need something come along have a browse and take away items for FREE.

It helps to rehome, within the same community, unwanted items that might otherwise end up in the waste stream, and helps those in need to get hold of useful items at no cost – protecting the environment by conserving resources, and benefiting the community at the same time.

Give & Take Days can also be fun and enjoyable and a way to bring members of the community together to take positive action.

East Suffolk Council and the Greenprint Forum have compiled this guide which is intended to help inform anyone wishing to set up their own community-run Give & Take Day in their local area.

Step 1 Recruit your team!

You'll need people to help out on the day and to help organise and promote the event. Spread the word amongst friends and family in your community.

Basic Give and Take Day (no electricals, no repairs)

Whilst you can just about run a basic Give and Take Day with two or three people it will be a tiring day. The more volunteers you have the easier it will be for the whole team. Six is a good number for a basic Give & Take. When it gets busy, your team may have a busy time sorting and displaying donations as they come in.

If you are not going to store leftover items at the venue for your next regular event, it is also a good idea to work with a local charity or organisation, such as the [Ipswich Furniture Project](#) or [The Benjamin Foundation](#), who may be happy to accept any items not claimed by the end of the day but which they could either make use of or sell if they have a shop. Make sure both you and they understand and agree in advance a clear list of what they will and will not accept.

Give and Take including electricals (no repairs)

If you are accepting electrical items you will need to have them PAT tested by a qualified electrician before you can offer them to members of the community. Some local organisations, such as the Benjamin Foundation or the Ipswich Furniture Project, may offer PAT testing or you could approach a local electrician to ask if they are prepared to offer the service – be aware though there may be a charge.



Full-blown Swap and Mend also known as Repair Cafe

If you are also offering to repair items at the event think about the kinds of repairs you intend to cater for, this will determine who you will need to have supporting to provide repairs and find out who in the local community can offer the required service. E.g. repairs of clothing/garments, bicycles, electrical items, sharpening garden tools, etc. And decide if repairs are carried out on the day and/or the items taken home by the repairer and returned to owner once repaired. If you have a local Mens' Shed they may be a good place to start. You also need to determine whether repairs are done for free or for a donation.

Remember – give everybody involved in running the event plenty of notice, at least a month in advance.

Step 2 Sort out your resources

You will need to make some preparations before your event.

Equipment

If you are accepting clothes make sure you have hanging rails and hangers.

Make sure chairs and tables are available at the venue.

Bring clip boards and pens/pencils, marker pens, chalks, (it's a good idea to have different colours in case you have access to a black board you can make a sign on) blue-tack, scissors, blank paper.

Bring posters.

Logging in/out forms

Log donations as they come in and as they go out. You can use this log to gauge the number and types of things that have been successfully rehomed within the community. Pre-prepared log sheets are useful to make the job of logging in and out easier.

Risk Assessment

Templates for logging in/out declaration forms, and a risk assessment are all available from this handy Give and Take Toolkit from Less Waste:

http://www.lesswaste.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/k0182_give_and_take_day_toolkit.pdf



Step 3 Choose your venue

Pick a large space that is easy to find and has car parking (good for dropping items off and if the weather is fine you can leave big items outside).

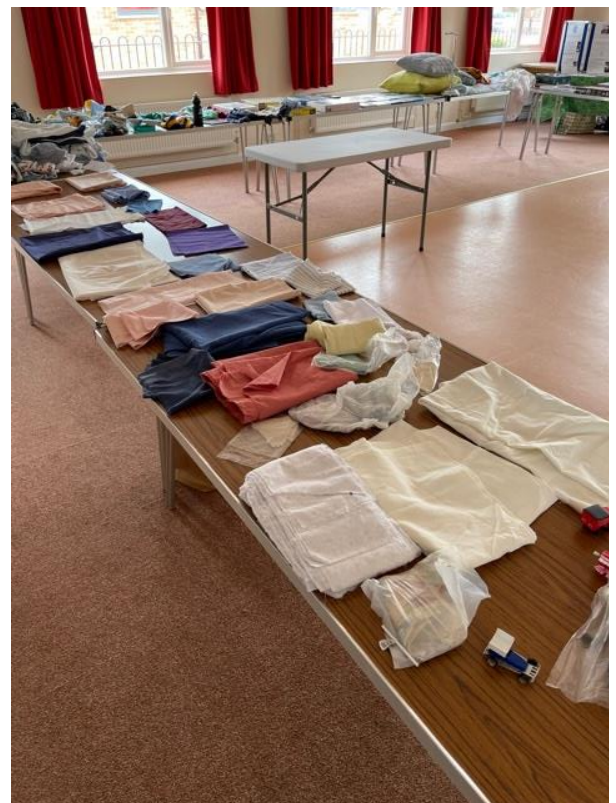
Pick a space that can provide tables and chairs and has tea making facilities.

Ideally pick a venue within a mixed housing area to enable more well-off households donate and less well-off people the chance to enjoy such items.

If you're going to make your Give & Take Day a regular event, ask the venue manager if there is storage available on the premises to keep left over items for the next event.

Depending on your venue, there may be a charity collection box on the premises. If there is, find out who the beneficiary of the collection is so that if asked you can inform the person making the donation.

If your event is on behalf of a charity or local community project, ask your charity partner in advance if they would like to provide a collection box at the event.



Step 4 Set a date

The event needs to be held on a day when the maximum numbers of people can participate. If your volunteers are willing to staff an event at the weekend it may be worth considering this, to avoid weekdays when more people tend to be at work.

Remember to check whether there are any other local events scheduled on the same day. You don't want your event to clash with another (for example a jumble sale down the road at the same time would be a bad idea). Sometimes having another event on the same day can add to the attraction.

If you anticipate a busy event then you may wish to advertise your event as "Give only" at the start of the day followed by either "Give and Take" or "Just Take" later on, this can give you a bit of time at the beginning to organise early donations and put them on display, and make the logging in and out of items more manageable for the volunteer team.

If you do take this approach be prepared to be flexible and potentially relax the timings or drop the division altogether particularly if the event is quiet early on and it seems reasonable to permit early attendees to take if they want to – especially if they say they won't be able to return later on.



Step 5 Promote your event

Once you've set a date, and decided what times to open the event, there are numerous places that you can advertise with low or no cost.

Posters and flyers

If you make a poster or a flyer remember to include:

- Date and time of event
- Location
- What you can bring along
- What you can't bring along

Press release

You could also send out (we recommend a month in advance) a press release with the details of your event to local papers and include it in your local community or parish newsletter.

Social Media

Research and identify all potential community pages on Facebook on which you could promote your event. This could include, as well as your own page (if your group has one) and any general community pages, pages used by the community to exchange items (such as local Freecycle pages) or selling pages (if they allow posts to promote events like this).

When trying to find such pages, bear in mind that they often only permit people who actually belong to that community to join and post on their page – if you are running an event in a community other than your own, ask your volunteer team if any of them are members of these groups and would be willing to post on your behalf.

Community Radio

If you're lucky enough to have a community radio station in your local area, check which days they operate on and if they are broadcasting on the day of your event then great – ask them if they would be willing to interview you live on the day. If not ask if they can mention your event in advance on days when they do broadcast.

On the day

If you are social media savvy, and have the time, a potential way of maintaining the profile of your event as it happens is to make live updates on your local community Facebook page with pictures to give residents an advance idea of what is actually available to browse.

Greenprint Forum

Also tell the Greenprint Forum and (so long as it free and it is in or close to east Suffolk) we will promote it through our network: greenissues@eastsoffolk.gov.uk



Step 6 Holding your event

- Set up the venue;
- Put up posters and if available decorate an A-board or blackboard to display somewhere prominent outside;
- Check donations are suitable (if they are rubbish politely point the person in the direction of the nearest recycling centre) and if they are suitable put the donations on the tables;
- Sort donations by category e.g. a table for books, a table for toys, a table for crockery;
- Keep log of what has been donated and what has been rehomed;
- Put 'I am taken' notes on items people plan to come back for;
- make a note of what is taken;
- Count the number of people coming in;
- Take photos;
- Make tea and coffee;
- Pack away!

