

**Meeting:** Well-Being Strategic Partnership Board

**Date:** 14 May 2009

**Report Title:** Mental Well-Being Impact Assessments: Haringey Time Bank

**Report of:** Health and Wellbeing Subgroup – Gerry Atkinson/Janice Woodruff

### **Purpose**

To inform the Board on the agreement to undertake two Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessments annually on policies and to start to skill up the workforce in this practice area.

To highlight outcomes of MWIA on the Haringey Time bank and benefits of this approach, which outweigh the financial investment for the community in promoting social cohesion and releasing social capital.

### **Legal/Financial Implications**

The MWIA shows the financial and non-financial benefits of using this approach to develop initiatives that support and encourage community engagement, participation, neighbourhood support and general well-being.

The benefits of the MWIA approach can be seen in the 'exchange value' of Time Bank Hours between users of the service.

Any proposed expansion to the service to be discussed with local commissioners.

### **Recommendations**

- 1) Notes the report, and the success of Support ongoing MWIA x 2 yearly
- 2) Notes the benefit of such an approach across other areas of the Haringey Strategic Partnership
- 3) Notes the proposal for the expansion of the Haringey Time bank across the borough which will be discussed with local commissioners
- 4) Notes the assistance that the Haringey Time bank has in ongoing support for community cohesion and achievement for statutory bodies against key performance targets.

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**Mental Well-Being Impact Assessments (MWIA):**

- 1) Proposal for ongoing Mental Well-being Impact Assessments within Services
- 2) Outcome of Northumberland Park Time Bank MWIA

**1) Proposal for ongoing Mental Well-being Impact Assessments within Services**

A group of multi-agency staff have been trained in MWIA as a result of Well London funding. These are 6 staff from Public Health and Commissioning HTPCT, Mental Health Commissioning LBH, 2 Occupational Therapists from BEHMHT and 1 member from the Mental Carers Support Association.

The emerging Joint Mental Health Strategy will promote MWIA as a method to include consideration for mental well being in all projects under development. It was agreed at the Health and Wellbeing subgroup in March that the staff who have been trained in MWIA will continue to use their skills and train up staff to complete them where policy is being reviewed. The proposal is for 2 MWIA's to be undertaken each year by the above team, with 2 staff from each policy area involved in the assessment in order to skill them up in the process. In this way we can skill up the workforce to undertake their own MWIA when planning/reviewing a project. This is particularly important to retain these skills within the borough.

In order to do this the Partnership would need to identify projects in the planning/review stage which would be appropriate to undertake a MWIA and also support the staff to complete the assessments, which take approximately 4-5 days in total, from planning, completing assessment and report writing. A process by which the MWIA will need to be agreed and agree how to take forward recommendations.

**2) Outcome of Northumberland Park Time Bank MWIA**

“How People feel is not an elusive of abstract concept, but a significant public health indicator, as significant as rates of smoking, obesity and physical activity” (Department of Health, 2001)

**Local Impact:**

“ I know a few more people that I can call on if I need a bit more help. It’s like a tonic if you’re on your won. It’s nice to be involved with something you can have a say about. To see when you “swap” with others, someone else benefits from a skill that you have.”

Time banks were invented in the mid-1980s in the US as a response to the erosion of social networks and informal neighbourhood support which were perceived as the bedrock of society (Cahn and Rowe, 1998). The idea was brought to the UK in 1996 and the first UK Time Bank was established in 1998 in Gloucester under the name Fair Shares<sup>1</sup>.

In 2002 a national survey of Time Bank coordinators across the UK found that there were 36 active Time Banks with an average of 61 participants each (Seyfang and Smith, 2002). Since then, the idea has grown and by 2005 there were 70 active Time Banks across the UK with a further 70 being developed and, an estimated 4000 participants, who have exchanged over 210,000 hours.<sup>2</sup> Time Bank in the UK is now developed in a range of settings where involvement of residents and service users can have beneficial impacts, for example, health care, regeneration, education and community development. (Burns and Smith, 2004).

**In its basic form, a Time Bank rewards local people for helping others. For every hour a person spends helping someone, they get an hour of time in return in the form of a ‘time credit’. They can ‘spend’ this time credit asking for help themselves. The principles being recognising people as assets and that everyone has skills to share; redefining work to include the unpaid ‘core economy’ of work in the neighbourhood and community; nurturing reciprocity and exchange rather than dependency.**

**The time Bank fits into the LBH and Primary Care Trust’s strategies aimed at supporting and encouraging community engagement, participation, neighbourhood support and general well-being.**

The aims of this Mental Well-Being Impact Assessment (MWIA) are to:

- To identify how Northumberland Park Time Bank impacts on the mental health and well-being of its members
- To identify ways in which the project might maximise its positive impacts and minimise its negative impacts

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<sup>1</sup> Gill Seyfang. Time Banks and the Social Economy: Exploring the UK Policy Context. Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment, School Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Time Banks UK, 2005.

- To develop indicators of mental well-being that can be used to measure, evaluate and improve the mental well being of the Time Bank members.

### **Northumberland Park Time Bank**

Northumberland Park Time Bank is open to all members of the community, irrespective of their age, gender, religion, mental or physical disabilities and other circumstances. It hopes to make a difference in this community by generating community spirit; offering practical support to residents; promoting healthy lifestyles; reducing anti social behaviour; increasing the skills and confidence of local people by promoting self worth; offering support to local community and voluntary groups; improving intergenerational relationships and; enhancing social network.

At present, Haringey borough has only one Time Bank located in Northumberland Park. In its present form, the Northumberland Park Time Bank is being managed by one part time member of staff employed 18 ½ hours per week. Support is given by line manager from Groundwork who are delivering and funding the project and an advisor who is employed for one day per month. The Time Bank received funding of £30,000 from Healthy Communities for the financial year 2008/09 to cover the salary and National Insurance of the part -time Time Broker, plus support from line manager and advisor. It is also to provide for events, room bookings, volunteer expenses, equipment and so on. This funding is available only on a year on year basis and is not guaranteed.

### **Method**

This MWIA was conducted by organising a workshop for members and broker of the Northumberland Park Time Bank and, using the Well London MWIA toolkit, which together a tried and tested Health Impact Assessment methodology with the evidence around what promotes and protects mental well-being. The toolkit enables people to consider the potential impacts of a policy, service or programme on mental health and well-being and can lead to the development of stakeholder indicators. It captures the DOH 'Making it Happen Guidance' for mental health promotion (2001) identifies four key areas that promote and protect mental well-being namely:

- Enhancing Control
- Increasing Resilience and Community Assets
- Facilitating Participation
- Promoting Inclusion

Hence, the toolkit helps participants identify things about a policy, programme or service that impact on feelings of control, resilience, participation and inclusion and therefore their mental health and well-being.

### **Time Bank Value of Hours Exchanged**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No. exchanged</b>	<b>hours</b>	<b>Market value per hour</b>	<b>Total value</b>
Office skills	244		£15.00	£3,660.00

Cooking	80	£15.00	£1,200.00
Attending meetings	43	£12.00	£516.00
Computer skills	122	£30.00	£3,660.00
Visiting	80	£11.00	£880.00
Gardening	25	£40.00	£1,000.00
Assisting at events	22	£11.00	£242.00
Telephone befriending	160	£11.00	£1,760.00
Reflexology	42	£50.00	£2,100.00
DIY simple	16	£69.00	£1,104.00
Errands	8	£11.00	£88.00
Dog walking	25	£15.00	£375.00
Caring	7,000	£10.00	£70,000.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>£86,585.00</b>

The cost of the Part-Time Time Bank Co-ordinator is £30,000. The social capital released as a direct result of the time bank that can be costed at market value is £86,585.00, which is a free good to society of £56,585.00. Note that the value of carers swaps is the largest swap currently within the time bank, however these could increase if the capacity of the broker was increased.

The value of carers is the largest exchange of free good, which is providing a value for voluntary caring. Caring does not attract a high value and often is provided at a large personal and financial loss for the carers.

Time is also donated by volunteers who do not want to exchange their credits as they get enough satisfaction and personal gain by using their skills. The current value of credits available to time bank members is dependant on the number of hours that an individual volunteers for ie 1 hour of volunteering equals 1 hour that can be swapped for something that they want. An example of this is one lady, who is building up her credits for a particular old lady, so that she can have some DIY undertaken in her home, which she otherwise would not be able to afford and also to have her shopping done. She currently has 52 hours banked, which would be £3,588 if exchanged for DIY. Another client has built up 40 hours tidying up communal garden space which she is donating for older people.

The value of the impact, outlined in the MWIA, cannot be costed but we can see from the comments of participants that it supports mental well being by promoting social cohesion, integration, reduction of isolation, fostering a feeling of individual worth through utilisation of skills for the community. Examples of the impact that cannot be measured are outlined in the case studies in Appendix 1.

### **Membership**

Time Bank currently has 71 individual members and 9 organisational members. There have been over 2000 hours exchanged so far this year for:

- Caring
- IT lessons
- Befriending
- Gardening
- Dog walking
- Hospital visiting
- Shopping
- Reflexology

### **Statistics**

- Female members outnumber male members almost 2 - 1
- Largest number of members fall in the 50+ age group
- Greatest number of members live with family - this accounts for all carers
- Second greatest number live alone

Members have joined from a number of areas:

- N17 (33%)
- N8 (22%)
- N22 (20%)
- N15 (10%)
- N10 (8%)
- N4 (6%)
- EN3 (1%)

Requests for help –

DIY	22%
Gardening	22%
Computer skills	20%

Other requests include help with:

Massage/relaxation, help with sewing/knitting, occasional home help, help with heavy lifting/moving, companionship/visiting, accompanying to appointments/occasional lifts.

### **Outstanding Need**

There are over 40 people on the waiting list that have not yet been matched with a volunteer for a number of reasons including:

- Shortage of volunteers with the requisite skills – i.e. DIY
- Although the TB was set up to operate in the Northumberland Park (N17) area, people have joined through other organisations from all over the borough – N4, N8, N15, N10. Many of these members are elderly and require help with basic skills such as gardening, simple decorating and DIY – there is a need to recruit volunteers local to these areas who can provide the necessary skills.
- Waiting for CRB checks to be completed
- Need for Time broker to be able to dedicate more time to recruiting people with the necessary skills

## **Trend**

Requests for help from TB are increasing – it is important that TB is not viewed as a replacement for services that statutory agencies should be providing. Members are increasingly asking for help in the following areas:

- Occasional transport for hospital appointments, shopping etc
- Gardening
- DIY and simple decorating
- At home hairdressing (simple)
- Basic knowledge of domestic electrical equipment
- IT skills
- Dance and exercise classes
- Massage and relaxation

## **Recommendations from MWIA**

Increasingly referring clients to Time Bank to enable access to volunteering opportunities for people who may be coping with effects of long term mental health issues such as depression and anxiety or have drug related issues.

The Time Bank is a valuable source of access for emotional and practical support, in a time where finances are strained and potential for development limited. Extending the remit of the time bank will enhance the strength of communities and build resilience plus enable statutory organisations to meet key local objectives.

Many of the clients from other projects have a history of being let down therefore it is essential that Time Bank can increase their confidence by meeting expectations. To help achieve this the following considerations need to be addressed:

- Supporting the steering committee to enable the Time Bank to grow as an independent organisation and apply for funding in its own right, with representation across partnerships to support it's development in line with local strategic objectives.
- Widen the remit of the time bank and availability across the borough through increasing Time Brokerage to meet demand.
- Funding to allow the project to run for the next 3 years to enable sustainability
- Accessible premises where members can meet regularly and arrange skill swaps
- Increased input from other agencies either by providing volunteers to regularly lead workshops or to provide training

Only by providing a reasonable period of time can we hope to create a network of sustainable relationships that will allow people to build up trust and confidence to continue the aims of Time Bank beyond funding possibilities.

## **Additional Supporting Evidence – See MWIA**

Stafford, Mai, et al.

**Neighbourhood social capital and common mental disorder : testing the link in a general population sample.**

*Health and Place 2008; 14 (3): 394-405 (September 2008)*

General population multilevel studies of social capital and mental health are few in number. This multilevel study examined external measures of neighbourhood social capital and common mental disorders [CMD]. Main effects and stress buffering models were tested. Based on data from over 9,000 residents in 239 neighbourhoods in England and Scotland, there was no evidence of a main effect of social capital. For people living in deprived circumstances only, associations between neighbourhood social capital and CMD were seen. Elements of bridging social capital (contact amongst local friends) were associated with lower reporting of CMD. Elements of bonding social capital (attachment to neighbourhood) were associated with higher reporting of CMD. Findings provide some support for the hypothesis that social capital may protect against CMD, but indicate that initiatives should be targeted to deprived groups, focus on specific elements of social capital and not neglect the important relationship between personal socioeconomic disadvantage and CMD. 3 figs. 3 tables 58 refs. [Abstract]

## **Case Studies**

### **Case Study 1**

C was referred to Time Bank by her case worker. C has a long term CMI – depression – that has led to her being unable to work which has greatly impacted on her sense of self worth. She has become estranged from her family who feel unable to cope with her depression and now lives alone feeling quite isolated.

C's initial request was to be put in touch with someone that she could share weekends away with. Time broker suggested that C might like to accompany her to a group that meets every Monday to cook and eat healthy food together while socialising. C agreed to this and as a result she has made a couple of friends and they are presently planning some days out. She has also signed up to a 12 week canoeing course and is even talking about going on to teach others to canoe.

C felt she had nothing to give when she first joined the time bank but is now willing to volunteer her time within the group by helping with cooking, setting up and tidying away. She is beginning to feel valued and likes the fact that by doing things within the group she can earn the credits that she can use to continue with canoe lessons or perhaps exchange for cinema tickets when available.

### **Case study 2**

H has been caring for his wife for a number of years following her diagnosis of dementia. He was made redundant from his job and decided to take



advantage of an IT course believing that this would allow him to secure employment in a new field.

However after several interviews he was still unemployed and his lack of success coupled with his wife's deteriorating condition led to him becoming quite depressed.

One of the most popular requests among the users was to learn IT and H was more than happy to give lessons. He now runs a class every other Tuesday and has a regular attendance of around 5.

Members who attend the class have told me they were put off signing up to other classes because they felt intimidated by the fact that others would be 'younger', 'smarter', 'understand things better' but felt at ease with H because they knew him, knew the problems he was facing were very similar to theirs and also knew the Centre they were going to do the lessons in.

H said ' I thought if I got a qualification in computing skills I could get a job – it felt after a while that no one wanted me. I've worked since I was 15 and to feel I couldn't provide for my wife when she most needed me was a blow. I don't think I want to get anything back from time bank at the moment – I just love coming here and helping other people understand computers a bit better. We have a lot of fun.'

### **Case study 3**

J has been attending the Carers Centre for a number of years. She was caring for her husband until he recently passed away. She continued to be involved with the Centre but was also feeling quite isolated as she was now living alone. She has practised reflexology for a number of years but felt uneasy inviting people to her home to do this – she has now started to offer reflexology sessions within the Northumberland Park Women and Children Centre where she has a regular group of 3-4 women every Tuesday. Due to writing about this session in the last newsletter we have received some requests from other people who would like to come along to her sessions. J said 'I feel needed again, I love doing reflexology, it gives me an energy that I didn't have for a long time'

### **Case study 4**

D recently did some DIY for a young mother who lives alone with a young baby – her son was in long term foster care because of her depression and inability to cope with him. As a result of some basic repairs being done on her home she has reported feeling much more positive and is now able to have her son home for weekend visits. D says' I now always say hello to this person when I see them out, its another way of meeting people and bringing communities together. I didn't get anything for the work but I earned time credits. I have arthritis and you never know what you might need in the future – maybe help with my shopping – at the moment I don't need anything but I know my credits are in the bank for when I do. I also enjoyed the Give or Take day – I took an old camera and brought home a VCR'

## Case study 5

We have recently begun offering the women who attend the Living Under One Sun group the chance to learn and share skills such as knitting and crochet, one of the women invited her neighbour to come along – she has diagnosed asperger syndrome and told us quite plainly that knitting was not for her so could she do some clay workshops with the women. She has been doing this for approx 5 weeks now. As part of the syndrome she can be quite plain spoken and some of the women did not know how to respond to her bluntness, however they are now beginning to recognise that she has a talent with the clay and have reconsidered their initial assumptions about her.

### Feedback

'Its all about giving you own talents to others. You need to use your talents or you become miserable and it affects your health.'

Once you retire from a job you need something to stimulate the brain – I am stretched, it keeps me fit and away from the doctor. By getting involved with TB I can forget about my worries for a while.

'I know a few more people that I can call on if I need a bit of help. Its like a tonic if you're on your own. To see when you 'swap' with others how they benefit from the skill you have. I have met a reflexologist through TB and can have a lovely massage every week, something I could never afford on a pension'

You maintain your individuality – I brought my percussion instruments to our social event – it was fantastic to see other people using the instruments I had made and having so much fun.

There is always a real person at the end of the phone to help me out when I need it.

It is good to know that TB members are checked out and not 'cowboys' –I've had bad experiences in the past.

On the Give or Take days-

'Great, can we have more'

'I've had a good clearout – and brought back some things I need'

'I met some nice people today and had a chat while I was browsing around the books – hopefully I will see these people again when I am in Park Lane and I will be able to say hello to them'

From local councillor –'it is really good to see this space being used for such as good event – it has also made more people aware of what is on offer in the Resource Centre'

100% of people asked said they thought it was a great idea and would like to see more of these events

100% of people asked said the organisation of the event was good or very good