

Community TimeBank

Sharing skills across South Manchester

in
partnership
with



Community TimeBank – Annual Report 2015/16



5/19/2016

Community TimeBank - Co-producing South Manchester: A Social Value Perspective

This report presents the findings of evaluative research conducted for Southway Housing Trust's Community TimeBank for the year 2015/16. Using the HACT Social Value Insight tool this report demonstrates the achievement of a Total Social Value of the Community TimeBank of £331,338 for the given financial year. Research used to validate this finding includes two focus groups involving 20 members, case studies and a qualitative and quantitative survey given to all active members with a return rate of 17.5%.

Community TimeBank – Annual Report 2015/16

COMMUNITY TIMEBANK - CO-PRODUCING SOUTH MANCHESTER: A SOCIAL VALUE PERSPECTIVE

Executive Summary:

Operational across the 5 wards in south Manchester in which Southway Housing Trust has housing stock, the Community TimeBank, formally known as Ladybarn Community TimeBank, achieved a membership of 317 in three years of operation. By the end of the financial year 2015/16 the Time Bank had 270 individual members who had exchanged a total of 2,609 hours that year. A diverse portfolio of activity has been achieved across the wards, with members equally active in all five areas. The HACT Value Insight tool has been used to prove a Total Social Value for the Time Bank of £331,338 for the year 2015/16. The Social Return on Investment, after taking into account the £35,036 Project Budget, was £296,302. Research validating this finding included two focus groups involving 20 members, case studies and a qualitative and quantitative survey given to all active members with a return rate of 17.5%.

Introduction:

The Community TimeBank has been a key community development and wellbeing improvement project for Southway Housing Trust since it began in January 2013. The Time Bank was initially targeted to a particular housing estate experiencing high deprivation and was started as a partnership between Southway Housing Trust and the Ladybarn Community Centre situated next to that housing estate. It was soon expanded however to cover the five areas of south Manchester in which Southway Housing Trust has social housing stock. These are low density areas typically comprised of 3 bedroom houses.

Although the Community Time Bank is managed by Southway Housing Trust membership is not exclusive to tenants of the Trust, with only 43% of members being Southway tenants at the end of 2015/16.

The Time Bank was coordinated by two part time members of staff for quarters 1 – 3 of the financial year and one part time member of staff for quarter 4. A total of 8 working days were given to the project weekly in quarters 1 – 3 and 4 working days in quarter 4. The total project cost for 2015/16 was £35,036 which included £27,820 on salary costs and £7,216 for project budget.

Rationale and logic:

The Time Bank is a mechanism for local people to share the skills and abilities they have with other people in the community. People join the Time Bank and state what they can offer to help others, and also what they may like in return. Members then help one another on the basis of exchanging time where one hour of one member's time is worth the same as one hour of another's, regardless of the task being completed.

Through this mechanism of equal exchange the Time Bank achieves the twin aims of community development and health and wellbeing improvement. This is through a number of means.

Community Development:

The Time Bank facilitates for neighbours to exchange with one another on the basis of trust and reciprocity and as a result is able to support people to create and sustain strong bonds with people in their local community. As members are able to 'spend' their time receiving help from anyone within the Time Bank, not just the person that they initially helped, the Time Bank is effective in increasing connections between people locally. Social capital is created and sustained through increased local connections. This helps to create strong neighbourhoods and communities which are sustainable and achieve high individual wellbeing. Additionally this has a social value attached to it, as will be discussed in this report.

Improvement to health and wellbeing:

The Time Bank improves the wellbeing of members through facilitating activities and 'time exchanges' that incorporate at least one of the five ways to wellbeing:

Connect – Through the organization of group activities and individual and group 'time exchanges' Time Bank members are encouraged and supported to create and sustain positive connections with people living near them, based on trust, reciprocity and compassion.

Be Active – Community member-led Time Bank activities regularly include light or medium exercise. Examples have included Tai Chi, Yoga, Meditation and Dance.

Take Notice – Completing time exchanges in the Time Bank requires members to be aware of the world and community around them. Similarly activities encourage members to be curious and pay attention to the activities they are involved in, their environment and those around them.

Keep Learning – Timebanking offers people the opportunity to learn new things from others in their local community. Group workshops and activities regularly focus on the learning of a new skill, including cooking, knitting, food growing etc. By supporting people to learn new things the Time Bank supports the development of their wellbeing.

Give – In order to 'earn' time to pay to attend workshops and receive help from others Time Bank members are required to give their time to help others. As such members must 'give' time in order to 'receive' help and improve their wellbeing in doing so.

The Community Time Bank in Operation:

The Community Time Bank provides a mechanism for local people to share their skills, hobbies, interests and abilities with one another on the basis of exchanging their time. Each member has their own 'account' which they use to 'earn' time by helping others or 'spend' time having others help them.

The Time Bank Coordinator coordinates all Time Bank activity but the activity itself is done by the Time Bank members. Time Bank members help one another with requests for help, on the basis of earning and spending time; and Time Bank members lead and deliver group activities on the basis of sharing a passion or interest or teaching a new skill. In this respect Time Bank members co-produce all activity in the Time Bank. All activity that takes place within the Time Bank is dependent on the skills, hobbies and interests of the members of the Time Bank.

'After helping someone, I come away with a feeling of, Wheey this is brilliant! It's nice to do something you wanted to do and you come away feeling proud to help other people. It made me feel much more confident.'

Activities that occurred in the Community Time Bank in the financial year 2015/16 are too numerous to mention but a number have been listed below. The list below is demonstrative but by no means conclusive of the activity that took place:

Group Activities:

- Delivering a Workshop – 34 counts
- Knitting Classes – 32 counts
- Armchair Yoga – 22 counts
- Health & Beauty Sessions – 12 counts

Individual Time Exchanges:

- Decorating – 35 counts
- Gardening – 24 counts
- Teaching English – 18 counts
- DIY – 27 counts

In 2015/16 the Community Time Bank achieved a total of 2,609 hours given through individual time exchanges and group activities. These were through a total of 90 different types of activity ranging from teaching crochet or web design to lifts to hospital and help doing the dishes.

As mentioned previously all group activities and individual time exchanges are delivered by Time Bank members themselves. The Time Bank Coordinator is responsible for facilitating exchanges, matching members based on

offers and requests, promoting and administering the project, completing monitoring and evaluation and organizing and publicizing the project and its activities. The Community Time Bank was previously coordinated by a Time Bank Coordinator and a Time Bank Broker, both working 4 days a week. In Quarter 4 of 2015/16 the staffing structure changed and the Time Bank Coordinator became the sole member of staff working on the project 4 days a week. Total staffing and budget costs for 2015/16 were £35,036.

“I do still get nervous when I’m about to go out and help someone in the TimeBank. But I just think to myself “come on, get up, go out and do it”. And when I’ve done it I feel happier and I come away from it I feel like “Yes! I’ve achieved something!”

‘I feel great. I always try to help and give to people. I share everything I can and it feels great. It makes me feel happy, content. I’m especially happy because I’m going out. Before I didn’t go out; I was just in the flat doing things on my own. I enjoy it more doing it outside with others than in the house alone.’

‘I made a great new friend through the Time Bank. We’ve met each other’s family, all the grandchildren, even the dog! We’re there for each other on the phone and talk regularly. When one of us has a problem we talk to the other and we always end up laughing, o matter what we were upset about originally!’

The membership of the Time Bank is not limited to individuals. Of the Community Time Bank’s 317 members 47 were organizations. Organisations typically earn time in the Time Bank through sharing venue space or equipment with others and additionally host Time Bank activities, thus broadening the range of community settings that the Time Bank is active in. During 2015/16 the Community Time Bank hosted group activities in 13 different community facilities across the five operational areas for the benefit of both Time Bank members and the wider community.

The Time Bank achieves key Social Investment Strategies for Southway Housing Trust including Volunteering, Employment and Training, Digital Inclusion, Customer Involvement, Youth Participation, Age Friendly and Reducing isolation and loneliness.



Evaluation Methods:

To evaluate the Community Time Bank a range of evaluation methods were undertaken:

- Two focus groups were held with a total of 20 Time Bank members. Both focus groups completed a Ketso Workshop reflecting on what has been successful, what is needed, barriers and challenges and goals and actions to be followed up. Attendance at the Focus Groups was representative of Time Bank membership.
- A quantitative and qualitative survey questionnaire was sent to all 270 active members. This incorporated questions from HACT Value Insight, a Social Value measurement tool and research questions developed by Dr Ruth Naughton-Doe, PhD in Timebanking. HACT outcomes needed to demonstrate improvement and thus retrospective questioning was carried out.
- Quantitative analysis was completed of existing records relating to HACT Social Value outcomes for which survey responses were not necessary.
- Case studies were completed with active members.

How the data was used

The data collected was analysed using two methods.

HACT Social Value Outcome Data – All data relating to HACT Social Value outcomes were analysed using the HACT Value Insight software. These included feeling of belonging in a neighbourhood, talking regularly with people in one's neighbourhood, thinking one's neighbourhood is a good place to live, self-confidence, relief from depression or anxiety, improvement to personal health, entering employment, regular volunteering and regular attendance at a community or voluntary group.

All other data – All other data, including that based on Dr Naughton-Doe's research, was analysed using Microsoft Excel.

Critique

The evaluation of the Time Bank has made good use of a variety of different evaluative methods. Three different methods were used adding to the validity of the findings.

The questionnaire received a high return rate of 17.5%, with questionnaires being completed in full detail.

One criticism is that retrospective questioning needed to be conducted to validate the findings for HACT Social Value Outcomes. This was the case for 7 of the 10 outcomes measured. Importantly though those 7 outcomes represent only 21 of the 74 outcomes achieved by the Time Bank and thus the negative impact of retrospective questioning has been largely diminished.

Who was surveyed and who replied?

Those who replied:

Ethnicity:

White – 72%

Asian – 7%

Mixed – 7%

Black – 9%

Prefer not to say – 5%

Age:

16-24 – 7%

25-34 – 2%

35-44 – 20%

45-54 – 22%

55-64 – 25%

65-74 – 17%

75+ – 7%

Employment Status:

Looking for work – 17%

Unable to work – 24%

Part time employed – 4%

Full time employed – 11%

Self employed – 2%

In education – 4%

Carer – 4%

Retired – 34%

Community Time Bank Membership:

The demographic breakdown of members is largely reflective of those that replied to the survey, with no notable differences to report.

Results:

HACT Value Insight

The Time Bank successfully measured 10 outcomes that have a social value as given by the HACT Value Insight tool. These outcomes were related to Volunteering & Civic Engagement; Community & Neighbourhood; Health & Wellbeing and Employment.

A total of 74 outcomes were measured using the evaluation methods discussed above. A breakdown of the different outcomes measured and the number of times each was achieved can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.	HACT Value Insight Outcome	Research Method	No.
Volunteering & Civic Engagement	Regular Volunteering	Records	48
	Regular Attendance at Community or Voluntary Group	Records	5
Community & Neighbourhood	Belief Neighbourhood is a Good Place to Live	Quantitative	5
	Feeling of Belonging to a Neighbourhood	Quantitative	3
	Regularly talking to others in Neighbourhood	Quantitative	4
Health & Wellbeing	Relief from Depression or Anxiety	Quantitative	3
	Good Overall Health	Quantitative	2
Employment	Achieving Full-time Employment	Questionnaire / Records	2
	Achieving Part-time Employment	Questionnaire	1
	Achieving Employment for Parent with a Child between 11 - 15	Records	1

Social Value

This combined social value of the 74 outcomes measured for the Community Time Bank in the financial year 2015/16, as displayed in Table 1, totalled **£331,338**.

£331,338

Total Social Value for Q4 2015/2016

The project cost for the financial year was £35,036, including £27,820 on salary costs and £7,216 for project budget. Taking the total budget from the Total Social Value the Social Return on Investment is calculated at **£296,302**.

£35,036

Total Budget for Q4 2015/2016

£296,302

Social Return

(net benefit = social value - budget) in Q4 2015/2016

Quantitative Data

In addition to HACT social value questions members completed a quantitative survey based on the researched questionnaire developed by Dr. Ruth Naughton-Doe, PhD in Timebanking. The data achieved can be found below:

- 82% of members feel they belong to their neighborhood
- 80% of members regularly talk to their neighbors
- 80% of members believe they live in a good neighborhood
- 73% of members feel loyal to the other members of the Time Bank
- 90% of members plan to remain a member of the Time Bank for many years
- 88% of members agree that the future success of the Time Bank is very important to them



'We don't need the Time Bank to organise it next time, we'll just do it ourselves!'

What the members said:

'I have met some wonderful people, I have felt so useful. Also, being rewarded for the voluntary work I do is fantastic.'

'It's enabled me to meet new people, contribute to the community and have fun.'

'It has provided me with opportunities to get out and meet people and feel like I am contributing'

'I've made new friends and watched friends develop who I introduced to the TB. Think it is a wonderful way to give people a feeling of wellbeing and feel valued'

Qualitative Data

Qualitative information was obtained through an open ended question asked to members at focus groups and through the evaluation questionnaire. Members were asked to state what their experience was of being a member of the Time Bank and if it had met their expectations. Reasons why or why not were welcomed.

Responses typically fell into 1 of 5 categories which are listed below.

- Positive feedback including feeling useful, having fun, improving confidence, appreciating a friendly and supportive network
- Experience met or exceeded expectations
- New friends and positive connections with others made
- Unable to engage due to other commitments
- Unable to engage due to lack of opportunity

Qualitative feedback was overall very positive. Only 3% of feedback provided was negative, with 82% being positive and 15% neutral. A breakdown of qualitative feedback can be found below in Table 2 and quotes from members in the column to the left.

Response:	%
Positive feedback including feeling useful, having fun, improving confidence, appreciating a friendly & supportive network	48.48%
Experience met or exceeded expectations	24.24%
New friends & positive connections with others made	9.09%
Unable to engage due to other commitments	15.15%
Unable to engage due to lack of opportunity	3.03%

Table 2.

Case Studies

Alison and Irene

Irene: Irene is from Manchester and has lived in the area all her life. She is a retired woman; bereaved and lives alone. Her family all live outside the city. While she is very independent there are certain things she is no longer able to do. She cannot drive and needs help with tasks that are physically demanding.

Alyson: Alyson is new to Manchester, having moved to be closer to her children. Alyson is also retired and lives alone. Alyson was very lonely and isolated when she first moved as she did not know anyone and so joined the TimeBank to meet people. Her loneliness was exacerbated by her anxiety, something she has always suffered from. Alyson has also been recently experiencing serious health problems.



Earning Hours:

- Delivering card-making workshops
- Teaching Ballroom dancing
- Help running social activities
- Volunteering on community projects
- Help running the TimeBank Café
- Teaching dancing

Spending Hours:

- Attending TimeBank craft sessions
- Help moving heavy furniture
- Help setting up broadband internet
- Help with online shopping
- Lifts to the supermarket
- Fixing computer
- Basic DIY help

Benefits:

- Alyson has met people and formed a friendship group in her new area.
- After joining and doing activities Alyson is a lot less anxious and her confidence has improved.
- Irene continues to get help and support with tasks she is physically unable to do herself.
- Both have made a network of friends. They're 'very, very good friends' and 'support each other with each other's problems over the phone'. Alyson's anxiety has lessened as a result. Both feel better knowing they have someone they can speak about problems with.

'I just think its one of the best things I ever did.'

'If I hadn't met Irene I wouldn't be as happy as I am now in Manchester.'

'I was told; get involved, it'll help you, and it has!'

Sharon



Sharon is a 40 year old woman with a teenage daughter. She spent years caring for her parents and mother in law until they all passed in the same year. Her daughter was 12 at the time. After her parents passed Sharon 'had a breakdown' and was diagnosed with depression. 'Everything went downhill'. She couldn't speak to people and 'couldn't get the confidence to do anything, make new friends or move forward'. She wasn't eating, sleeping or socializing and felt like she was in a 'vicious circle'. She was very isolated.

Earning hours:

- Mowing the lawn
- Trimming the hedge
- Basic Housework
- Befriending

Spending:

- Piano lessons for daughter
- Donating hours earned to members in need

Benefits:

- Sharon has met lots of 'lovely' new people and made 'genuine friends' in the local area and feels 'a lot less isolated' as a result.
- Doing things to help other people has helped her 'move forward' after she lost her parents.
- She has developed her confidence, resilience and strength by interacting with others.
- She knows she is now able to 'brighten up a bad day' herself 'by doing something good for someone else'.
- Feels like she has an 'extended family' that she can turn to for help and support.
- She feels happier knowing she is 'part of a network of people that genuinely care' about her.

'It sounds really mad that something as simple as helping with the gardening or doing the dishes for someone would make you feel better mentally but you feel valued by the person you're helping and that just makes your day.'

'Helping her with cutting her hedge was the first step in the right direction for me'

'I feel confident. I've got a bit of confidence back. It makes me feel a lot better than being in a dark place and I just love it. If it wasn't for the TimeBank I don't know where I'd be'

Maria

Maria is a 78 year old Spanish woman who lives alone. She has lived in the UK for most of her adult life and spent most of that in her current neighborhood. Four years ago she was the victim of serious Gross Bodily Harm in which she was attacked close to her house. Despite being naturally outgoing and active she was frightened after the incident and started to organize her social life around her apartment to avoid going outside. She is now a very active member of the TimeBank and exchanges time regularly. This helps her to get out and move past her victimization.



Earning hours:

- Teaching painting
- Delivering Arts & Crafts workshops
- Teaching dress making, knitting and crochet
- Volunteering at community events

Spending:

- Help using the computer

Benefits:

- Met more people on her local estate that provide a network of mutual support.
- Feels useful and appreciated sharing her many skills with members of her local community.
- Developed more confidence in leaving the house and going into the community following her attack.
- Feels positive and has good mental health as she is regularly giving to and connecting with others.
- Has developed connections with new people that she now considers to be friends.

'I now look forward to the day; it makes me feel good having something to do.'

'After I was attacked I was staying in a lot. I was more frightened to go out. I get more confidence in going out so this has been a really good thing for me. The TimeBank has given me more freedom to go out.'

'I feel great when I help someone, like I've done something good. You always feel good when you give. It's a very good experience.'

Discussion:

There are a number of broad lessons to be learned from this evaluation. The main lesson is the importance of collecting initial data from respondents to compare against when calculating Social Value. As prior data had not been collected it was necessary to use retrospective questioning. The resulting Social Value calculation from this evaluative research still stands, however the result would be stronger if initial data had been collected before the evaluation was carried out.

Making use of the HACT Value Insight tool it is clear the Community Time Bank achieved a Social Value nearly 10 times the total of the project cost. With a social return on investment of £296,302 the Time Bank demonstrates clear value for money and achieves a very large social return on initial investment. As Social Value measuring continues to grow in importance this finding should clearly demonstrate the value of Timebanking. This is value to both communities with regards to creating strong, sustainable neighbourhoods, and to individuals with regards to improving individual health and wellbeing.

This evaluation hopes to highlight the benefits of community-centred approaches to improving health and wellbeing to all parties and stakeholders. A recommendation for the development of the Time Bank will be to develop partnership links with local health professionals and providers, due to the clear health and wellbeing benefits of being an active and engaged citizen.

Recommendations

- 1 For all future practice it will be necessary to carry out an initial questionnaire with all members at the point at which they join the project, in order to determine achieved outcomes in terms of their volunteering and civic engagement, perceptions of community and neighborhood, health and wellbeing and employment.
- 2 Create partnerships with local health care providers to improve the health and wellbeing of local people through proven community based initiatives.

Conclusion:

This report has used a variety of research methods to prove community development and health and wellbeing outcomes achieved by the Community Time Bank during the year 2015/16.

Through use of the HACT Value Insight Social Value measurement tool it has proven that the Community Time Bank achieved a total Social Value of £331,338. The return on an investment of £35,036 in project costs results in a social return on investment of £296,302. For every £1 spent, £9.46 of Social Value was achieved.

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