

Save money and save waste – help for your community

The Waste Prevention team at Cumbria County Council is here to help your community become more resourceful and save waste which in turn will save you money.

We have helped groups run various events including Give and Take days, Swishes (clothes swaps), community compost awareness days and sessions on how to reduce food waste in the home.

A **'Give and Take'** day offers local people the opportunity to bring along any good condition, unwanted items to their community venue of choice. Anyone can donate and anyone can come along and take away items, all for free. You can even use the event as a fundraiser by putting out a donation bucket and providing refreshments. These events have been held in a number of venues around Cumbria and are growing in popularity.

A **'Swish'** or clothes swap is a similar event and can be limited to certain types for example ladies and gents clothing, children's clothing, school uniforms etc. You can run it however you want but we have found that a good way is to limit people to 3 good quality items so you don't end up with too many leftovers. For each item someone brings they get a token to take that number of items away. It is a good idea to have a free-for-all 15 mins at the end so anyone without tokens also has a chance to pick up something nice. Again, you can run it as a fundraiser by perhaps charging people to get in, putting out a donation bucket and putting on refreshments.

For both Give and Takes and Swishes you need to have an outlet to dispose of any leftovers – the local charity shops have been great and things often get given away online via Freegle.

We also offer sessions on reducing food waste in the home and composting. These can be run for groups in the community perhaps through your village hall committee. Both of these sessions are great fun and of course we are happy to come along for free.

If your village hall committee or local community group would like us to help you host a Give and Take or a Swish event or come along and deliver a food waste or compost session then we would be delighted to come along for free. All you need is a venue and we will bring our expertise. We want to prevent waste and stop perfectly good stuff ending up in the bin and by doing our part we can also make the household budget stretch that little bit further!

The Community Waste Prevention Officer for Allerdale and Copeland is Sarah McNeill who can be contacted on 07979 535170 or by email at: sarah.mcneill@cumbria.gov.uk