The Give & Take Toolkit

Tools to Reduce Environmental Impact and Cut Costs Through Sharing Community Events

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Toolkit

Across the UK, nearly 22 million small items of furniture, more than 11,000 bicycles and over 28 million toys are thrown away each year when they become damaged. Fewer than one in 10 people attempt to repair or restore broken items – despite 42% saying they'd like to learn the skills to do so.

North London Waste Authority (NLWA) October 2018
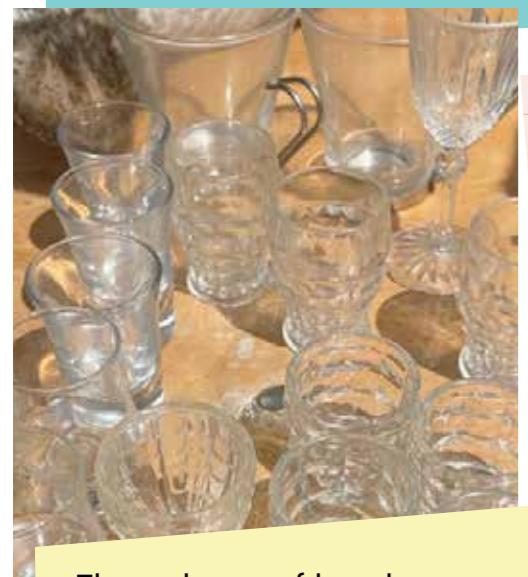
The volume of local authority-collected household waste in London amounted to roughly 2.8 million metric tons in the financial year ended March 2023. Household waste collection has remained at a similar level over the past decade, but has decreased notably when compared to the turn of the century.

Statista, March 2024

I want to be visible by using recognisable and engaging visuals
Event posters & flyers

The benefits of promoting the event

How do people learn about the event? How will they get what's happening as they pass by the fold-out tables? By sharing flyers across the community—either by placing them in communal areas or going door-to-door—you'll generate awareness of the event.

Having an event poster that mirrors the flyer's style will reassure people that they're at the right location. Moreover, this poster can serve as the initial point of contact for passersby to discover what's happening, initiating potential conversations. Both the flyers and the poster serve as methods to publicise the event and ensure a lasting presence.

How to

have a go at making your own posters and flyers. Make sure to include:

- **date and time**
- **location**
- **a short and snappy description of the event, and the sustainability and personal benefits**

Feel free to get creative, you can use a computer (we suggest Powerpoint or Illustrator), or design them by hand and make copies. To make it easier, we also included files from our designs that you can download using the link, and easily fill in with the information for your event.

How we used the posters and flyers:

when we kicked off the Give & Take days, we tried out different things in different places. In doing so, we found that handing out flyers in community spots and going door-to-door helped us to reach people where they live. This personal touch made our outreach stronger, forging better connections and understanding between us and the neighbourhood.

We want people to know about the event at least 2 weeks in advance, so they can get their stuff ready. For the Estate Swap, we spread the word in a bunch of ways - posted in the resident chat, on the notice board, and went door-to-door with flyers. We chose these ways of communicating because we wanted to focus on the residents of this estate. During the event we put our poster at the entrance, to catch people's eyes.

The poster made our space officially a Give & Take spot. People passing by could see something was happening, sparking their interest and curiosity. When someone checked out the space or read the poster, we'd chat with them, offer something to drink and eat, and share more information. Some people ended up taking stuff or coming back to donate afterwards!

Click here to download link, or go to **www.thinkanddocamden.org.uk/ other-resources**

I want to fix donated items by labelling defective items
'Take Me' 'Fix Me' Labels

The benefits of labelling items

By collaborating with organisations that do repairs, you can go beyond swapping and give a second life to broken items. But this also makes things more complicated, you might not always see if an item is broken. For instance, with broken electrical items, the defect is often hidden.

You don't want someone to pick up something from the table, only to find out it is not working when they plug it into the wall at home. To prevent confusion, you can label items to make a clear difference that is easy to spot.

How to

You can grab stickers in different colours to easily tell things apart. But sometimes, you might need more details. For instance, to write down what needs fixing, or you might want to number items to keep tabs on things (see form and spreadsheet tool for more information).

In that case you can follow these steps:

1. Prepare the tags before the event. If you are using a spreadsheet to track the items you need to add codes to the top corner of the tags, before the event write consecutive, unique numbers on each tag (eg. R001, R002, R003 or G001, G002, G003 (R for red/fix me tags, G for green/ take me tags)), add string to them.

2. When someone drops off an item, ask them about its condition and inspect the item

3. Select the tag that best suits whether the item needs to be fixed or is ready to take (if you are using a google form record the code on the tag

4. If the item is taken, keep the tag for your records and make a note of the code

We've got a link for you to download the label sheets we used. Check out the diagram on the right to see how we did our labelling.

How we used the labels:

At the Street Swap, we teamed up with a repair crew who fixed things on the spot. As items came in, we would label them 'Take Me' or 'Fix Me'. During the morning people would walk by and take the items that were ready. In the afternoon, the repair team dropped by to fix the items that were broken. After which they would receive a 'Take Me' label and join the items available for people to take home.

At the Estate Swap, we didn't have a repair crew on-site. But we still took in broken electronics, planning to send them to fixers a few days later. The labels showed which items needed fixing, letting people know they weren't good to go yet. People could still take them, knowing they needed a little maintenance.

With lots of stuff coming in, it's easy to lose track of what's good to go and what needs fixing. Having everything tagged with colours that match their condition, made it clear for both organisers and the people taking part to see what is what.

Labeling System
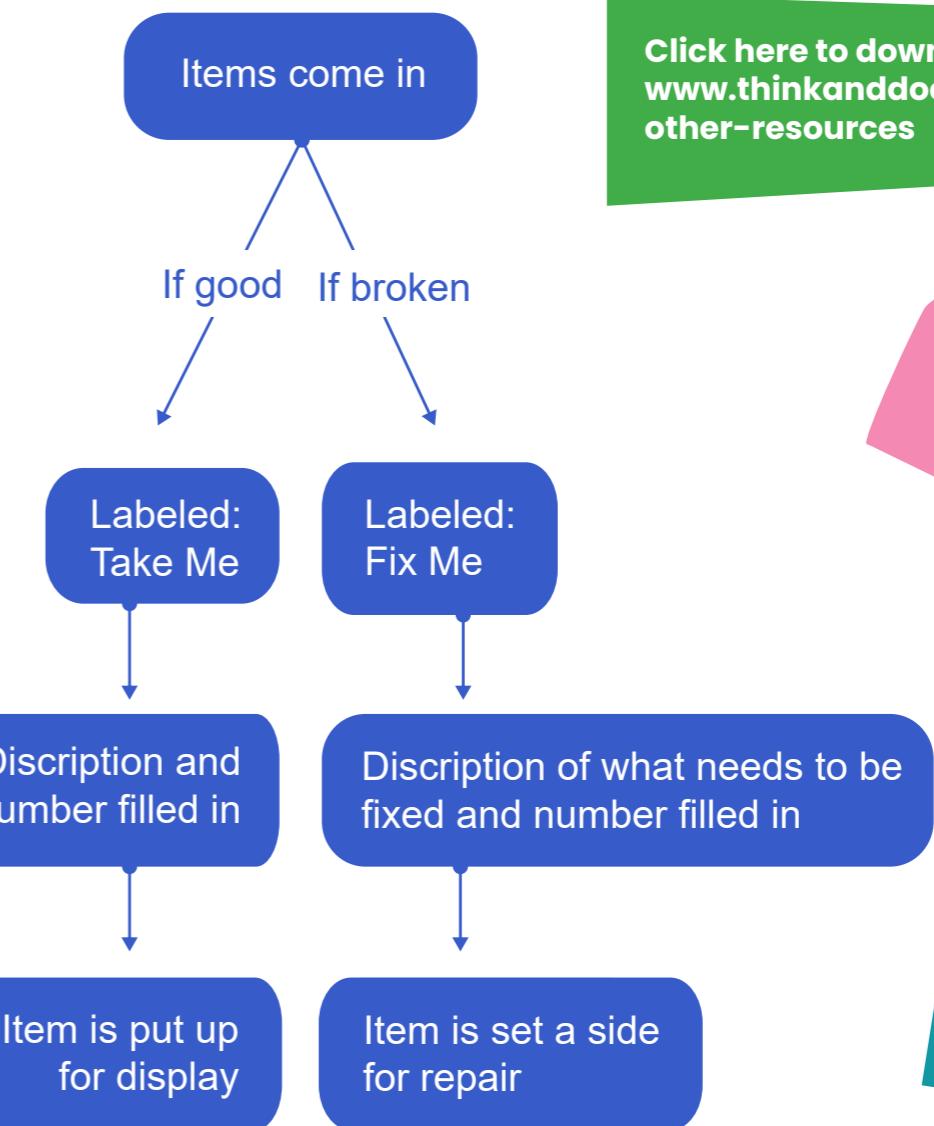
Click here to download link, or go to www.thinkanddocamden.org.uk/other-resources

```
          Items come in
         /            \
    If good          If broken
        |               |
   Labeled:         Labeled:
   Take Me          Fix Me
        |               |
  Discription      Discription of what needs to be
  and number       fixed and number filled in
  filled in
        |               |
  Item is put up    Item is set a side
  for display       for repair
```

I want to measure impact and improve by learning from past events
Form and Spreadsheet

The benefits of tracking items

How do we learn from past Give & Take days? How can we track what comes in and goes out effectively? And can we use this information to plan better events and measure their environmental impact more accurately?

We've learned that besides experience, tallying what comes in, goes out, and its condition provides insights that help guide you later on. It tells us about what we're doing and gets us ready for what's next.

How to

We used Google Forms and Spreadsheets to log what came in and went out. These online tools made sharing information with our team and handling the data afterward super easy. But choose whatever means to keep track of stuff works for you! It could be tallying in a notebook or taking pictures on your phone.

Most important is that you figure out what you need to track. For us, sorting items into categories like clothes, toys, and electronics helped us plan future events. Follow the download link to find the form and spreadsheet we used. It can be used alongside the tags - by using unique codes to track what happens to each item. If you are partnering with other organisations you can show which items have gone to which organisations.
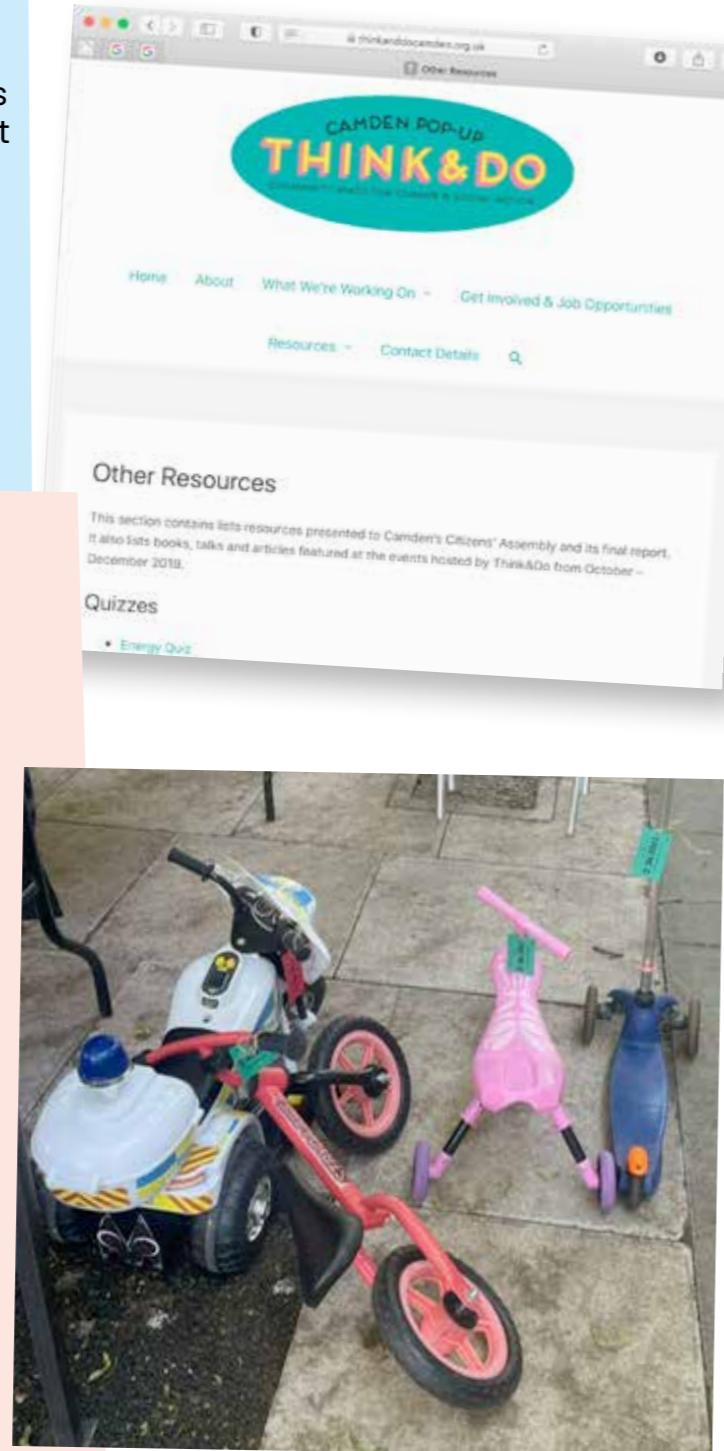
How we used these survey tools:

We paired this tool with the labelling system. Ahead of the event, we shared the spreadsheet with all the facilitators. On the day, we quickly ran through the system before diving in. As items arrived, we'd assess, tag, and fill in the form on our phones or tablets, updating as items are taken.

At the beginning of the Give & Take days, everything was trial and error. We were figuring out what clicked and what didn't. Keeping track of what came and went was a major benefit. It gave us a clear view of how things went and guided us for the next round. Having those past records was a solid base. It helped us organise the event better and match it to what we could handle.

Later on, we used this info to figure out who we could team up with next time. It also helped us link places, people, and what they brought along. We noticed loads of toys coming in, which made sense because we were in areas with lots of families. This got us thinking about how to make things better for kids and parents. These aren't fixed rules and might change based on your setup, but the more insights and angles you have on why people give and take, the better you can make swaps work.

Click here to download link, or go to **www.thinkanddocamden.org.uk/other-resources**

Good luck from Think & Do

'The Planet is facing a climate crisis but by coming together we can implement creative solutions, where we all can build a better future for us all. By bringing all the community's ideas and passion for making these changes we can make it a healthier and happier place to live!'

Ellie Bryant & Halima Khan

Want to have a chat? Nice!

Reach out to us at info@thinkanddocamden.org.uk