

TIME BANKS UK

TIME TO GIVE AND TAKE

www.timebanks.co.uk

Edition 21

September 2005

Getting into Shape ... London's Event on July 12

The event was part of the national consultation examining time banking in the UK, evaluating how we currently operate, outlining what we intend to achieve and planning how we use our resources intelligently and effectively to ensure we fulfil our potential. The agenda for this day reflected issues that London Time Bank Network (LTBN) members had been raising in different forums over the last 18 months.

Over 40 stakeholders attended, demonstrating the wide range of organisations and individuals that LTBN engage with. Time bank members, Councillors, host organisations, nef staff, time brokers and TBUK staff all contributed ideas, experience and enthusiasm throughout the day.



Fumi and Marianne in deep discussion

Participants made a huge effort to be there in light of the recent London attacks, extreme heat and transport issues, particularly Bill from Rushey Green who travelled for 3 hours!

Key factors of high attendance

- Responding to a need identified by London time banks
- 3 months planning and preparation by the LTB staff at nef
- Invitation letters and emails mailed twice, plus information on the website
- Straightforward response mechanism and a closing date for replies
- Clarity about the purpose of the day and what the next steps will be

It was a day in which all participants had a role to play and a vital step in the development of the London Time Bank Network and Time Banks UK. The dynamic conversations and exciting action plans made on the day illustrate the vibrancy of the network and potential for the future. The event was innovatively recorded by Sherry Clarke from nef and expertly facilitated by Martin Farrell, Chair of Time Banks UK. Many attendees expressed their pleasure in the opportunity to spend time with each other and their interest in doing this more often.

Lucie Stephen
London Time Banks Co-ordinator

Fame for Royston

In early May I was approached by a consumer affairs correspondent for ITV – Claire, who had seen recent local newspaper articles about the Royston Time Bank. She asked me to put together a chain of exchanges for a short feature on time banking. This sounded straightforward enough.....

The Royston time bank members fell into 3 camps when asked if they wanted to be on television: the 'absolutely nots,' the 'maybes' and the 'definitelys'. After the 'maybes' had thought a while, there were 12 willing members.

I thought about how to capture the essence of time banking and that it might be by showing that members possess a variety of home type and professional type skills and that these are valued equally. It was important to show that there are male and female members as well as a wide age range.

A testing time for this came when it was suggested by the crew that perhaps some 'ordinary' activities were not exciting enough for television. I found myself feeling thoroughly defensive about the importance of these skills to time banking and insisting on their inclusion. This was not a problem and we were all put at our ease and given as much time as we needed.

I felt it was important to show the time bank members *giving* their skills and what they had chosen to *receive* for their time. I sent out a bit of a humorous agenda to everyone to show we could be relaxed about this. Meanwhile, I continued to panic with lists and phone calls as this seemed to be turning into something resembling a military operation. Most members had a requirement such as getting a lift which needed co-ordinating and if I had done anything differently it would have been to have delegated a bit more.

Members gave and received decorating, gardening, ironing, Indian head massage, nail painting, tea making and fence painting.

All participating members earned credits, including those who gave lifts to the venues, made teas for the crew and babysat for other members. Altogether there were ten exchanges in four venues shown in the three minute programme.

Kate Fraser
Royston Time Bank

Funding tips for Time Banks

This is a quick summary of how time banks have been funded in South Wales.

We are currently working in six local authority areas with around 30 host organisations. These include Development Trusts, tenants' and residents' groups, learning providers, housing associations and local regeneration partnership boards. Each host will decide whether to underwrite the time bank from existing budgets or go to external funders who include: Welsh Assembly Government; Local Authorities; Wales Council for Voluntary Action; local County Voluntary Councils; Lloyds TSB; Awards for All. This represents a mixture of European funds administered by local voluntary sector agencies, central government monies via the Welsh Assembly, lottery and charity sources.

Each funding application is clear about objectives and describes what exact difference people hope to make by using time banking. It matches the policy priorities of funders by showing how time banking will deliver the results they wish to see – for young people, the environment, communities etc. It describes *both* quality and quantity 'outcomes' to the work, which funders always need to see.

We are also developing close working relationships in different sectors: youth services, health and education in particular. This begins to open up the potential to get time banking into the mainstream of service delivery and regeneration, which is crucial to the future of time banking in the UK and an issue which Time Banks UK takes seriously too by developing key strategic relationships across government and different sectors.

Beyond these tips, Edgar and Christine Grey-Cahn have taught us never to tire of talking about the Core Values of time banking rather than the mechanism as an end in itself and if this matches funders' values they are more likely to fund you!

John Rogers
Wales Institute for Community Currencies
wicc@newport.ac.uk

Moving forth, up in the North!

“Being the hosting venue for Time Banks UK in the North East makes us feel really proud and I can see really exciting times ahead for the whole region,” - Newcastle Time Exchange’s project manager, Theresa Ball.

Her comments follow the appointment of Nicola Wylde, the new regional co-ordinator, the growth of the now well-established Blyth Time Club and others being set up in Shieldfield and Darlington. An important part of Nicola’s role will be the formation and co-ordination of a regional network and hub. This will involve bringing together the time banks in the North East to create a sense of community; building on previous combined activities such as the trip to Hadrian’s Wall that included members from the Blyth Time Bank and the Newcastle Time Exchange. This gives members a chance to get to know one another and also is an opportunity for staff to share ideas and solve problems. This integrated trip was partly funded by a £200 transport grant from the English Heritage fund along with contributions of £1 and 1 credit from members. It is hoped that as the regional community grows, so too will the opportunity for members and staff from across the North East to get together.

There was no hiding, development worker, Martin Brennan’s exuberance either as he rattled off a list of achievements quicker than they could be scribbled in shorthand. “We now have 112 individual members, 26 group members and are in the process of establishing a single parents’ group which will initially involve leisure activities and then move on to jewellery making, selling what they make, eventually becoming self-funding and able to afford days out and alternative therapy sessions. The Terraces in Bloom project is committed to the improvement and maintenance of over 100 street flowerbeds. We help our organisational member, Yours and Mine Community Café, with funding and staffing and this creates job opportunities for local people. So things are really happening for us,” Martin continued.

It’s full steam ahead at the Blyth Time Club too! “After two years we have over 50 members but we are constantly striving for growth” support



a proud contributor to Terraces in Bloom

worker, Alison Brennan said. The Time Club is committed to helping the elderly and many old peoples’ homes have become organisational members after volunteers set up a scheme to run arts and crafts sessions in the homes.

Back in Newcastle, Shieldfield H’our Bank is just getting off the ground as a pilot scheme. Tania McAllister is in charge and has been involved since the project’s official launch in April. It is overseen by the city’s East End Community Development Alliance.

Geoff Brown
Arthur’s Hill Time Exchange

Update from **TBUK**

New Staff

Nicola Wylde - NE Regional Co-ordinator
nicola@timebanks.co.uk

Stella Parkes - Training & Events Co-ordinator
stella@timebanks.co.uk

Sarah Komnatskaya - National Time Broker
sarah@timebanks.co.uk

Tam Cassidy - TBUK Director for Scotland
tam@timebanks.co.uk

New Regional Mentors

Janetta Ross - West Scotland
Laura Murgatroyd - SW England

Prizewinners

Aylesbury Time Bank, London and LETS Garw & Time Bank, Bridgend were lucky winners of family tickets for the zoo. Their Registration Forms for TBUK Membership were picked out of the hat from all those received in June and July. Have fun!



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TIME TO GIVE AND TAKE

It's Who You Know That Counts

Time banks are social networks that enable us to achieve more, to feel better about ourselves and to act more positively to each other. By reaching out and getting to know an ever-widening circle of people, by exchanging skills on an equal basis and in a spirit of mutuality, we broaden our horizons and are encouraged to grow.

Conversely, as we know is to their cost, 'professional helpers' continue to rely almost exclusively on one way service delivery systems which have become detached from the local informal social networks that can address the actual causes of many of our social problems - isolation, powerlessness and the loss of self worth.

It is up to us to find new ways to all work together to re-attach our public services.

"Ties That Bind", a recent report by the Annie E Casey Foundation, offers us several pointers. Not least of which is the insight that there are two distinct types of social networks:

1. Instrumental

Designed for specific outcomes, (work readiness, offender management etc.), this type of network is intentionally infused with information and activities for the benefit of individuals. The strength of this type is the

ability to help those who are most ready to be helped. The weakness is that people come and go and very few relationships are sustained. There is also a heavy burden on staff to maintain the network and little ownership by the participants. Activities are usually in groups.

2. Transformative

Here the network is the goal. This type offers lots of 'people to people' connections that support long term, lasting relationships. Strong in overcoming isolation, affecting people's sense of identity and self-confidence and supporting risk taking through reciprocal experiences. Able to help the most vulnerable and participants have active role in leading the network. The staff are facilitators. Weaknesses are they are not easily controlled and results cannot be predicted. You cannot pre-programme this type of social network.

We need to be much more aware of these two distinct models and be careful when we blend them together. There is detailed advice in the report on this and on many other fascinating and highly relevant issues. Please let me know if you would like me to send you a copy on martin@timebanks.co.uk.

Go well
Martin Simon