



Which Council Aim does this case study deliver?

To have a high quality, clean and sustainable environment

Working with local groups to benefit the communities of Ryedale

Background

In 2001 a similar 'Clear Out Day' event took place in Malmesbury, Wiltshire under the sustainable development banner of Local Agenda 21. Since then this concept was further developed by local authorities in London and Oxford. In 2009 the updated model was adopted by Ryedale District Council's (RDC's) Environmental Coordinator, John Brown who set up a series of 'Give or Take Days', enabling the Council to work with local community groups. The two main benefits of a 'Give or Take Day' event are the social benefit, providing low-income families with items they may otherwise not be able to afford, together with the positive environmental benefit of diverting waste away from landfill.

What was done?

During 2009/10 five separate 'Give or Take Days' were coordinated and supported in Kirkbymoorside, Pickering and Malton. Each event involves liaising with a community group, assisting with advertising and promotion. Support on the day includes assistance with transporting items to and from the event, including delivery to people's homes if they happen to be old or infirm. So far the Council has worked in partnership with Kirkbymoorside Environment Group (June and November 2009 and March 2010), Malton Society of Friends (October 2009) and Pickering Civic Society (March 2010).



Kirkbymoorside Environment Group, Memorial Hall Kirkbymoorside, June 2009

Who was involved and how?

Each 'Give or Take Day' is supported by a member of staff from Streetscene, working together with the community group who have organised the event. The community group arrange the venue and distribute promotional literature prior to the event. Additionally, Streetscene staff are on hand to design and print advertising material and co-ordinate press releases. Occasionally, the Council can arrange for larger items to be delivered to the venue and then on to people's homes, in some circumstances. Following the event, any remaining items are reused or recycled, where possible, with a small percentage being disposed of. The events have been very well attended by the public and feedback has been extremely positive, with repeat events already planned for 2010.

What was achieved?

The main purpose of the days, are to bring to the towns a fun, community waste exchange event. It gives the chance for people to pass on items, such as bric-a-brac, clothing, furniture etc., and at the same time pick up something they need. And it's all for FREE!

'Give or Take' Days offer an exciting opportunity for people to have a clear out of household items cluttering up their home or garage and provide others the chance to pick up items they need. Far too many good re-usable items are sent to landfill which could easily be re-used or recycled and these fun events are designed to tackle this problem.

'Give or Take' Days also offer those on low incomes, or tight household budgets a chance to pick up household items they need. By exchanging goods everybody can save a bit of money. Most people will have items they no longer need or use, so it's much better to pass these on for re-use than discard them.

Each event deals with the equivalent of approximately ten high-top transit van loads of donated items and at the end of the event there is usually only one or two loads remaining. Approximately 95% of these items leftover are reused or recycled with only about 5% going to landfill, which is an excellent achievement.

Who benefited and how do we know?

There have been a few examples where low-income families, often new to the area, have been helped with essential furniture and have been absolutely thrilled. Feedback from the events has been extremely positive. Quite simply, people cannot believe they can take things they would like for "free", saving them money. Normally, these items would otherwise be thrown away!

'Give or Take Days' are a great example of RDC working together with local groups to the benefit of local communities.

Resources and value for money

Each event costs RDC in the region of £300, which is funded from existing budgets for environmental projects. The key to success of 'Give or Take Days' is the involvement of local groups with their drive and commitment – local groups exist due to the dedication of a few volunteers who have the interests of others at heart. The contribution made by the Council offers excellent value for money, which is far outweighed by the positive benefits enjoyed by the communities of Ryedale as a direct consequence of these events.

Next Steps / Further Action

There are three 'Give or Take Days' planned for 2010/11 which will be a repeat of events in Malton, Pickering and Kirkbymoorside. It is also planned to develop community support, by promoting assistance that the Council can offer to local community groups via Parish Liaison, the website and press releases.

RDC has also produced a manual for holding a 'Give or Take Day', providing a "Best-Practice Do-It-Yourself Guide", which has been adopted by the York and North Yorkshire Waste Management Partnership. Other Council's in the Partnership have also held similar 'Give or Take Days' in their areas following in the footsteps of RDC.

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Background documents/Links:

*Best Practice Guide for Organising a Give or Take Day
Committee reports*