



How to run a give and take Event

What is a give and take?

Running a 'give and take' event is a great way to encourage your community to keep more things in circulation rather than throwing them away. It's a bit like a bring-and-buy sale but with no money involved - you can donate unwanted items and take away useful things from other people, all for free. It's also a chance to spread the word about the importance of reuse and help your community to get more involved in sharing networks such as Freegle and Streetbank. It can be great fun to do as well!

Why run a give and take event?

Every item we buy and use as consumers represents energy and materials taken from the natural environment so when we avoid sending unwanted items to landfill, we can reduce energy, waste and cost, with less pollution for our local area. Cumbria County Council is committed to 'reduce, reuse, recycle'. Recycling materials is a good start, but reusing an item is even better so that it doesn't to be reprocessing into something new.

TOP TIP

Offer extra activities, for instance keeping children entertained by making puppets from recycled materials or colouring cloth bags that they can then take and use for free.

There are various online schemes available to help you pass on unwanted items (see *Further information and support* below), and many communities are also now running regular 'give and take' events to promote reuse. As well as conserving our resources, passing things on helps develop a strong community spirit of sharing, benefitting others and saving money as well!

This session should take no longer than 3 hours.

What things do I need?

- A suitable venue, preferably one that's easily found and used by the community. Go for somewhere large enough for the numbers of people and items you anticipate
- Tables to display items on as well as chairs and a few tables for people to sit at and meet
- Information about local sharing groups, for instance Freegle or Streetbank (put up on display boards if you have them)
- Lots of interesting items to give away for free!
- Free reusable cloth shopping bags to give away – these are often produced for publicity, so see if your local council or businesses will provide these for free.

Things to make sure you have considered

Managing risk

- Check whether you're covered by your venue's public liability insurance. If not, you may be able to benefit from another organisation's insurance cover, such as your local Freegle group.



- Avoid accepting electrical items unless you've been able to PAT test them.
- Large pieces of furniture and other heavy items can be difficult to move, and you may get stuck with them if they're not taken!
- Undertake a risk assessment on the event location and ensure you implement the actions needed to reduce any risks. This should include checking access and fire safety equipment are present – see *Resource A for an example risk assessment*.

It is also good practice to display a disclaimer along the lines of:

“Persons taking part in this event do so at their own risk. For your own protection, please take all reasonable measures to check the condition of any items or tools brought or taken away. [insert name of your group] accepts no liability for any claim or loss resulting from this event.”

But remember this will not absolve you of responsibility if you have not taken adequate steps to prevent incidents.

Running the event

1) Setting the scene

You and your volunteers will need to bring some items to kick things off – spread these items around the tables ready for when people start arriving. Think about how to categorise items so that they're easier for volunteers to put out and people to take. For example, you might have different tables for books, clothing, videos / DVDs / CDs, bric-a-brac and kitchenware. Try to display the items as attractively as possible to encourage people to browse.

If possible, have some handouts available on display about reuse and recycling, including Cumbria County Council schemes and contact details for local groups such as Freegle and Streetbank. If you are able to offer refreshments, this will encourage people dropping in to stay longer and meet new friends – and remember to give your volunteers cups of tea!

2) Clearing up

While hopefully all the items donated will be taken, realistically there might be a big clean-up so ask beforehand for volunteers to stay on to help. Left-over items can be listed afterwards on Freegle or they can be bagged up and taken to a charity shop.

You can find out which charity shop is the nearest to your community at <http://www.charityretail.org.uk/find-a-charity-shop/>

Testimonials

Our recent give and take days organised by Penrith and Eden District Freegle have been very well attended. We've held these in community venues and vacant shops. Many items have been successfully exchanged ranging from clothes and CDs to books, cooking utensils, seeds and gardening equipment. Some stuff proved really popular and were taken almost as soon as they were donated!

Chris (organiser)

I was delighted to get a free PS2 PlayStation for my autistic child, and shortly afterwards some extra PS2 games were donated so I was able to take those as well - fantastic!

Clare, Newbiggin

Further information and support

Recycle for Cumbria provides advice on resourceful living, including listing furniture reuse centres located throughout Cumbria: www.recycleforcumbria.org

Freegle is a web-based organisation with groups in local communities throughout Cumbria promoting reuse and recycling: www.ilovefreegle.org

Streetbank is a website helping you share and borrow things from others locally – members join by adding one item, skill or recommendation: www.streetbank.com

The **Freecycle Network™** is another grassroots initiative online to promote reuse, with local groups around the world all passing on items: www.freecycle.org

Recycle Now is the national recycling campaign for England, helping people to recycle more things more often. The website includes lots of helpful advice on dealing with unwanted items, whether by reuse, repair or recycling: www.recyclenow.com

Environmental action groups such as **Transition town initiatives** in your community may already be campaigning for reuse or keen to support your event, so it's well worth finding out what's already going on locally and linking in: www.transitionnetwork.org/nearby