



GIVE & TAKE

How to....

run a Give and Take Event in a School

Thank you for your interest in running a Give and Take Event aka a Swap Shop or even a Shwop!

A Give and Take is an event where members of the public pass on household items that they no longer want, use or need to others. Households get a welcome opportunity to declutter and the event offers everyone the chance to take home something 'new' at little cost. It isn't essential to give in order to take and vice versa. Every item that is taken away may mean that one less thing is bought new, which is important for conserving precious natural resources, or that one less item is disposed of – turning trash into treasure!

The toolkit (on www.recycledevon.org/give-and-take-events) is designed to give you a full set of instructions and materials for putting on your own event based on similar events run elsewhere. This guidance accompanies our Give and Take kit which includes the equipment that will be required for the event and can be borrowed from Recycle Devon at no cost. All we ask is that you monitor the amount of goods that come into and out of your event so we can measure the total amount of items that are re-used in the course of the event.

Give and Take events can be run in a number of different ways so we will outline a number of different approaches for putting on your own event – be it in your school or a larger, public event.

The Team

First thing's first; this isn't an event that you would want to tackle on your own – you'll need a small team – the more hands the better. The event could be organised solely through your PTA or you could involve the pupils as part of an enterprise scheme. Do put a shout out to parents/guardians to help organise the event, or to help out on the day.

Event Planning

Ideally, you will need to start preparing about eight weeks before you want your event to take place. This will enable everyone who wants to be involved to make the date, as well as giving you enough time to book the venue and to publicise the event.



Charges / Costs

Give and Take events can be free to attend but charging an entry fee of £1-£2 per adult is suggested to publicity costs, alternatively, you could just ask for donations at the door. It's possible to raise even more money at the event by serving tea/coffee & cakes/biscuits but don't feel that this is essential to attract visitors.

Event Times

The best time to run your event is around the times when most adults are dropping off / collecting their children.

Ideally;

- **Donations Drop-off - An hour before the start of school** on the day of the event. If you have storage space you may want to extend this time to increase the chances of more donations.
- **Sorting through the items** – if you are using the school hall, it may be in use for lunchtimes, so go through your items during the afternoon.
- **Time to Take - Half an hour either side of school closing.**

Running the Event

As people arrive, it is useful to have two people meeting and greeting them to check the items they have brought and explain how the event will run. Even though the publicity states what items cannot be accepted, you will still come across items that you can't take and it's important that these items are taken away again by the people that brought them so that you aren't left with them at the end. After the event opens for taking, visitors who bring items can be asked to put out their items on the relevant labelled tables or rails but prior to that your volunteers will need to do this.

Make sure you have got enough tables for everything to be displayed – one for each category of items that you are accepting. [Table labels](#) are included within this kit. You will also need at least one table for checking people / items in and out.

We would ideally suggest numbers of volunteers along these lines:

2 on the door
3 on the floor
2 on the check-out
2 on teas/coffees

Make sure that event volunteers are identifiable on the day; by wearing [badges](#) for example. Often there are a fair amount of goods that have been amassed prior to the event that will need putting out before the event opens.

Ask people to bring:

It's really up to you what items you want to include but the following are normally accepted at these kinds of event.

- Bric-a-brac
- Kitchenware
- Books, CDs, DVDs
- Toys & Games
- Kids' stuff



- Garden items
- Sports Gear
- Household Linens and soft furnishings although these can contain dust mites and upholstered items will need a fire safety label.
- Possibly clothes / shoes / accessories but you'll need rails to display the clothes and possibly space for people to try things on.

It is important that donated items are in working order. Let people know, through your publicity, that you can only accept items in good condition and don't be afraid to vet and refuse things on the day.

You could also include a board for people to list larger items to be collected directly from their home.

Ask people not to bring:

- Gas appliances
- Electrical items – unless you can find a friendly electrician to PAT test (Portable Appliance Test) during the event
- Safety equipment such as children's car seats / cycling helmets
- Opened toiletries
- Food
- Anything dangerous or toxic such as sharps/knives or household chemicals
- Upholstered items without a fire safety label
- Large items that won't fit in a car

It is a good idea to have a secure area of the hall for volunteer's belongings as a Give and Take event is a bit of a free for all on items that are lying around! This also ensures that there is somewhere safe to store items that are found to be unsuitable to be put out as, even with vetting, some items can slip through the net.

You may feel that you want to put a restriction on the number of items that an individual is able to take away with them but, in our experience, this isn't necessary as the event is all about getting as many items re-used as possible. You can always have a quiet word with someone if you feel that they are taking more than their fair share.

As people leave, they will need to sign a [disclaimer form](#) to state that they are taking items at their own risk. This form also includes an opportunity to sign up to be on the mailing list to be notified about further events and to volunteer in the future.

One of the ways to determine the success of your event is to monitor the number of items that are actually passed on to new homes i.e. re-used. Waste prevention is categorised in weight terms so we have included two sets of scales which enable items that are taken to be weighed on the way out of the event. Only the weight of the total number of items that each person is taking is required.

Insurance & Risk Assessment

It is recommended that groups of volunteers undertaking this kind of event have suitable public liability insurance. Often, venues will also insist on this kind of insurance being in place but it may also be possible that the venue has their own public liability insurance that your event could come under. [Tennyson Insurance](#) offer public liability insurance to community and voluntary groups as well as clubs and societies.

A risk assessment is recommended for this event and may also be required by your insurance policy. We have included a [template risk assessment](#) with this kit which should be completed prior to the day and monitored on the day in the case of new and unexpected hazards. Please be aware that the template risk assessment is only an example and you will need to identify any further hazards and control measures that are directly relevant to your venue and event. Volunteers will need to be briefed on the risk assessment before the start of the event and will need to remain aware of hazards as they arise throughout the morning; taking necessary action to remediate – such as dealing with breakages.

Event publicity

Local publicity is key to getting as many people as possible along to your event. Giving people plenty of advance notice allows them enough time to clear out their cupboards, lofts and garages to be able to make the most of your event. Do all the local publicity you can through the usual school route, but if you want to open the event up to the public you may want to consider the following:

- Put up posters around the local area, in as many locations as possible. Ask every shop/café on your main street to put a poster in their window; ask householders on different streets to do this as well and make sure it makes it on to your town / village noticeboards and in the local library. This toolkit contains a [poster template](#) that you can alter and use.
- Leave flyers (A5 or A6 versions of the poster) in shops and public places such as the library for people to take. Start distributing your posters and flyers about three weeks before the event.
- Send a press release to the local newspapers/radio (including BBC Radio Devon) approximately three weeks before the event (depending on their submission / printing schedule). They may be willing to do an article on your upcoming event which will serve as an advertisement but they may also want to come along on the day itself to take photos and do a follow-up article. Included in this toolkit is a [press release template](#) for you to modify and use. Send an [image](#) along with your press release or a jpeg copy of your poster.
- Your local paper may also have a listings / What's On section that you can get your event included in.
- Depending on the success of your pre-event press release, you may need to consider paying for an advert (based on your poster) in a local publication.
- You can also send your press release to local newsletters such as parish and village magazines. However, these may be monthly publications so check their deadlines well in advance. Again, send an image with your release.
- [Recycle Devon](#) can list your event on their [Event Calendar](#) and also publicise it on their [Facebook](#) page.
- Make good use of social media; if you have use of a Twitter account then tweet local organisations, including press, for them to retweet. Create the event as a public one on Facebook and then share it across relevant Facebook pages / groups such as [What's On in Exeter](#) and the local Buy/Sell/Swap groups that now exist on Facebook.
- Promote the event via your local Freecycle / Freegle group, if you have one.
- List details of your event on local websites such as your town or parish council's event listings.
- Email the poster to your friends and family and via relevant local email networks. Word of mouth is the best form of advertising so tell everyone you know / meet about your event!
- Involve any event partners in promoting the event such as your venue or the charity you are fund-raising for.



- A banner is useful to put up in the weeks running up to the event and outside of the venue on the day. An 'A' board is also available in this kit for displaying large versions of your event poster on the day.

After your Event

Anything left over at the end of the event can either be held onto for another event or donated to [local charity shops](#) or [re-use organisations](#) who may be willing to come at the end of the event to collect items by prior arrangement or you may need to share out delivering goods to them.

Weighing the remaining items along with the items taken away on the day will provide a total figure for the amount of re-usable items that were donated on the day. This is the amount of goods that were potentially diverted from some form of disposal. Please let us have this information so we can monitor the value of our event loan kit. The total weight of goods that were rehomed will give you information you can use after the event to publicise your success in the media.

It might be a good idea to put out a [post-event press release](#) (see template in the kit) in case the press don't make it along. Make sure to take photos of the event in full swing which can then be used for publicity purposes. After the event, work out what you would do differently/better, if anything, and then book a date for your next Give and Take event which you can then include in your follow-up press release. Your success may encourage others to hold their own event.

Event Partners

When you hold this kind of event there is an opportunity to partner with other groups and organisations that support your aims and can add to your event. Perhaps the local WI or another foodie partner would be willing to do the catering? Perhaps you could promote the local [Freecycle](#) / [Freegle](#) group during the event and other local re-use organisations and charities by including relevant information on a display.

Events like these are also an opportunity to raise awareness of the problems associated with waste and over-consumption. Ideally, your event will inspire people beyond the day to waste less, buy less and re-use and recycle more. Having information available at the event about your local council's recycling services and waste prevention campaigns such as 'Don't let Devon go to waste' is a great accompaniment to the event itself.

Make sure any partners and volunteers are fully thanked for their contribution to the day and ensure that they are kept fed and watered throughout!

An alternative idea for fundraising is to run a clothes swap, also known as a 'swishing'. We have created a kit to support such events, this see our website page www.recycledevon.org/clothes-swaps

For further advice, guidance and help with running your event as well to provide any feedback on this toolkit, please contact Recycle Devon via: info@recycledevon.org or 01392 382266

