Implementation of TimeBanking principles in a UK Social Enterprise: The key findings of US research funded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.
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BACKGROUND
MAKE A DIFFERENCE (MaD)

I work as a Social Enterprise Manager for Community Interest Company Make a Difference (MaD) 
http://www.mad-uk.org/

We provide positive activities for young people and aim to inspire people to make a difference to their lives and the lives of others.

Since 2010 we have been regenerating and repurposing a former Bus Station in Central Milton Keynes. Now known as The Buszy the building hosts conventions, conferences, live music events, workshops, training and classes. The Buszy is home to a skate plaza, recording studio, media lab, large performance space, a café, a thrift shop, a car park, a fitness studio, a gallery and a lounge/games room.

www.thebuszy.com

Operating a building like The Buszy, with many desirable facilities, saw the natural development of exchanges between us and the public to access these facilities without paying in a traditional way. Either because they didn’t have the means or they had something more valuable to give than their cash.

It became apparent there was a need for a vehicle to allow us to do this officially and legitimately. This progression along with a desire to be able to reward the volunteers we worked with is what led me to consider TimeBanking as a potential vehicle for facilitating such exchanges.

TIMEBANKING

A TimeBank is a form of service exchange that uses units of time as currency. Members earn a credit for each hour given to the network and spend those credits accessing services from someone else.

HISTORY

TimeBanking isn’t a new concept. Forever people have used their time as currency. If anything it’s something we’ve forgotten.

Examples of communities still using such structures include barn raising and baby-sitting circles.
MODERN DAY TIMEBANKING

Today TimeBanking as a concept has been guided by the principles laid out by Dr Edgar Cahn in his book *Time Dollars*.¹

When speaking to many directors and founders of the TimeBanks I met with across America most of them credited Edgar and reading one of his books as the spark they needed to set up their TimeBank. His model of TimeBanking is based on 5 key principles. Used by all TimeBanks I met with as a base these are often referred to as the “Core Values” of TimeBanking.

Several TimeBanks have slightly adapted the definitions but they all stick to the same principles as outlined by TimeBanks USA

5 CORE VALUES OF TIMEBANKS

Assets
We are all assets.
Every human being has something to contribute.

Redefining Work
Some work is beyond price.
Work has to be redefined to value whatever it takes to raise healthy children, build strong families, revitalize neighborhoods, make democracy work, advance social justice, and make the planet sustainable. That kind of work needs to be honored, recorded and rewarded.

Reciprocity
Helping works better as a two-way street.
The question: “How can I help you?” needs to change so we ask: “How can we help each other build the world we both will live in?”

Social Networks
We need each other.
Networks are stronger than individuals. People helping each other reweave communities of support, strength & trust. Community is built upon sinking roots, building trust, creating networks. Special relationships are built on commitment.

Respect
Every human being matters.
Respect underlies freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and everything we value. Respect supplies the heart and soul of democracy. When respect is denied to anyone, we all are injured. We must respect where people are in the moment, not where we hope they will be at some future point.

HOW A TIMEBANK WORKS – OFFERS AND REQUESTS

This is the main activity of any TimeBank; the way in which members exchange with each other. Often termed Offers and Requests but also known as “time ins” and “time outs”.

A real example of an Offer (taken from the KCTB software- see below):

“I have been teaching Latin for 7 years and am a certified public school teacher in language arts and English at the secondary level. I am willing to give Latin classes for time credits for anyone who would like to try learning this amazing, useful language”

An example of a Request:

“I need someone to walk my dog once or twice a week. He is a 3 yr old Labrador and has lots of energy and I don’t have the time to walk him every day.”

Some TimeBanks allow members to offer to make items for the cost of materials and their time.

For example they may offer to knit someone a scarf for the cost of the wool and time credits for however long it took to make the scarf.

CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIPS

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust awards travelling fellowships to British citizens from all walks of life to travel overseas, to bring back knowledge and best practice for the benefit of others in their UK professions and communities [http://www.wcmt.org.uk/](http://www.wcmt.org.uk/).

In 2013 I had the honour of being selected to research US practice and experience of TimeBanks and the implications of that experience for the future of Make a Difference in Milton Keynes and UK Social Enterprises more generally.
Winston Churchill Fellowship 2013

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES
THE RESEARCH I UNDERTOOK

As the main objective of my fellowship was to equip me with the knowledge and skills to be able to create a new TimeBank back in my home city, my particular focus was on TimeBanks, which were successfully engaging businesses and organisations within their networks. The organisations I selected were based in: Boston, (Massachusetts) Portland (Maine), Kent (Ohio) Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Lake County (all in California).

TIRES AND MORE (KENT COMMUNITY TIMEBANK)

Tires and More is a local garage in Kent Ohio, the business is a member of the TimeBank. They offer services such as an Oil Change or Tire rotation for time credits & offer a full service for the cost of parts and time credits for the labour.

This brings in new customers,

They often spend their credits on baked good for their waiting room (and mechanics) but have also spent time credits on design work and consultation.

When I spoke Mary the owner of Tires and More she said.

“As the KCTB grew, so did people using our service. And not only our "regular" customers but new people to my store. I think it has attracted new business. I also have KCTB members call for other automotive repair help and they have mentioned that it’s because we are part of the time bank!"

TACO TONTOS

This local Mexican restaurant specialises in burritos. TimeBank members can buy one burrito and get one for a time credit.

They do this on a Monday when sales are usually slower than other days. The restaurant covers the cost of the second burrito from the profit on the first so doesn’t lose any money. Customers often buy chips or a drink alongside the burrito. The restaurant spends it time credits on having their windows cleaned and the front of their restaurant painted.
I interviewed Kelly Ferry, the Haymakers Market manager several times about their involvement in the TimeBank. In exchange for her time I spent a morning surveying customers to gather some data about the markets effect on other businesses in the area.

“The 21 year-old Haymaker Farmers’ Market in Kent, Ohio runs on a tight budget that is supported almost entirely by vendor fees. Joining the Kent Community Time Bank allowed us to add two assistants at our information and token sales booth every week. One of those positions became a paid position for the Time Banker who did the job for time credits for the first year. Having that help at the table allows me, as manager, to circulate the market answering questions and helping with anything that arises.

We have also hired time bankers to help with surveying customers during market hours, to create hand painted signs, and to help with the market’s adopt-a-spot flowerbed maintenance.

We worked with time bankers for a large portion of our mural project, as well. This committed base of service exchange workers saved the market budget many thousands of dollars, and where they may have burnt out on the project as volunteers, a number of the Time Bankers continued to help with the painting as the project moved through its four month process. They earned time credits and the market did not have to hire more workers for cash, and the artist did not have to continue looking for new volunteers each week. In all more than 50 people helped paint the bridge over the four months, earning a total of 250 time credits, and many of them became market customers for the first time. Their names are listed on the mural right alongside the names of cash donors.

All of these things have enhanced our market twofold – by adding service that we would not have otherwise been able to afford to add, and by bringing more people into the circle of our local food community. The people who have participated through the time bank have all asked to return if the service is needed again because they enjoyed the day immersed in this culture of local so much. We’ve got several other ideas for how to incorporate the time bank into the market for the coming season, including offering advertising in our weekly newsletter for time credits, and art and cooking workshops during market hours”
HOUR SHARE – KENT OHIO

This project first got me interested in the possibility of exchanging goods for time credits. Though not officially the first exchange of its type (See Maxine’s TimeBank Store below) it is the only TimeBank exchange of this type with a street front.

The Hour Exchange Center, or hOUR Share as its know, lets members of the KCTB swap their time credits for goods in the store.

The hOUR Share is a member of the TimeBank and pays credits to people who work in the store and people who donate items. Donators get a credit for the time it takes them to load up and deliver the items to the shop, note not for the items themselves.

hOUR Share is an exchange centre open to Kent Community TimeBank members and the general public. All inventory consists of new items, like new items, items of value, and handmade/crafted/grown goods by KCTB members. All stock has been donated by KCTB members and the community. Goods may be obtained by donating time credits, or offering a cash donation. Donations collected go directly to the centers operating costs. All donations are tax deductible and receipts may be requested.

People donate new or nearly new items to the store and then “pay” for the items they want to take with time credits.

There are a couple of main rules to the exchange being tax-exempt.

1. It cannot be called a store, it is an exchange centre.

2. Nothing has a price. Instead customers are encouraged to donate the amount of time credits they feel is fair for the item. Often being prompted by a exchange worker with the question “How much time would you work in the community to get that item?”

The exchange center isn’t just a great way of getting TimeBankers to exchange credits.

It also gives the TimeBank a visible public presence and acts as a great marketing tool. On all occasions I visited the store, non TimeBank members of the public came in enquired about the TimeBank
The exchange runs promotions, these are “donation drives” they incentivise members to donate certain items during a time period, possibly toiletries or food items. They receive an extra ¼ credit for these promotional items donated.

The hOUR share also provides a place for members to exchange their handmade items for time credits. The centre buys the item for the amount of time it took the TimeBanker to make, and sells it for 1 credit more.

MAXINES TIMEBANK STORE (DANE COUNTY)

The first of its kind in America and located in a Dane County TimeBank members house Maxine's TimeBank Store is a place to exchange TimeBank Hours for new and gently used clothing, books, jewelry, toys, home decor, home ware, small appliances, and other supplies.

LOS ANGELES METRO PASS

In 2011 Arroyo S.E.C.O negotiated with L.A Metro that all TimeBank members can be eligible for an annual pass at a discount of 84%.

The annual pass is valid on all rail and bus routes in Los Angeles.

To qualify members must:

1. EXCHANGES. Make 10 exchanges as the giver or receiver with a minimum of three different people or organisations/groups/classes per year. If you are a teacher you must give or receive with at least two additional people or organisations/groups/classes besides your class(es).

2. PROFILE. Complete your Community Weaver profile by adding your picture, offers, and requests (3 steps) If you have a completed profile up, extend the expiry date of your offers and requests to 2015.

3. PAY. Pay 1 year up front in full by October
REPAIR CAFE

The Repair cafés happened in a few of the California cities I visited. They are a group meet up which links TimeBank members with specific repairing or mending skills with members who need something fixing.

Focusing on different skills each meeting, such as electronics, bikes, clothing etc. The repair café promotes a culture of mend not throwaway and also provides a group social.

TIMEBANK WEDDING

At an L.A TimeBank orientation meeting I went to, I met Jon and Lee, a couple of TimeBankers who now run the orientations. They told me of a TimeBank wedding last summer where the entire day had been paid for in time credits.

Jon and Lee own a large house up in the hills of L.A and had offered it as a venue for TC’s, everything else from the catering, the outfits, the band, the photographer had all been sourced via the TimeBank network and paid for in time credits.

Jon and Lee’s house is now a member of the TimeBank in its own right and earns credits being hired out for events, and spends credits on gardening work, maintenance and even the odd dog sitter when the house is in use.

YOUTH COURT

The TimeBank Youth Court was created in 2005 to help break the destructive cycle of arrest and detention that can limit options as youth become adults. The Youth Court provides an alternative to the juvenile justice system so young people can willingly take responsibility for their actions, make amends, and build healthy, productive relationships – creating a safer, more caring community.

Involvement in the Youth Court has the proven potential to enhance community climate and increase support for each young person and his or her family. In the Youth Court model, needs are nurtured by addressing strengths. The goal is to keep young people engaged in programs of interest; while building skills, work experience, and overall capacity. The TimeBank Youth Court is underway in all four Madison High Schools.

The mission of the TimeBank Youth Court is to provide an alternative to the juvenile justice system so youth can willingly take responsibility for their actions, make amends and build healthy and productive relationships to create a safer, more caring community
COMMUNITY REVOLVING LOAN FUND (ARROYO S.E.C.O)

Mission: CRLF seeks to educate, support and empower the local Time Bank community through micro-loans and access to professional development. Supported by donations and the community it serves, this charitable fund supports community revitalisation by providing equitable access to resources for members of the Arroyo S.E.C.O. Network of Time Banks.

The loan fund offers low interest, community supported micro-loans to entrepreneurs, Loans in the amount of $500-$2,000 are available to help small businesses, cottage industries and independent creatives scale up their production, upgrade equipment or purchase materials and supplies.

As an experiment in complimentary currency and the Sharing Economy, the loan fund utilises both U.S dollars and time credits. Members repay their loans with federal dollars, but pay associated loan fees for processing to the fund in time credits that are calculated by the time it takes fund officers to process the loan over the course of its life.

The idea is as the loans are repaid, the scheme becomes self sustaining and a further cohort of small local businesses can apply.

ASNTB ran a successful crowd-funding campaign to create this, raising over $6500 from individual donations. You can see co-ordinator Sarah Dear talking about our meeting and the revolving loan fund here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_kfj2hbABQ

TIME GALLERY (HOUR EXCHANGE PORTLAND)

The First Friday of the month in Portland is the First Friday Art Walk, a guided art walk through downtown Portland ending at the Time Gallery/ A TimeBank exclusive gallery where artists sell their work for time credits.
ACCESS TO ARTS (HOUR EXCHANGE PORTLAND)

The Access to Arts project in Portland, Maine, encourages local artists to offering mentoring and workshops to TimeBank members in exchange for time credits.

They have also secured partnerships with local arts venues such as Lucid Stage and Space Gallery to donate tickets for events and shows to the TimeBank who offer them to members in exchange for time credits. The organisations are non profits who have similar objectives to the TimeBank so provide the tickets for free.

FRUIT HARVEST – L.A

Groups of TimeBankers go around the city offering to collect surplus fruit from peoples garden. The group harvest the fruit give as much back to the owners as they want and then distribute the surplus between themselves and those who are in need. People can offer a donation of time credits for the fruit received.

Purpose: To strengthen our neighbourhoods, provide easier access to healthy locally grown food, reduce waste and bridge the gap between unmet needs and unused resources by harvesting & sharing the surplus fruit growing in our community
Wherever I went on my fellowship, the people I met were generous with their time. People gave me lifts all over, cooked me dinner and let me interview them.

Visiting TimeBanks meant I was lucky enough to have an outlet for paying people back, so wherever I went on my fellowship I gave something back to the exchange.

Some of the ways I earned credits to pay off my debts,

Picking walnuts
Making a dish for a potluck meal (Scotch eggs)
Surveying members of the public for an organisation
Leading a workshop on how to make a proper cup of tea (I had 10 people show up)
Helping set up for TimeBank events
Attending orientations
Administration
Helping a TimeBank member move house
Gardening on a group project
Painting a member’s bedroom
SOFTWARE

Software is key to any TimeBank. It’s the accounting system where members record credits and advertise their offers and respond to requests.

Though there are several different software options, the two main ones being used by the TimeBanks I visited in America were:

Community Weaver. This is the software built by TimeBanks USA. It’s a drupal based system and all TimeBank pay an annual fee per member to TimeBanks USA for a subscription. www.Timebanks.org

Time and Talents built by hOurworld. There is a mobile app version of the software, which will help facilitate immediate credit transactions. www.hourworld.org

Though I didn’t get to see the software in action Dane County TimeBank are using Community Forge http://communityforge.net/

I studied both Community Weaver and Time and Talents thoroughly, getting to access them as both a user and an administrator.

They both have pros and cons and you can find supporters for either side. Ultimately for me, neither is quite right for MK TimeBank. Both are, understandably, Americanised in their terminology the reporting side would need rebuilding and both are heavily focused on individual to individual exchanges.

Both software packages cost money, Time and Talents is free if you are in America, but since I returned to the UK they have struck a partnership with TimeBanking UK which means all UK TimeBanks wanting to use the software have to join Timebanking UK (Between £250-£450 per year for membership)

Since returning to the UK, I have been put in contact with SPICE who have just custom built their own software. Their system is much more focused on facilitating organisation exchanges and young people. We are meeting in March to discuss the possibility of us being able to adapt and lease their software.
ORIENTATIONS

An orientation is usually compulsory for any new member of a TimeBank. It’s an information meeting where new members get an overview of how the TimeBank works, a demonstration of how to use the software and a chance to meet some other TimeBankers.

I asked all of the TimeBank workers and co-ordinators about the importance of an orientation.

One particular TimeBank, which used to run orientations and stopped recently due to staffing cuts had found that their level of disputes between TimeBankers had risen since the orientation was no longer required.

For many people the concept of a TimeBank is new and in many ways it requires members to start to think differently about how they value their time, and so members need an opportunity to ask questions about how they can earn and spend within the boundaries. The orientations also provide an opportunity for coordinators to explain clearly the restrictions and limitations TimeBank must operate within. TimeBanks must comply with strict rules about the exchanges offered in order to comply with IRS (I.e.US tax rules) and non-profit guidelines, without clear rules for members these TimeBanks can often find themselves breaking the guidelines.

One example of this is the cash value of items, for instance some people may offer an item for cash or time credits e.g. “you can have this mug for 1TC or $10”

This could be seen as putting a cash value on a time credit and could therefore be classed as a taxable exchange, landing the member and the TimeBank in trouble with the IRS.

Orientations also serve as a great tool to get people thinking about the sorts of offer they can give. Most people come into the TimeBank thinking, but I have nothing to offer. Many TimeBanks use different games and ice breakers to start the process of people thinking about what they can offer.

The Yarn Game* is one example of these games I played at an orientation. Everyone stands in a circle and one person starts with a ball of wool and states something they can offer (“I can offer lifts to the university”) then they throw the ball of wool to someone who would like this service. The person now with the wool, wraps it around ² their finger and states something they can offer (“I can fix peoples guttering”), The process then repeats until everyone has the string wrapped around their finger. You then swap to another colour and repeat the process with requests (“I need someone who can walk my dog”)

Eventually everyone in interconnected with a web of wool demonstrating how the TimeBank can work and having prompted people to think about what services they could offer.

*This tool was created by Dane County TimeBank you can find a detailed fact sheet about how to run it and other icebreaker tools on their website at: http://danecountytimebank.org/share
Originally named as the time dollar by Edgar Cahn, most TimeBanks I met with were using other terms such as Time Credit, or service credit, because they want to distance themselves from their currency having a federal monetary value and ultimately the IRS.

Although in some ways there are several “grey areas”, the IRS has issued three local rulings that Time credits are tax exempt. They have given three reasons for this status.

1. An hour is always an hour, regardless of what is offered
2. They are backed only by a moral obligation and are not legally binding
3. Their purpose is charitable.

501 (C) 3

A 501(c) is an American tax exempt not for profit organisation. Some TimeBanks I met such as Kent Community TimeBank were in the process of applying for 501 (c)3 status as a community organisation. This would allow them to apply for grants, fundraise and allow tax-deductible donations.

Arroyo S.E.C.O TimeBank are in the process of applying but currently have a fiscal agent, a partner organisation who already has 501(c) status and becomes their umbrella organisation, allowing them non-profit status by proxy.

The partner agent is the non-profit public benefit organisation CRSP. (see Appendix for further information on CRSP.

Others such as Dane County TimeBank had already gained their 501 (c) status.
SOCIAL MEDIA

Kent Community TimeBank are arguably utilising social media better than any other TimeBank I came across.

Their Facebook page serves as a great promotional tool driving interest in the TimeBank to non-members. The co-ordinator of the page regularly “tags” people in posts to get the widest reach beyond existing members.

They also offer TCs to members who upload a picture of their exchanges onto Facebook.

The KCTB Facebook pages often have offers or requests filled before they are posted officially on the TimeBanking software.

They also use it to promote the hOUR share, the potlucks and events. With just under 800 members on their group page they have more members of their Facebook page than their TimeBank (682 members).

It’s probably a perfect use of Facebook. Facebook’s built in notifications mean people get alerts when someone posts to the group and therefore the TimeBank can be reactive to people’s last minute requests. A post about a last minute lift to the hospital gets a few hundred views via the social network, people are more likely to check their Facebook before page more regularly than the software.

In a community the size of Kent (a population of just under 30,000), once you utilise a social media platform like Facebook people will always find common ground and links between each other. Along with seeing people’s family photos and friends in common you automatically get a level of trust and familiarity which you wouldn’t get with using the TimeBank software alone.
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OVERVIEW

As stated earlier the purpose of the Winston Churchill Fellowship was to research TimeBanking practices engaging communities and organisations that can be replicated in the UK. Make a Difference, a social enterprise inspiring young people and running buildings for community benefit.

Make a Difference (MaD).

Is a Community Interest Company that provides positive activities for young people and aims to inspire people to make a difference to their lives and the lives of others.

Since 2010 we have been regenerating and repurposing a former Bus Station in Central Milton Keynes. Now known as The Buszy the building hosts conventions, conferences, live music events, workshops, training and classes. The Buszy is home to a skate plaza, recording studio, media lab, large performance space, a café, a thrift shop, a car park, a fitness studio, a gallery and a lounge/games room.

Operating a building like The Buszy, with many desirable facilities, saw the natural development of exchanges between us and the public to access these facilities without paying in a traditional way. Either because they didn’t have the means or that they had something more valuable to give.

It became apparent there was a need for a vehicle to allow us to do this officially and legitimately. This progression along with a desire to be able to reward the volunteers we worked with is what led me to TimeBanking.

OUTCOMES

There are more outcomes to my fellowship than I originally expected. I hoped to set up a TimeBank and through my travel, the knowledge I have gained and the network of people I have met I have been able to confirm the appropriateness of that hope and flesh out a plan for implementation.
PARTNERSHIPS WITH ORGANISATIONS

Having seen successful examples of community TimeBanks working with businesses, we aim to officially launch our TimeBank at the beginning of April 2014 with partnerships with local businesses, community groups, the local authority and other social enterprises.

MK TIMEBANK will have two main types of organisation membership.

A general TIMEBANK MEMBERSHIP where an organisation trades and exchanges as an individual would. Membership organisations will be able to offer ways of both earning and spending credits to the exchange.

Organisation Membership is on an invitation only basis and organisations who can demonstrate they operate within some of our core values will be favoured.

The second is a TIMEBANK SUPPORTER. These accounts do not earn or spend credits, instead they offer a benefit to members of the TimeBank. Usually in the form of a discount or exclusive offer.

Example of some existing organisation members:

BUSZY CAFÉ - MKTB SUPPORTER

The Buszy Café offers all TimeBank members buy one get one hot drink for a ¼ time credit every Monday. This encourages TimeBank members to come in on a usually quiet day.

MK Sports Development - MKTB MEMBER

MKSD are the local authority sports department. They spend their credits hiring stewards at large charity events such as Sports Relief. In exchange they earn their credits providing sporting facilities for hire for time credits to the network.

USBORNE BOOKS – MKTB SUPPORTER

Usborne books is a locally run online book store. They offer all TimeBank members 20% discount off anything on their website.
Carrabosse Theatre – MKTB MEMBER

Carrabosse theatre group spend their credits hiring rehearsal space and earn their credits giving tickets to their shows to the network. Their show is 2 hours long, so for every 2 hours of room hire they receive, they give one ticket to the TimeBank. Anyone else within the TimeBank can spend their credits on the tickets and go see their shows.

St Marks - MKTB Member

Individuals of St Marks congregation earn credits on behalf of the organisation. They earn their credits as any individual member would, but the credits go to the organisation. St Marks then spend those credits on space for events or choose to donate their credits back to the MKTB network to pay for a session or workshop for someone else.

For example, St Marks may spend a day repainting the local skate plaza as a group, or an individual may choose to hand out goodie bags at the finish line at Sport Relief. St Marks could then spend these earned credits in the traditional way or they might choose to donate some credits back to the network effectively buying a place for a young person on a music production workshop allowing them to participate for free.

N.B. Any member, individual or organisation will be able to donate their credits onto others.
WIDER IMPLICATIONS FOR MAKE A DIFFERENCE – HOW THE CREATION OF MKTB WILL AFFECT OUR DAY TO DAY RUNNING

A more unexpected, though now seemingly obvious, outcome as a result of my research is a major overhaul of how we work with young people.

We are now restructuring our organisation and all of our traditional "volunteer" roles will be replaced with opportunities to earn credits within the TimeBank.

This is a major change for us; youth volunteering has always been at the heart of our work. Having successfully run several large government youth volunteering schemes over the years and now self-funding our own we have worked to inspire over 10,000 young people to volunteer.

In the future we will only be offering people the opportunity to participate in the TimeBank. It’s important for us for several reasons, but it all comes back to our main core values of our TimeBank:

- Revaluing what is classed as work. We want to put a value on the time people give to the community, by using time as a alternative currency we are able to achieve is.

- Reciprocity. We want people to realise that everyone in their community has something to offer and for everyone to recognise the benefits to both parties when skills and time are exchanged.

- Social Network. We aim to help strengthen bonds between people by facilitating exchanges and encouraging participation in social events.

- Respect. By providing a level platform where everybody’s time is valued equally, we create an environment of mutual respect. There are no contracts within our TimeBank and the network is built on trust.

- Recognition. To recognise and reward the time given by our members

- Opportunity. To provide an opportunity to access events, training and goods in exchange for services given to the community.
THrift Shop

Apart from replicating lots of the partnerships witnessed on my fellowship, one example I researched which I have directly implemented is within our Thrift Shop.

We run a traditional “charity shop” on the ground floor of our building, we take in donations and the shop is staffed by volunteers.

After seeing the hOUR share exchange centre in Kent Ohio, we are directly replicating how they operate. We are taking the prices off all items in the shop and asking for donations in time credits from TimeBank members or cash from the public.

My main reasons for this are:

1. It allows TimeBank members to spend their credits in store and eliminates any issue over directly linking a cash value to time credits.

2. Observing people in the hOUR share there is a good chance we will increase our turnover. When asked for a donation a large majority of people gave more than the centre would have priced it as.

3. It should generate some great publicity for the TimeBank, as far as I know it will be the only “pay what you want” shop in Milton Keynes, possibly further.

The MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS I HAVE FOR OUR TIMEBANK

Social Activities

The importance of social activities. The most successful TimeBanks I met with all had thriving social activities associated with the TimeBank.

People are more likely to exchange with someone who they have already met.

Almost all had a regular monthly potluck, a social event where everyone brings a dish. I also heard about cheese and wine parties, group dog walks, group outings to sports matches, Frisbee in the park etc.

They help to reinforce the feeling of belonging and inclusion. Our TimeBank will have at least one social a month, gig nights, film afternoons, skate parties, and group projects.

Our social activities will be run by TimeBank members, who will earn credits for the organisation of the events.
ORIENTATIONS

Orientations or Information meetings about the TimeBank are key for new members. The majority of TimeBanks I met with made their orientations compulsory.

The ones that didn’t, or had stopped having them stated a rise disputes between TimeBank members.

For many people the concept of a TimeBank involves a new way of thinking about exchanging with a network, therefore its important that they have the opportunity to ask questions face to face and hear of examples of how a TimeBank cannot be used.

The meetings also serve as a way of introducing the prospective members to other new members and existing TimeBankers. They often involve a game or icebreakers which help people realise what they can offer to the network.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Our MK Timebank will officially launch at the beginning of April. You can follow our progress and see other information about the project on our website www.mktimebank.co.uk

I kept a blog during my fellowship where you can read about my day to day encounters and see many photos from my trip.

http://blog.travelpod.com/travel-blog/annapeters/1/tpod.html

ANNA SCARLETT PETERS
APPENDIX 1. ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS I MET WITH:

Cindy Wentz – Cambridge Time Trade Circle
Lynn Rosenbaum, Cambridge, Time Trade Circle
Stephen Beckett – Director hOurWorld
Linda Hogan – Director hOurworld
Minna Sorrel – Hour Exchange Portland
Deb Barth – Hour Exchange Portland (H.E.P)
Amanda Edwards – Director of hOURShare
Abby Greer – Founder and Director KCTB
Ralph Oates – Attorney for KCTB
Judy Conway – Director of Ravenna Community Hub
Tom Schmidt – Director of Twinsburg Community Hub
Kelly Ferry – Manager of Haymakers Farmers Market
Beth Thorpe – Director of Louisville Timebank
Tony Budak – TimeBank Mahoning
Stephanie Rearick, Founder and Director of Dane County Time Bank
Autumn Rooney – Director Arroyo. S.E.C.O
Nyene Kitchings – Arroyo S.E.C.O
Lois Larkin – Founder of L.A Eco Village
Johnny Sacko – Director Santa Barbara TB
Sarah Dear – ASNTB – Revolving loan fund manager
Carol Cole-Lewis – CEO of Lake County Time Bank
Terry Daniels – Director of HOurworld
TIMEBANKS

Timetrade Circle, Cambridge Mass - 857 members  www.timetradecircle.org

Hour Exchange Portland – 1053 members  www.hourexchangeportland.org/

Thrive Lake County, California - 330 members  www.thivelakecounty.org

Louisville Timebank, Kentucky - 300 members  louisville.timebanks.org/

Kent Community Timebank 682 – members  kentcommunity.timebanks.org/

Dane County Timebank  2380 – members  danecountytimebank.org/

Arroyo S.E.C.O – 1200 members  arroyoseco.timebanks.org
APPENDIX 2. OTHER PROJECTS OF INTEREST.

When travelling round meeting with people from the TimeBanking community it often led me to be introduced to people from different initiatives that held similar values.

It’s not a surprise that if you believe in community cohesion, that you would be interested in resilience hubs, or if you believe in using local people that you would also be a supporter of “Buy Local” campaigns.

It’s often a bigger picture which makes a timebank successful, it’s the members and their inherent belief that “If you use what we have, we have what we need”

So here are a few examples of some other projects I came across whilst on my fellowship.

ISLA VISTA FREE BOX

FREE BOX at University of Santa Barbara. Originally set up in 1969 by some students, the Free Box is open to anyone who wants to use it. It does exactly what is says on the box. People can help themselves to whatever is in the box. The box has a custodian who I met and there are a couple of rules:

Please Take only what you need (5 items max a day)

Please speak in a quiet voice during office hours

Please keep your children by your side

Please leave the plants and lizards alone.

Vendors please look elsewhere for items to sell

COMMON GROUND FAIR

While in Maine, I was one of the 60,000 visitors to the Common ground fair.

I car-pooled to the event with a volunteer and a TimeBanker from Portland.

The Common Ground Country Fair is a rural living celebration that unites Maine’s organic farming community, alternative lifestyles, and a variety of organizations and ethnic groups through the traditions of an agricultural harvest fair. Events range from livestock shows, exhibition hall judging, talks, and workshops on farming, organic gardening and energy efficiency to live music, contra dances and folk art shows.

When visiting I attended a workshop run by Stacey Jacobson, from Mid-Maine TimeBank.
LOS ANGELESE ECO VILLAGE AND CRSP

Know as Cooperative Resources & Services Project and pronounced crisp, was founded by Lois Arkin in 1980 as a resource centre for cooperatives. Based at The L.A Eco village where I stayed in Los Angeles CRSP have helped several start-up co-operatives and community initiatives as well as the timebank. Including:

http://la-bike.org

http://www.bicyclekitchen.com/

Food Lobby

The food lobby provides an opportunity for neighbours to co-op buy organic produce and organic bulk foods and selected other items. Full boxes are enough for 2 to 3 people for the week, and include many of the following: various kinds of greens, various root vegetables including beets, carrots, turnips, etc, strawberries, tomatoes, eggplants, citrus.... A full box is $20, and a half box for $10. To qualify members are required to work a 1.5 to 2 hour shift once a month for the food co-operative.

CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTER

David Gibbs and his staff from CCC were kind enough to allow me to use their building to interview some TimeBankers while I was in Cambridge (Mass.) Established in 1929 in a less affluent area of Cambridge to its adjoining neighbourhoods they offer a wide range of social, educational and recreational activities to people of all ages and backgrounds.

I witnessed some of their youth programmes when I visited, which are available for 0-14 yr olds, after school, weekends and in the holidays.

http://www.cambridgecc.org/

BUILD FOR THE WORLD

Dane County Timebank have been collating lots of resources from TimeBanks all across America, you can find and add to the resources at:

Www.buildftw.org