



# PARTNERS IN TIME

A PROPOSAL FOR USING TIMEBANKING TO BUILD  
SELF-ESTEEM AND CHANGE SELF-PERCEPTIONS FOR PEOPLE  
WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



Timebanking UK

# TIMEBANKING: THE BASICS

In timebanking, people connect by sharing their time and skills with others. One of the founding principles of timebanking is that everyone has something to give - even if they don't yet know what it is.

Timebanking values everyone's time and skill equally. You can earn a timebanking hour by helping someone fix something, by training them in a skill, by general mentoring, or by being a 'buddy' to motivate someone to take part in fitness activities or arts and crafts. For every hour a time bank member spends helping someone, they earn a timebanking hour.

Timebanking UK is the national charity supporting the development of timebanking across the country with resources, training and support available. We are the national voice of timebanking, lobbying government and commissioners to change the way of thinking and to invest in people who might otherwise become 'hard to reach' or those who become dependent upon benefits, statutory support and services. We recognise the value of every individual no matter what their background or ability. Our evidence and impact reports prove that timebanking turns ingrained perceptions around of both the individual and the community.



# TIMEBANKING AND REDUCING REOFFENDING

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Timebanking UK supports prisons and youth offender institutions to use the timebanking mechanism where prisoners earn timebanking hours while in prison in a variety of ways offering peer support and activities. The hours are spent, saved or gifted to family or communities. Timebanking UK now want to build on the successes and learning from past projects to propose initiatives for offenders and on-going support to ex-offenders.

Lack of empathy for others is often cited as a major cause of reoffending in young people; a 2014 report for the Scottish government suggests antisocial attitudes, values and beliefs are a strong predictor of reoffending.

Timebanking enables prison residents to see the positive impact their actions have on people both inside and outside the prison – and, for some prisoners, this may be the first time they have seen their efforts having a positive effect. Participants earn timebanking hours that can be used after release, donated to help their family, or donated to a goodwill pot to be used by time banks in the wider community.

Timebanking can support the reduction in reoffending strategic outcomes of the MOJ's Outcome Delivery Plan 2021/22 through breaking the cycle of reoffending by offering proven interventions:

- Improving job prospects through participating in timebanking where earning time credits are accepted as Job Centres as part of seeking employment. Through improving self esteem and developing skills timebanking offers an opportunity to improve employment prospects and secure a job;
- As well as employment, through regular timebanking activity people raise their self-esteem, become part of their communities and can be supported to find a home that will offer the stability of a base.
- Timebanks work closely with local GP practices. Through the support of Social Prescribing Link Workers, we can ensure that patients get the medical referrals they need, including for mental health and substance misuse, as well as access to a range of activities to improve their health and wellbeing

## Support to probation services

Time banks can not only support offenders to learn new skills during their custodial sentence but can continue this process, within the community, to ready them to seek employment as part of their rehabilitation. Timebanking can support the aims of the Prisons Strategy White Paper (2021) by tackling reoffending with education, skills and employment. Through time banks, members can acquire new skills, from basic literacy to digital technology to enable a pathway to employment.

Time banks can support probation services by being a referral point once an offender has completed their sentence. Time banks offer an inclusive, routine and structured way to occupy time whilst giving back to the local community. Being a member of a time bank will also assist with rehabilitation, improved self esteem and ready people for employment. Timebanking can also support the implementation of Diversionary and Community Cautions. With Diversionary Cautions, where the caution is punitive, timebanking can offer the opportunity of unpaid work and where the caution is rehabilitative timebanking can support the individual to engage with the necessary services to address their mental health or addiction. With Community Cautions timebanking can offer an option for community rehabilitation as part of the agreed activities within the contract with the police. Working within, and for, the community gives something back to it and supports the reduction in reoffending, preventing future offences.

## Youth Time Banks

Community time banks can offer many opportunities for neighbourhoods to come together and can enable inter-generational exchanges that will enhance the understanding and mutual respect between different age groups through the sharing of time and skills.

In addition, over the past 20 years, Timebanking UK has helped to develop time banks specifically focused on offering the youth within a given community to undertake timebanking. By offering the opportunity to interact with others, through the giving and receiving of time and skills allows young people to improve their self esteem and make them more confident for their future whilst contributing to their local community. Within the custodial setting, youth time banks have been established to offer a positive way to utilise their time whilst serving their sentence. The case study below demonstrates how timebanking can give its members improved self worth and a sense of purpose, not only when in prison, but also as part of their release and rehabilitation back into society.

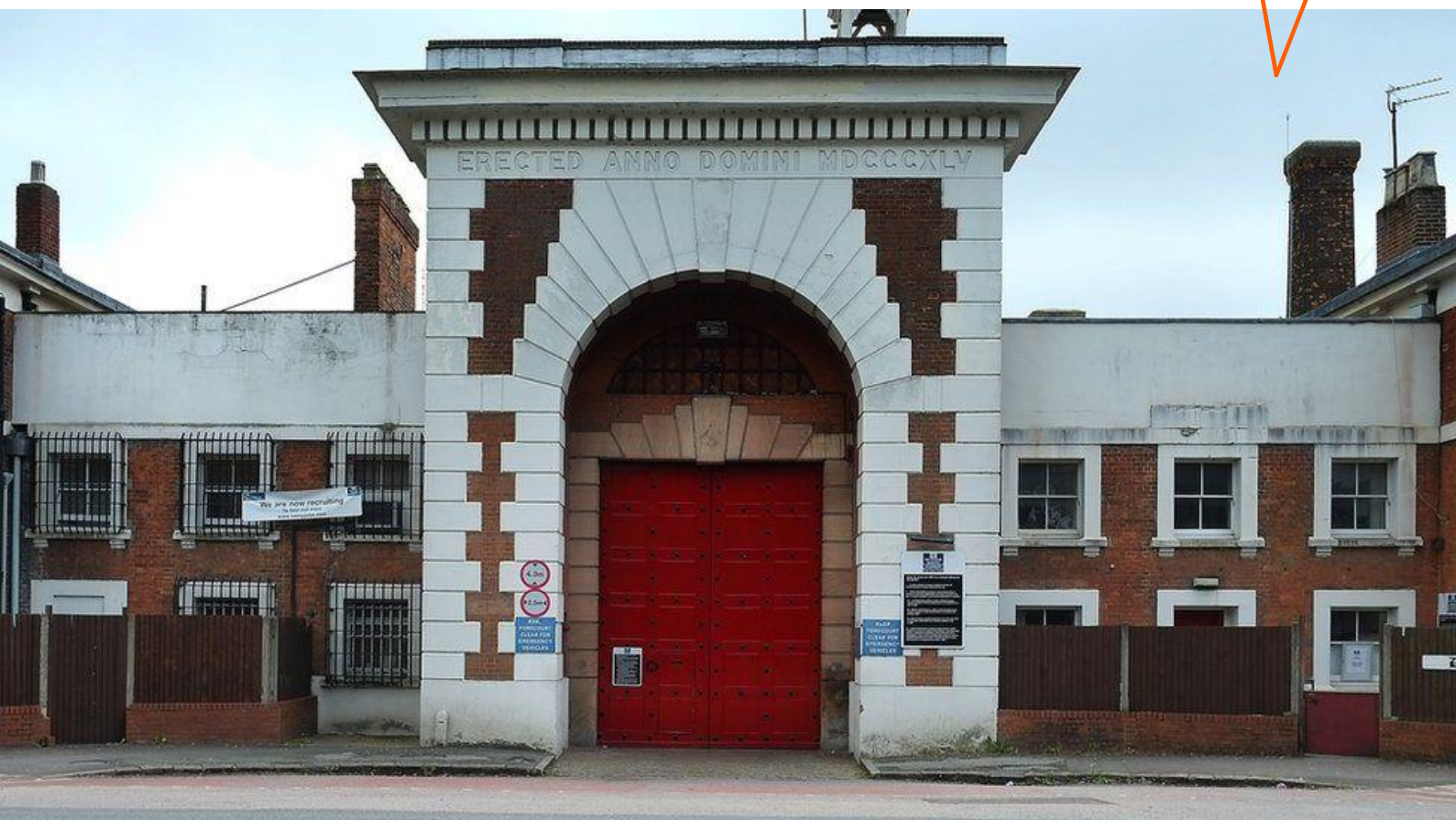


## HMYOI Aylesbury case study:

David of the Safer Prisons Hub said “For me, this all started when I worked as an officer in HMP Kilmarnock and was approached by a local time bank in Glasgow to set up joint working,” he explains. “Seeing the prisoners’ response to feedback [from time banks] was amazing. You actually see physical changes in them – sitting up proud, smiling, and so on. In 17 years of working in prisons, I’ve never seen anything impact on their self-worth as much as this. It seems to really give people a belief they can make a positive impact on other people.

“The effects have been replicated here; in fact, one lad welled up and almost cried when I told him how he had helped other people. I’d love to see this good work in other prisons and even post release. It’s got to be an ideal opportunity to give ex-prisoners purposeful work on the outside...”

For each hour of peer mentoring prison residents give each other, they earn a timebanking hour. Hours can also be earned by peer and new staff training, and by running activities. Timebanking UK distribute the earned hours to community time banks. A rigorous monitoring and feedback system means that young people find out exactly how the time they earn goes towards helping others, and discover the impact they have had on people who have benefited, without discovering any personal details about the people who have accepted their hours through the time bank.



# TIMEBANKING IN PRISONS:

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TBUK member time banks have worked with people who have committed crimes, at various stages of the criminal justice system. While these projects produced positive outcomes for prisoners and staff, they have not sustained into the long term, so now Timebanking UK will lead this programme Partners in Time which will provide the foundation for long-term results that transform the way people who have committed crimes see themselves, making for a more positive transition into the community post-release.


Here are some of those examples of previous timebanking projects in prisons:

HMP Gloucester integrated a time bank with the help of Fair Shares, Gloucester's own time bank, running from 2004 until the prison's closure in 2013. During this time, prisoners could earn timebanking hours working to repair bikes in the prison workshop, with the hours earned sent to their families.

HMPs Leyhill, Eastwood Park, Erlestoke and Guys Marsh also worked with Fair Shares as part of the Times2 and/or Timebanking for Offenders programmes. In these prisons, prisoners participated in volunteer activities and took part in maths tuition to earning timebanking hours.

HMP Dartmoor was part of the Times2 maths project, the success of which led to a fully integrated time bank in the prison, with exchanges occurring between prisoners and in service of the wider community.

HMP Shotts operated with Castlemilk Timebank, with prisoners primarily gaining hours through the Samaritans Listener Scheme. These hours were then used by members of the Castlemilk Timebank.



# TIMEBANKING IN PRISONS: OUTCOMES

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Timebanking in prisons has produced a number of positive outcomes for prisoners and for the wider prison system as a whole. There has been a marked improvement in mathematics qualifications in prisons participating in the Times2 project, as well as a rise in prisoner confidence, which is reported commonly across timebanking prison projects.

Another noted outcome is the improved relationships with families; at HMP Eastwood Park, timebanking hours earned by prisoners were spent on the creation of DVDs to be sent to families, while in other prisons, hours earned could be given to families to use for help at home.

One of the most important outcomes is in no small part a product of the other two; the support that timebanking projects provide for reintegration once prisoners are released. Time banks are hyper local and based in communities. Each one is managed by a coordinator who gets to know each person, introducing them to activities and help which is tailored to the individual. The mentoring provided through timebanking is specifically aimed at improving prisoners' capabilities of contributing to society after release in a safe and risk-free manner.

When ex-offenders feel useful and able to help others, sharing skills and interests, their self esteem and confidence improves. It is sometimes the first time they can see a personal positive impact which changes self-perception. When families see this positivity it enables strengthening of relationships thus leading to less reoffending.

TBUK also works with the DWP at national and local level to support people into work, and timebanking hours now count towards jobseeking hours. Job centres and the DWP recognise that timebanking is a first step towards formal volunteering or attending training courses.





# DELIVERABLES AND BUDGET

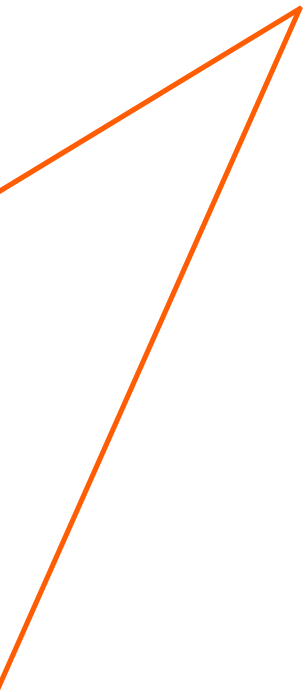
## FOR ONE YEAR'S INTRA-PRISON TIME BANK

Timebanking UK will work with you/your prison to assess your needs in terms of embedding timebanking principles to engage prisoners during custodial sentences and/or upon release.

Over 12 months we will dedicate 20 days of TBUK staff time to work with you to set up a time bank either inside the prison or with an existing time bank in a community setting. We will:

- ◆ Help to coordinate activities
- ◆ Create an action plan for you
- ◆ Holding scoping sessions to learn more about your prison, its residents, and which model of timebanking would work best
- ◆ Enable local asset-mapping to establish activities residents could partake in to earn timebanking hours
- ◆ Offer two staff engagement workshops
- ◆ Offer two prisoner engagement workshop
- ◆ Hold four training workshops on how timebanking works, how to evaluate the impact and sustainability planning
- ◆ Give ongoing support with monitoring and reporting
- ◆ Link to a specific community time bank upon release, where possible





Please note: images are representative of general time bank activity and do not picture people who have committed crimes.

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