**Timebanking: A Practical Tool for Rebuilding Community Trust and Supporting Social Mobility**

Dear Editor,

The recent unrest has highlighted the fragility of our communities and the strength that can emerge when people come together. As we reflect on how to rebuild in the wake of these events, it is essential to focus on practical, sustainable methods that foster mutual support, trust, and opportunity for all, particularly for our younger generation.

Timebanking offers a proven approach to achieving this. By allowing individuals to exchange time and skills on an equal basis, timebanking strengthens community ties and empowers people to contribute meaningfully to their neighbourhoods. As these exchanges take place, people from diverse backgrounds come to see the humanity and inherent value of others in their wider communities. This creates networks of reciprocal support that are particularly resilient during times of crisis.

Importantly, timebanking values everyone’s contributions equally, regardless of background or circumstance. This is especially powerful for young people, many of whom have faced significant challenges in recent years. Disruptions to education and the emotional toll of these events have had a profound impact on their academic attainment and overall well-being. Reduced social mobility among young people undermines societal cohesion, economic prosperity, and the principles of fairness and opportunity, while stifling innovation and under-utilising talent.

Timebanking UK proposes the launch of a Social Mobility Programme designed to create equitable opportunities for young people through the principles of timebanking. By facilitating the exchange of skills and services, timebanking fosters a sense of community, reduces isolation, and improves well-being. This model is perfectly placed to enable young people to overcome barriers and realise their full potential, contributing to a more just and cohesive society.

As we look towards national renewal, I urge those in positions of influence to consider timebanking as part of the solution. It is a model that has worked in communities across the UK and beyond, and it could play a vital role in helping us rebuild trust, solidarity, and opportunity in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Bird

CEO, Timebanking UK