



Tool Library resources

What could be more climate friendly than the reuse of tools and equipment! A tool library allows community members to freely lend and borrow various items such as garden tools, seeds, games, event materials, books and so much more so that everyone has access to this sort of equipment, and it helps community members to avoid unnecessary one off purchases.

Having access to a tool library means that instead of buying a drill for one job in your house you could just go and borrow one for a couple of days then return it for the next person. The average household drill is only used for 13 minutes in its lifetime. Imagine how much more space you would have in your shed if you didn't have to keep buying equipment for single jobs!

So, you want to create a tool library? Let's have a look at how to do it!

Firstly, you need to think about what you need.

- A storage place that's easily accessible for all the community, such as a shed next to the village hall or a space within an already existing community building.
- Good signage and advertising on social media and through word of mouth
- Some volunteers or staff members to help manage it, keep track of anything that's lost or broken
- Items to be borrowed!

Choose what sort of tool library you want to host

- A free unattended sharing library such as a book swap or beach equipment such as tennis balls for dogs or buckets and spades for children. This is an easy way of setting up a community sharing scheme that doesn't need much management.
- A more formal lending library, this can be run more like an actual library where the public can check items out and then return them. It means that all items can be checked for issues when they are returned and can be useful for more high value equipment such as electric gardening equipment. This brings on the addition of needing staff or volunteers to manage it.

Where to set up

- No matter which option you choose you will need to find somewhere to store the equipment.
- The site should be public and easily accessible.
- If it is unattended an area that's well lit, public and with lots of footfall will help avoid vandalism.
- Make sure the site is relatable, such as gardening equipment next to the community garden.
- Get permission from a land or building owner.

Decide on policies

- Will borrowers be expected to return the items and how long are they allowed to keep them?
- If you are hosting a small unattended library e.g. a book swap, are borrowers allowed to keep them?
- Who will be responsible for a liability waiver for equipment which may be hazardous such as sport equipment and tools?
- How will you transfer donated items into your care?
- Who will ensure the upkeep if you choose to go for an unattended library?

Where to get donations

- Spreading the word on social media and local papers
- Start off with asking friends and family so have a sort out of their shed
- Apply for funding to purchase some secondhand goods or organise a car boot sale
- Ask local growing groups if they have leftover seeds or seedlings
- If you are targeting a specific item such as books, ask local libraries and book clubs

Useful links:

[LittleLibraryToolkit_final.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

[Build a Little Free Library - Little Free Library](#)

[How to start a Library of Things - Shareable](#)

[little free pantry](#)

[CLACHWORKS | Home](#)

[Share & repair in the Highlands \(keepsotlandbeautiful.org\)](#)

[\[002\] – MEET THE FOUNDER OF THE UK'S FIRST TOOL LIBRARY – Sustainable\(ish\) \(asustainablelife.co.uk\)](#)

[Adopt a Tool. Build A Shared Future. - Edinburgh Tool Library](#)

[Lending Policy — Belfast Tool Library](#)

[Tool-library-manual \(southseeds.org\)](#)

[Circular Communities Scotland - Circular Communities Scotland](#)

Accessing support from the Highlands and Islands Climate Hub

The Highlands and Islands Climate Hub are here to support communities in various ways which includes, accessing funding, networking, training and events or even just someone to chat to about ideas or to help advise you on your next project.

To access the full range of support and resources available you can join us as a member - [Membership — Highlands & Islands Climate Hub](#)

If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to get in contact with us by email – enquiries@hiclimatehub.co.uk and a member of the team will be able to help.