



Timebanking UK
Annual Report
June 2021

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Who are Timebanking UK?

Established in 2002, Timebanking UK (TBUK) are the only membership organisation in the country to provide advice, resources, software and training for anyone wishing to set up a time bank or learn about timebanking. We also advocate for timebanking at policy level, working with local authorities and government agencies to promote the values of timebanking and to make our transformative method of sharing time and skills accessible to everyone.

We provide operational guidance for time banks, with our Quality Mark™ representing a model of best practice for community time banks. We specialise in person-to-person timebanking and recommend clear procedures to minimise risk for people who engage in time exchanges.

Our mission is...

- To support time banks by giving them the resources, tools and information they need to thrive;
- To work with organisations and commissioners with the aim of engaging local people in timebanking;
- To influence policymakers, local and central government to promote the advantages of timebanking.

TBUK also encourage research into the impact timebanking has on individuals and communities, and promote the belief that time banks build capacity within communities, recognising and releasing every individual's assets using time as a currency, not money.



Our vision is a country with a time bank in every community and on every high street, connecting and valuing people, and helping eliminate loneliness.





What is timebanking?

Timebanking is an asset-based approach to sharing time and skills: like other asset-based approaches, we focus on what people *can* do, not what they *can't*. We believe that every person is valuable and has something to offer others – and timebanking is a simple way to enable them to do that.

As a time bank member, you help someone for an hour (or thereabouts) – for example by mowing their lawn or doing their shopping.

For every hour of help you give, you earn a timebanking hour from your time bank. You can spend this on an hour of someone else's time. For example, you could learn how to cook an apple pie, or get help with painting your fence.



A snapshot of timebanking across the UK

Timebanking is all about people. Our time banks connect people with others in their community and make them feel happier and healthier – and the figures collected by our time banks bear that out. Our time banks use a variety of methods to collect demographic data and to record the number and type of exchanges taking place. Around 60% of our national network of time banks use our specialist software Time Online 2, which has been developed in close consultation with the people who run time banks – and we are continually improving it in line with their feedback. As well as making it easy for people to join in with their local time bank, Time Online 2 captures rich veins of data which demonstrate the impact of timebanking.

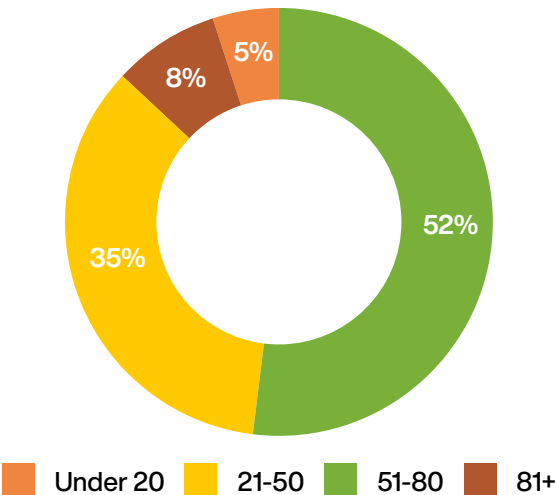
Approximately

18,000

people are currently taking part in
timebanking in the UK



60% are over age 50



67.6%
of our time banks are supported
by their local authorities

76.5%
of time banks supported by local
authorities receive direct funding



62.5%
of these were supported for
more than 2 years



TBUK time banks – the national story*



TOTAL = 177

*This includes mini time banks and hubs, which are groups of time bank members who swap time in a particular area or around a topic, such as art/crafts. This also includes time banks in Ireland that are members of TBUK.



14 time bank networks
(across cities and/or counties)

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TBUK hit the six million mark!

This year has been a special one for TBUK and all our member time banks, because in March we recorded the six millionth timebanking hour since we started keeping centralised records.

Woolmer Forest Timebank in Hampshire was the one who clocked up the magic number, with Daphne supporting another member, Sue, with a befriending call. The time bank's broker, Claire, said, "How amazing that Woolmer Forest is the one time bank out of all the others in the UK who achieved the six millionth timebanking hour!

"Our growing membership consists of a wonderful group of people who support each other and the local community and swap skills and hobbies in return for time credits."

Our time banks across the country joined in the celebrations, as each and every one of member has been part of this achievement. Each of those six million hours represents more than an exchange of time: it's a hour of kindness, a boost of self-esteem, a bond between neighbours, and a step towards a stronger and more connected community. We are now looking forward to our seven millionth hour.



Claire (above) and Daphne (below) celebrate the six millionth timebanking hour



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The impact of timebanking

Time banks work because they are grounded in their communities and supported by local organisations who share the values that underpin timebanking, but also because they're part of a network of shared learning facilitated by Timebanking UK.

An effective time bank operates in accordance with Timebanking UK's working and safeguarding guidelines and quality standards.

Life has changed and our friends and family don't always live nearby. It's not always easy to ask someone for help, especially if that brings with it a feeling that we can never 'pay them back'.

Timebanking UK's case studies show that joining a time bank can change people's lives. After taking part in exchanges, time bank members report that they learn new skills, meet new people, enjoy better self-esteem and self-confidence, and feel healthier. Time bank members realise their knowledge and skills are useful – and they feel more involved in their community, too.



Fair Shares Gloucester is one of the UK's oldest time banks



Time Bank Uttlesford members found safe ways to carry on through the lockdown



Using amalgamated data from four time banks, these averaged figures show the results of joining, and give an idea of how a new time bank might benefit a community:

- **85%** said they were meeting more people
- **80%** felt more part of the community
- **74%** made new friends
- **74%** experienced a lift in mood or reduced depression
- **69%** felt they could ask for or receive more help
- **66%** experienced reduced loneliness
- **60%** said their quality of life, health and wellbeing had improved

Timebanking enables people to realise they are useful and valued members of society. It makes us feel better, more connected – and just happier!

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A new insight: calculating the social value of timebanking

In June 2020, TBUK and Moore Kingston Smith embarked on a project to create a framework to calculate the impact of time banks' activities. Using a typical time bank, they were able to capture and predict commonly experienced outcomes. The work was kindly funded by the Dunhill Medical trust.

In the past, TBUK have focused on the personal impact of timebanking; this development represents progress in the way we collect data to strengthen our case and that of our time banks when working with funders and policymakers.

Outcomes analysis found four stakeholder groups emerged; the outcomes they described are listed in each case:

1 Outcomes for time bank members

- Reduced loneliness and isolation
- Improved confidence and self esteem
- Increased sense of belonging in the community
- Increased independence
- Reduced anxiety
- Improved mental health
- Increased skills
- Improved employability

2 Outcomes for close family members of time bank members

- Reduced anxiety and worry about the loved one
- Uplifted by members' new activity and better quality family time
- Increased involvement and feeling part of community



3 Outcomes for NHS / social care services

- i. Reduced pressure of social care services
- ii. Reduced demand on NHS services – more hospital beds available
- iii. Reduced visits to GP and less need for medication

4 Police / judiciary

- i. Reduced antisocial behaviour – less police time taken up and increased deployment for other issues
- ii. Reduced probation, antisocial behaviour orders and judiciary and courts' time

For this predictive model of impact, using figures from Stratford Time Bank, the net return figure means that for every £1 invested, £5.76 of social value is created. Much of this is through outcomes for time bank members and their loved ones, though public sector stakeholders also benefit from the work that time banks do.

One of our targets for 2021/22 is to use this model to assess impact across our entire time bank network.

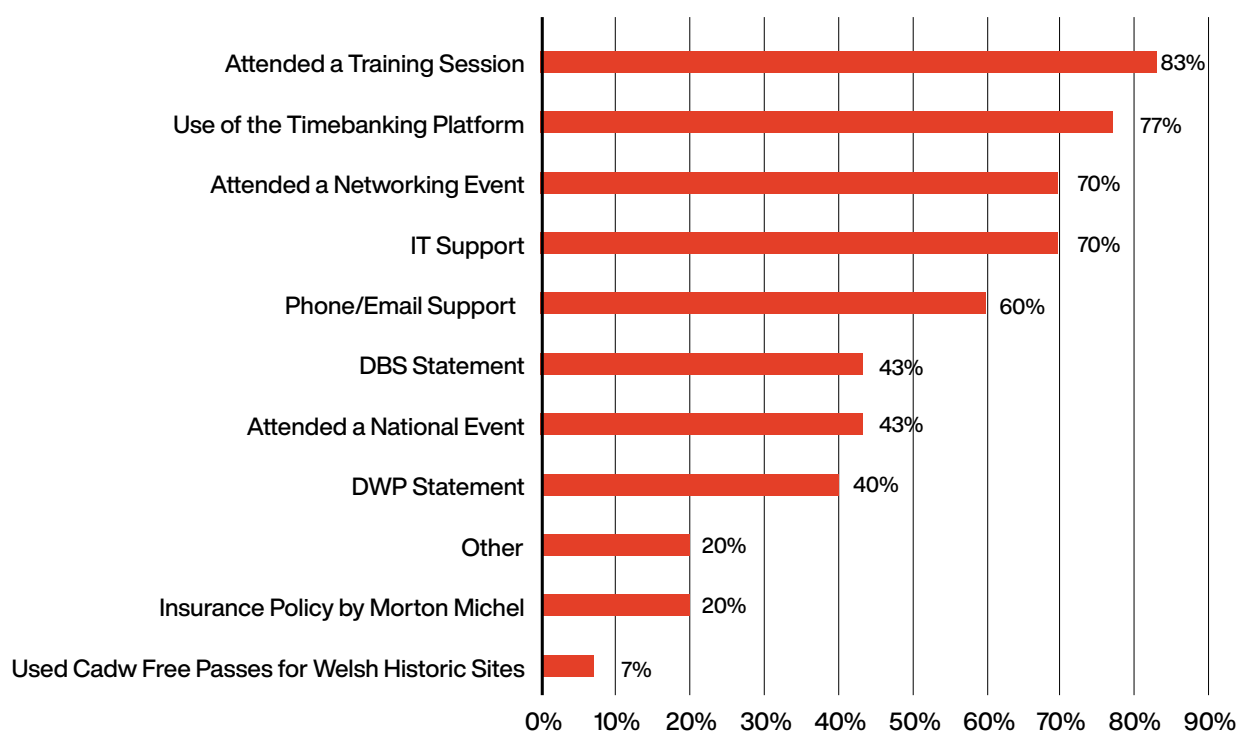


How our time banks see us

In November 2020, an independent researcher spoke to 30 time bank brokers about how they feel about TBUK and our support, and which of our services they had utilised in the past 12 months.

**Time bank brokers/coordinators run our time banks. They are responsible for timebanking activities, and for adhering to TBUK's working guidelines. They are usually paid a salary through independent funding, and some time banks are run by volunteers.*

Timebanking UK support and services for time banks



Have you had any challenges at your time bank where you felt the need to ask TBUK for advice?

The initial training session I attended a few years ago was very useful, but I have received one-to-one support from Ian* recently, which was great...

Zoe Weaver, St Ives and Fenstanton Timebank

**Ian, our IT manager, supports time bank brokers with our TOL2 platform.*

I don't think I would have been able to do half of what I do if I hadn't attended the broker training session before lockdown happened. Everyone has been so helpful in the setting up and the worries about Covid19. The online Zoom training has been great too."

Lucy Amos-John, Sutton Time Bank

“

Always valuable to get together with others to share ideas and initiatives [Check In and Chat Zoom sessions]. The Timebanking UK team as a whole – fantastic support!

“

I have found the policies and publications particularly useful...

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We had a very difficult member where the time exchange went wrong. We talked to TBUK for advice and support over which resulted in successful outcomes.

“

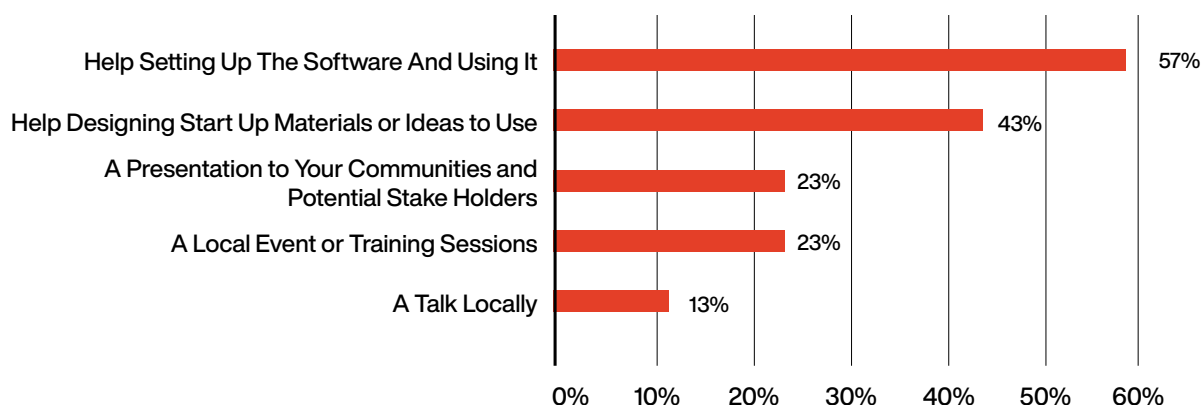
Advice re Covid19 restrictions and risk assessments have been really helpful...

“

Reference requirements and clarification was useful...



What other services have you used?



Our brokers value TBUK, and their fellow timebanking enthusiasts...

"They are a great, friendly team and everything they do is worthwhile and of great use. And their conferences are fun..." **Georgina Corley, St Neots Time Bank**

“

Also using their paperwork and including some of the information in members' newsletters...

“

Ian also comes out on top. He's helped me tremendously setting up the software.

“

The recent Check in and Chat opportunities have been really useful during lockdown...

“

The networking and the national conference were great for learning what other time banks have been doing...

“

Confirming I'm going down the right roads and confirming DBSs...

It's reassuring to know that they are there to answer questions. I really enjoyed the national event I attended two years ago and would love to go to another one when restrictions allow..."

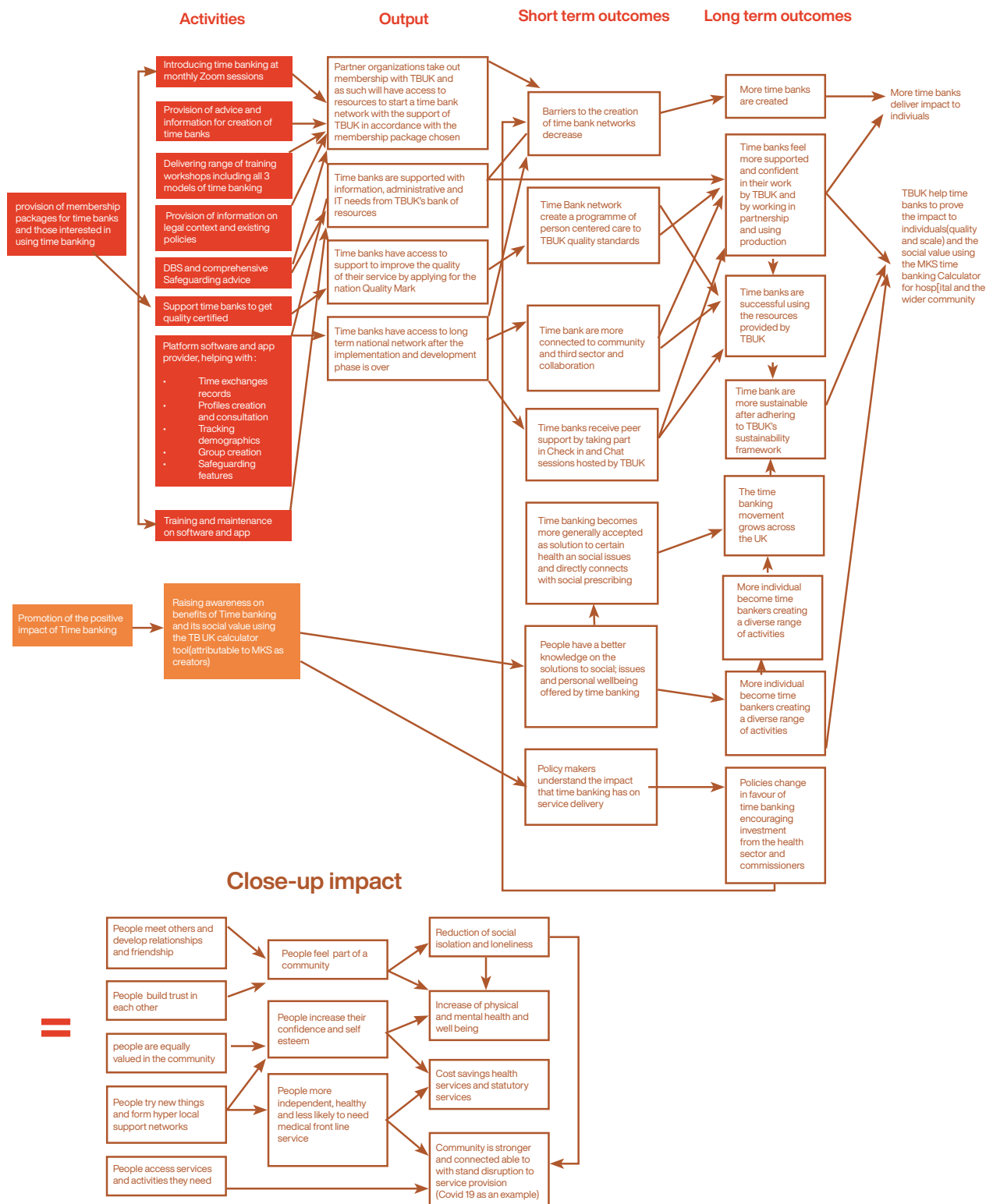
Katie Ixer, Somersham and Pidley Time Bank





Our Theory of Change

A theory of change clearly explains the activities and outputs that lead to short and long-term outcomes, and from there to positive change. At TBUK, we want to see the results outlined in the Close-up impact section below, and our theory of change plots the best way of achieving these.





Covid19 – a unique challenge

Covid19 has been a challenge, but being a smaller organisation has enabled us to respond quickly to the needs of our time banks and their members. Our turnover dropped by £100k, but our outgoings were also much lower due to no travel, overnight stays or expenses.

We created a range of materials and guidelines for our time banks, even supporting the development of new time banks during the pandemic lockdown.

Where we used to go around the country meeting our time bank brokers, we developed an online forum for shared learning and support. Our Check In and Chat sessions have been extremely well attended, with our time bank brokers giving us universally positive feedback. We run them every month and between eight and 20 time bank brokers generally attend. We are also delivering specialist training online to support new and existing time banks.

Like so many other organisations large and small, we and our time banks had to respond in an agile manner to the acute needs of people who were suddenly required to stay at home. As they are deeply embedded in their communities, our time banks were called upon to join the front-line response to the pandemic, and, while timebanking activity dropped, many of our time bank brokers found themselves helping stem the flow of need.



Timebanking on the front line



We're mainly doing a great job supporting all our existing members – telephone befriending, picking up shopping, introducing members to Zoom and similar methods of getting in touch...



We had a call from a Barnardo's family support worker about a family in town. Mum has disabilities and needed her prescription picked up. A time bank member did this for her...



I've been doing the free school lunch deliveries for a local school – I pick them up at school then deliver to doorsteps...



We were contacted by the local hospital. A patient needed a prescription picked up but after talking to him, we found out he was really low on food as well, so we dropped off a food parcel to him. A time bank member picked up his prescription and dropped it off to him, as well as some milk and bread and a few other things...



In spite of ill health, Covid19 and interminable lockdown, TBUK has been always approachable and supportive and encouraging our project to succeed...

Our time banks have continued to take part in timebanking exchanges throughout the pandemic. One significant achievement in 2020 was moving all our time banks still using the now obsolete Time Online platform onto the more effective Time Online 2.

Timebanking through the pandemic			
	July to December 2019	January to June 2020	July to December 2020
Hours exchanged	82,167	45,858	35,837
Number of time exchanges	17,863	21,760	8,184
Average time per exchange	4.5 hours	2 hours	4.5 hours

The above figures show that, despite the lockdown restrictions, our time banks continued to work hard to engage, involve and support local people. While the number of hours exchanged dropped significantly, we were surprised to find that the number of time swaps increased during the first part of 2020. We believe this is because people were doing shorter exchanges – so fewer garden makeovers, and more trips to the shop or chemist.





Promoting the advantages of timebanking – 2020/21 in review

Supporting people with visual impairment



Timesight London is a developing time bank funded by the Vision Foundation. We're working with London-based community groups to get visually impaired people involved in timebanking in a way that suits them. Our patron, former RNIB chair Lord Low of Dalston, recorded a rousing 'call out' to people with sight impairments to get involved in timebanking, which was well received in our presentations to visually impaired Londoners, and we have distributed our Braille handbook and developed our website and platform in response to feedback from visually impaired users.

Helping everyone to get active



Over the course of the pandemic, many people have felt their physical and mental health deteriorate. We are working with Disability Rights UK and Sport England on a project to support disabled people and people with long-term health problems to become more active: time bank members pair up using a buddy scheme to take part in activity together twice a week for 10 weeks.

Healthy bodies, healthy minds



Our time banks tend to involve more people over 50 than under as a matter of course. However, this year we've continued a national project with a specific focus on involving and supporting older people funded by the Dunhill Medical Foundation. This is to use timebanking to help people stay independent, to improve their mental and physical health and wellbeing and to enable them to feel less lonely and isolated.



Secondly, we have a project with Serco and Sport England, which aims to support people living with dementia or long-term health conditions to access leisure facilities, using a timebanking framework. This was put on hold during lockdown, but is starting up again as we move into the next phase of the pandemic.

Broadening the scope of timebanking

Timebanking recognises the value of everyone in society, including people who have committed offences and those at risk of offending. We have been working with HM Youth Offender Institute Aylesbury to enable their residents to take part in timebanking while serving custodial sentences. This slowed during lockdown, but we were still able to donate timebanking hours earned by young people in prison to community time banks, with a positive outcome for both parties. We are looking to extend our work with people involved in the criminal justice system over the coming year, with the endorsement of Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC, Secretary of State for Justice, and we have begun constructive talks with HM Prison and Probation Service's Reducing Reoffending team and Sodexo Justice Services.



International cooperation

We were delighted to present to over 100 people at the International Timebanking Day, hosted by TimeBanks in March, forging new contacts with time banks in the US, New Zealand and Spain amongst others, and we have agreed to host next year's event. We also presented to a timebanking network in Portugal. In South Korea, we have started work on Time Travellers, a time-sharing language exchange, and we have also kept up fruitful dialogues with time banks in Thailand, Italy, Finland, and China.



Talking timebanking



We continue to seek new conversations with organisations who share our values, and this year we've talked to and worked with Creative Lives, the Richmond Fellowship, Coalition for Personalised Care, the Health Creation Alliance, Eden Project Communities' Community Action Response, the Connection Coalition, the Department of Work and Pensions and individual Work Coaches, Community Circles, Community Organisers, and Community Catalysts. Timebanking featured as a 'promising approach' in the Campaign to End Loneliness's report in January this year.

Timebanking works for councils

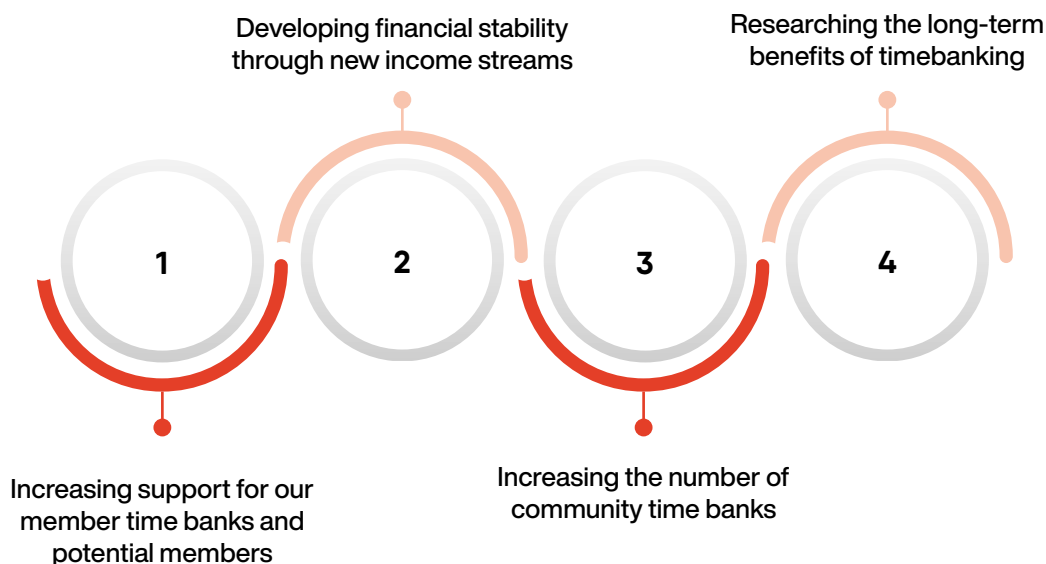
A new piece of research shows that over 70% of time banks are or have been supported by a local authority, and we will continue to work with councils to support them to achieve their local aims, as well as reaching out to potential new partners. We recently began work with Worcestershire County Council, and we have had an active year with Bristol City Council and Monmouthshire Council as they develop their time bank networks.



The future

Our three-year strategy works towards a more sustainable economic position for TBUK, a stronger position for our time banks, and an increase in the recognition of timebanking as a means of asset-based community development. We will launch campaigns to increase the number of community time banks, and to encourage men, visually impaired people, and disabled people to take part in timebanking.

Objectives for the coming year



CONTACT US



The Exchange
Brick Row
Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 1DF



www.timebanking.org



info@timebanking.org



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