# 2013

# Evaluation of the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2012-13

# Final Report: *Timebanking Trial*

*A joint project by: the University of Newcastle and the University of Wollongong.*
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## PREAMBLE

*This is the final report prepared for the Office of Communities and its partner organisations on the evaluation of a Timebanking trial operating in the Hunter, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the Central Coast during 2012 and 2013. It has been prepared by project team members: Professors Max Smith and Allyson Holbrook; A/Prof Kevin Lyons; Drs Johanna Macneil, Daniella Forster and Neville Clement; and Ms. Elizabeth McDonald, from the University of Newcastle; and Dr Mark Freeman from the University of Wollongong in consultation with the NSW Office of Communities.*

### WHAT IS A TIMEBANK?

A timebank is an alternate exchange system that is community focused and based on a system of reciprocity among members. In a timebank, the time spent on an activity earns time credits (sometimes called time dollars) and all work undertaken by participants, no matter what type is considered of equal value. Some timebanks have now reached or exceeded ten years of operation.

### THE NATURE OF THE TRIAL

In the trial, the *Timebanking* has taken the form of a web-based tool that facilitates the reciprocal exchange of volunteer services within the community. The *Timebanking* trial has been supported administratively and operationally by the NSW Office of Communities and region's volunteer organisations, the Hunter Volunteering Centre and Volunteering Central Coast.

### NOMENCLATURE

Throughout this report, when referring to the concept of a timebank, it is referenced using the term 'timebank'. The actual trial is referenced *'Timebanking'*.

It is commonplace in the literature to use the alternative form 'time bank'. This convention has been followed in sections of the literature review to maintain consistency with the sources used.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL TIMEBANKS

Timebanks are shaped by the socio-political context in which they operate and, in turn, influence their context. Timebanks are a flexible structure that can be adapted to many contexts. The co-ordinator or timebroker is key to the functioning of timebanks and has a particular role in managing relationships. One of the core purposes of successful timebanks is to build social capital in communities through establishing and sustaining social networks based in reciprocity.

Reciprocity builds community. With people willing to share, and to give as well as receive from others, an atmosphere of trust is created. Co-production and reciprocity are features of time banks that mark them out from traditional volunteering. Co-production is the sense of community and mutual support that results from the combined effort of members. The labour that people invest contributes to the creation of community support systems and this in turn requires intentional input from all parties involved. A timebank has the potential to establish co-production as well as other valuable economic, social and health-related outcomes. However, the outcomes of timebanks, whether they be health, wellbeing, employment or expanded social networks are contingent on the context in which they operate. In order to sustain and build timebanks the literature tells us that several factors are crucial. These include dedicated members, methods of outreach and exchange and effective management with adequate funding. There is no one formula that can be applied consistently across all timebanks to achieve successes.  In sum, it is the facilitator's capacity to build relationships of trust in a sustained way that is vital.

### KEY FINDINGS

The findings of the report broadly support and are consistent with previous research, as reported in the literature review. It was clear from literature and through the evaluation that the work of community brokers in promoting registrations and facilitating trades is instrumental in the success of *Timebanking*. The literature indicates that support from timebrokers, paid or possibly dedicated volunteers, is directly related to the levels of recruitment, trading and sustainability of *Timebanking,* especially at the local level.

The evaluation team's interim report effectively informed changes to the expectations, rollout, methods and process of the *Timebanking* trial. Importantly, the literature and analysis suggests that effective employment of social media had an impact on registrations and engagement with the *Timebanking* trial. It makes sense that contemporary forms of communication would form the basis of the communication strategy around an innovative mode of volunteering such as *Timebanking.* Facebook and Twitter have been used as effective tools to raise awareness and interest of the overall *Timebanking* initiative.

Since the launch of *Timebanking*, 1261 trades have occurred, resulting in the recording of 7724 hours of volunteering. At 17 December 2013 the *Timebanking* trial database included registrations for 4004 members. We recommend that a dedicated, overarching social media presence and strategy is integral to the success of the NSW *Timebanking* expansion in 2014.

The *Timebanking* trial is attracting and serving the needs of a sector of the community who might often not be seen to have a contribution to make in volunteering programs. In essence, those from low socio-economic groups and other marginalised sectors find value and opportunities to engage more fully within the community through *Timebanking*. Our results demonstrate that participants have a range of different needs, and these are generally satisfied with the help provided. The results have also established the power of *Timebanking* as a valuable driver of employability, and its ability to contribute positively to quality of life and health outcomes for users. We expect the further *Timebanking* pilots to evolve community perceptions of volunteering towards a more reciprocal model, fostering the related benefits that flow from this innovative approach to connecting volunteerism with co-production. Rather than competing with existing volunteering, it should broaden, strengthen and complement existing frameworks.

For the continued success of *Timebanking*, it is important to engage the right people to facilitate its rollout in flexible ways to suit the local context. As *Timebanking* is in its infancy, these people need time to finesse a role that includes recruitment, planning, monitoring of trades, building connections between people, helping members to identify and employ abilities, encouraging and weaving the social fabric. The required skillset blends with those available in existing volunteering and community organisations but may take some internal mentoring and collaboration between organisations for the training of staff.

Smaller timebanking structures with a particular focus, operating under the overall *Timebanking* 'umbrella', are a preferable model. Their size allows them to become embedded more thoroughly within an established community and its organisations, proffering the benefits of more 'manageable' *Timebanking*, but with the support of the larger system.

The *Timebanking* trial demonstrates that timebanks can be a powerful mechanism for community engagement and increased volunteering. The trial demonstrates that there is an appetite for such innovation in volunteering that must be further nurtured for its potential to be fully realised. The *Timebanking* trial has been a successful method by which to address all of the NSW Volunteering Strategy strategic directions, particularly in making volunteering more accessible, and thereby broadening the base of volunteers in our communities.

# CONTENTS

## 1   THE TIMEBANKING TRIAL

The *Timebanking* trial commenced in August 2012 and was completed, for the purposes of this evaluation for the Office of Communities, in late November 2013.

Project funding for the trial has been provided through the Office of Communities as part of the NSW Government's Volunteering Strategy.

The expected outcomes of the *Timebanking* trial are:

- Effective engagement and recruitment of people to register with *Timebanking*, with a particular focus on attraction of new volunteers across the trial region.
- Among *Timebanking* users to increase the volume of hours that they volunteer.
- Positive outcomes for the users of *Timebanking* in relation to social inclusion (primary) and pathways to employment (secondary).

An interim evaluation of the *Timebanking* trial was conducted in May 2013 with the intention of learning from the existing literature/evidence on timebanking and related topics, and to also identify actions to consolidate and/or improve the performance of the remainder of the trial.

In that interim evaluation, nine recommendations were made and are presented in Appendix A.

A key recommendation (Preliminary Recommendation No. 5) related to the fact that the *Timebanking* trial was already one of the largest in the world, and that this achievement should be acknowledged. (Note: International research suggests that membership of more than 500 is quite unusual; and in May the trial *Timebanking* had 694 members.)  Despite the success of *Timebanking*, on 4 November 2013, the Minister for Citizenship and Communities, Victor Dominello, was able to announce:

> "*Timebanking* has been very successful in the Hunter and Central Coast pilot sites, attracting more than 3,600 members, so I'm excited to invite 30 additional communities to come on board" he said. "To build on this success, we are now calling on volunteer groups, local councils and communities to learn more about the program and register their interest with the Office of Communities.  We hope to have 30 new groups established in 2014."

Since engagement and recruitment of individual and organisational members was central to project success, several recommendations related to these activities (Preliminary Recommendations Nos.2, 4, 8 and 9). The results of these activities can be seen through the growth of *Timebanking* membership since May, reported in Section 4.

Another recommendation (Preliminary Recommendation No. 3) suggested there be greater engagement with already registered members, to better understand their needs and help promote the use of *Timebanking*.  In Section 5 of this report, data and associated analysis are provided from a survey of *Timebanking* members.

Two recommendations (Preliminary Recommendation Nos. 6 and 7) acknowledged the important role that paid and professional staff play in managing *Timebanking*, and recommended a deeper exploration of the various skills and competencies that would best prepare them.  These issues are considered in Section 6, along with the lessons learned through experience by paid/professional participants (Preliminary Recommendation No 1), which will inform the continued successful rollout of *Timebanking* across NSW.

*This report will not repeat information that can be found in the Interim Evaluation Report.*

Rather, this report seeks to achieve four objectives:

1. To review the relevant literature, focusing on the parties involved in timebanks, the processes of timebanking (including the co-production process), and the outcomes of timebanks for individuals and the community (Section 3).
2. To report data and analyse the *Timebanking* trial activity; including data on members, the nature of trades and usage of social media (Section 4).
3. To report and analyse data on the outcomes of the *Timebanking* trial, as reported by *Timebanking* members, NGOs and partner organisations involved in the project (Sections 4, 5, 6).
4. To evaluate the management of the *Timebanking* trial, specifically focused on what lessons can extend into the 2014 expansion to improve the design and future outcomes (Section 6).

## 2 PROJECT INITIATION, DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION

### 2.1 2012 TIMEBANKING OVERVIEW

*This section focuses on the roll out of the NSW Volunteering Strategy. The following chronicles key events in its release, deployment and strategies for promoting Timebanking. It provides an overview of the sequence of events occurring around the Timebanking project sites evaluated in this final report. It gives a synopsis of the stated aims, actions and interactions of groups engaged in this process. The synopsis draws from material including event running sheets, internal documentation and media releases provided by the Office of Communities for the period of May 2012 and November 2013.*

7 MAY 2012: Cabinet endorsed the NSW Volunteering Strategy ('the Strategy')

14 MAY 2012: Setting: National Volunteer Week. Minister Dominello volunteered at YWCA (at a breakfast club for primary children) and then launched the Strategy at a press call. Summary of the Minister's presentation –

> There are five priorities of the Strategy: 1) Making it easier to volunteer 2) Supporting organisations that work with volunteers 3) Recognising and celebrating volunteering 4) Support for corporate volunteering 5) Creating better volunteering pathways

> Budget of $4.5 million was announced over four years to 2016; *Timebanking* is first mentioned after priority three (see above); *Timebanking* will be a focus of promotion.

Media Release Summary: Fundamentally, volunteers contribute an enormous amount to our communities and to the NSW economy; they are worth $5 billion per year. To support and recognise volunteering, two *Timebanking* trials in Newcastle and Central Coast will be launched. Examples are provided to illustrate what a *Timebanking* interaction looks like, to capture the public's imagination. Two trial projects are noted, one in South West Sydney and the other in Western NSW. To further encourage volunteering a reduction in the cost of a police check (NCHRC) for volunteers is announced as well as other funding initiatives. The Strategy was made formally and publicly available. Theme: "valuing volunteers and celebrating their contributions".

19 MAY 2012: Minister Dominello launched *Timebanking* in Newcastle.

26 JUNE 2012: *Timebanking* tender process opened with an announcement at Niagra Park on the Central Coast with the Member for Gosford Chris Holstein. This makes television news in NSW with NBN exposure. Three proposals from the community are received and an evaluation panel recommends a joint proposal between two of these – the Hunter Volunteer Centre (HVC) and Volunteering Central Coast (VCC).

31 JULY 2012: Minister Dominello announces the *Timebanking* providers (Hunter Volunteer Centre HVC and Volunteering Central Coast VCC) at the Newcastle Museum 10.30-12pm. Speakers: Tim

Owens MP; Tony Ross (HVC); Michelle Vanstone (VCC); Prof McMillen University of Newcastle (UoN) Vice Chancellor (VC); and Minister Dominello. Summary of targets announced at this event: 1) To increase the region's volunteers by 50 000 individuals (to 150 000 in total) and 2) UoN's VC promises the resources and activities of ENGAGE Newcastle to explore possible contributions to *Timebanking* as a partner.

Media Release Summary: $300 000 for the *Timebanking* trial beginning in September 2012; a description of a basic transaction process explains how it works. An announcement for registration of interests is requested via HVC or CCV.

20 AUGUST 2012: Minister Dominello is informed that a Newcastle and Wollongong university consortium is to evaluate the Strategy and that the UoN ENGAGE program is to participate in generating support and interest in *Timebanking*.

2 OCTOBER 2012:  Several fundamental documents are presented: Project Charter; Project Plan; Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. These were developed from three consultative workshops with representation from OoC, HVC and VCC provided through PricewaterhouseCoopers. At this time project coordinators are recruited and the *Timebanking* Trial Advisory Committee is established. A manual trial is initiated at both *Timebanking* sites to identify software needs. Seven companies are recorded as having been approached for a tender for software development.

3 OCTOBER 2012: Expressions of interest tender process closed for the development of *Timebanking* software.

9 OCTOBER 2012: Meeting between OoC and Evaluation consortium to establish scope, framework and work plan.

10 OCTOBER 2012: Software product planned to be presented at *Timebanking* trial advisory committee.

11 OCTOBER 2012: Software contract awarded to Jnana Australia.

22 OCTOBER 2012: Soft launch of *Timebanking* software for beta-testing was planned to occur on this date.

19 NOVEMBER 2012: Public launch of *Timebanking* software in provider's local areas was planned to occur.

20 NOVEMBER 2012: *Timebanking* software goes live: Launched with celebration at the Hunter Wetlands between 17-30 November with seedling planting exercise.

22 NOVEMBER 2012: Media Release "Massive Volunteer Effort" volunteer call-out to introduce *Timebanking* at Hunter Wetlands. 2 hour sessions over 9 days announced. The NSW Environment Minister, Robyn Parker, attends.

**24 NOVEMBER 2012:** Minister for Environment planted a rainforest specimen at Hunter Wetlands. PVC at UoN Prof Crump attended the event.

## 2.2 2013 TIMEBANKING OVERVIEW

**26 JUNE 2013:** Interim Evaluation Report on the *Timebanking* trial provided.

**28 JUNE 2013:** Temporary position in OoC volunteering team for *Timebanking* concluded.

**18 JULY 2013:** *Timebanking* mini-summit held with 20 attendees.

**25 JULY 2013:** Interim Evaluation Report on the *Bathurst Grows* trial provided.

**2 AUGUST 2013:** Planning for the implementation of interim evaluation recommendations and mini-summit outcomes occurs.

**8 AUGUST 2013:** Report on mini-summit revised Evaluation recommendations. This is a relatively lengthy and detailed document. Summary: the trial "has created the largest timebank in the world" – recommends reviewing and re-scoping of targets down to reasonable expectations.

**29 AUGUST 2013:** Further deployment to the wider community as part of the City and Country Volunteering innovation in the 21st Century conference. The conference brought together over 100 participants from the community sector, government and universities to discuss innovative ideas, trends and challenges in the volunteering sector.

**4 SEPTEMBER 2013:** Co-presentation at the Australasian Evaluation Society International conference on "*Creativity and accountability can be friends and other lessons from the evaluation journey in the NSW evaluation strategy*".

**5 SEPTEMBER 2013:** A business case for the expansion of the *Timebanking* trial in 2014 is made. Additional funding and roles identified and proposed by the Office of Communities team.

**6 SEPTEMBER 2013:** Proposal for additional *Timebanking* trials in 2014 is made. Summary: there are 36 proposed new sites for *Timebanking*. Minister Dominello is asked to announce a call for registrations in October 2013.

**4 NOVEMBER 2013:** The announcement for expansion occurs between 9-10am at Crew Park Girl Guide Hall for breakfast event. Minister announced expansion of the trial at Warilla, (again with children and volunteers attending; this time around the promotion of a pre-funded project about the positive use of recreational public space "Child Friendly by Design Project").

Media Release "*Timebanking* Volunteer Program to Expand". The expansion is due to the successful *Timebanking* trial (of 3600 sign ups). 30 new communities are invited; these include, for example,

emergency services volunteers. New social media affordances are also announced, which include phone apps for Google and Apple available (via search) to enable easier registration and exchanges.

25 NOVEMBER 2013: Hunter Surf Lifesaving Inc. distributes newsletter to 7,500 email subscribers promoting the *Timebanking* initiative through an iPad giveaway.

## 2.3   COMMENT

The *Timebanking* project started afresh in the second half of 2012 as a flagship initiative under the NSW State Volunteering Strategy. The Strategy itself and the flagship *Timebanking* trial were thoroughly planned and backed up with a coordinated communication strategy developed in consultation and direct collaboration with stakeholders, community and corporate volunteering agencies, and established volunteering organisations.

Key features of the NSW State Volunteering Strategy were the close alignment with the broader strategic directions of government and securing the active participation and patronage of the Minister, senior officers of the Office of Communities and key community and corporate figures. The planning recognised and supported what was already in place in the volunteering space, and identified new opportunities to increase the number of volunteers and the net value of volunteering through the *Timebanking* trial. To this extent the *Timebanking* trial provides a valuable model of innovative public policy.

## 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE ON TIMEBANKING.

The literature review for this study features two components. The first comprises an overview of timebanking internationally and identifies the characteristics of timebanks and their operation. The second is more selective, with a focus on empirical studies that feature the outcomes of timebanking for participants and for society and the economy more broadly. The first component was reported in the interim report (although not in the exact form presented here), while the second features more prominently in this report.

More than 200 items of literature were captured in the comprehensive literature search through major databases. Of these we defined 34 as the empirical literature, including four theses and 26 journal articles. There has been a clear growth in research studies in the field since the early 2000s but only a few individuals appear to have a sustained publication record in the field, notably Gill Seyfang (England), Ed Collom (USA) and Lee Gregory (Wales). They account also for the UK and USA's prominence in publication. Most journal articles tend to be in the area of welfare, health, youth and community services, economics and sociology, however, the most common single location of articles in the field of timebanking is the *International Journal of Community Currency Research* edited by Seyfang*.*

### 3.2 SECTION 1 CHARACTERISTICS OF TIMEBANKS AND THEIR OPERATION

#### 3.2.1 WHAT IS A TIMEBANK AND TIMEBANKING?

To understand timebanks we must first turn to the concept of community or complementary currency. Community currency is a generic term for the range of alternate exchange systems that exist alongside money. Since the 1990s these have been 'springing up' in many countries as a response to social, economic and environmental needs. They take the form of 'skills exchange, modern-day barter, green versions of supermarket reward schemes, and even notes and coins' (Seyfang, 2009, p. 141). While all community currency systems differ to some extent, each is premised on creating a local currency as a measure of and mechanism for the exchange of services and goods (Collom, Lasker, & Kyriacou, 2012, p. 8).

There have been four 'generations' of community currency schemes traced to this point, with each generation having more defined partnerships. The first generation involved schemes like Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) with 'nonconvertible' currencies and few economic links or partnerships*.* Second generation schemes, including early timebanks, are characterised by time exchange with strong links to social policy. One second generation example is the Italian *banche del tempo* emanating from Italian city councils. Third and fourth generation schemes are marked by convertible currencies and a greater alignment with partnerships and the local economy (Blanc &

Fare, 2013, pp. 66-70, 74). The flexibility evident in the range of options that have arisen in response to perceived need and local circumstances accentuates the important role of alternative exchange systems in contemporary society, not least because they can enhance the base and community capacity for volunteering.

Timebanks turn unpaid time into a valuable commodity through *mutual volunteering.* They operate on the principle of both *giving and receiving* help in exchange for time credits (Seyfang, 2002b)*.* Timebanks promote community self-help and are seen as more strongly capable of promoting social inclusion and social capital than any other variant of community currency (Seyfang, 2006a). The recent origins of timebanking in Western nations are traced to the initiative of Edgar Cahn in 1986; however, a similar movement which predates that of Cahn began in Japan in 1973 (Miller, 2009a; Seyfang & Longhurst, 2013).

In a timebank, the exchange is time not goods. Time spent on an activity earns 'time credits' (Cahn, 1997) often called time dollars, where one hour of time earns one *time dollar*. All work undertaken by participants, no matter what the type, is considered of equal value (Collom et al., 2012, p. 12). Moreover, the exchanges (one service for another) do not necessarily occur at the same time, and can occur as needs arise at different times. A time debit is the promise of time and energy at a later time (Ozanne, 2010). Because of this and its overall flexibility, timebanking can be adapted to a constituency's needs (Collom et al., 2012, p. 25).

Timebanks are not based on bilateral exchange but multilateral bartering or serial reciprocity. This means that services can be provided from within a network rather than by exchange with a single person (Collom et al., 2012, p. 7). With timebanks, an hour's service, despite its nature, is always given an hour's credit. This differs significantly from LETS, a similar type of community currency where an hour has a market price, subject to local variation (Cahn, 2001; Seyfang, 2002a).

### 3.2.2   RECIPROCITY AND CO-PRODUCTION

In the section above, the notion of mutual volunteering was raised. What distinguishes timebanking from conventional volunteering is reciprocity (Boyle, Clark, & Burns, 2006; Seyfang, 2004b). Reciprocity builds community. Those who receive help may 'reciprocally' be able to help others in alternate ways (Cahn, 1992). With people willing to share, and to give as well as receive from others, an atmosphere of trust is created.

Co-production is the sense of community and mutual support that results from the combined effort of members. The labour that people invest contributes to the creation of community support systems and this in turn requires intentional input from all parties involved. There is a sense of building interdependent relationships that extend beyond the offering of assistance (Cahn, 1992; Ozanne, 2010). A timebank has the potential to establish co-production because it draws on a combination of the following: seeking and respecting the assets that individuals have in terms of their skills and capacities; an understanding and valuing of work and persons that extends beyond

the conventional notion of economic exchange; the act of reciprocity; and a deep and pivotal regard for individuals and families (Drakeford & Gregory, 2010; Gregory, 2009; Ozanne, 2010).

In a volunteering context, reciprocity carries its own challenges because volunteers typically seek to give - not receive anything tangible as a result, so there has been shown to be some reluctance to request exchange (e.g., Boyle et al., 2006; Ozanne, 2010; Seyfang, 2004b). In addition, mutual exchange may be impeded if there is only a limited range of services that participants wish to offer (Gregory, 2012a; Seyfang, 2003a). Some ways that have been established to deal with this is that participants can donate unwanted time credits to the timebank (Ozanne, 2010; Project Lyttelton, 2009). It has been argued that time credit debit can be tolerated and even encouraged (Collom et al., 2012) for timebanks to operate effectively.

In the scheme of things timebanks are in a unique position not only because reciprocity and community building are seen as outcomes that are difficult to achieve through traditional volunteering (Mayo, 2001), but because of the flexibility of the premises and the mechanisms underpinning the exchange that allows scope in size, activity and site parameters with which to respond to community needs.

Boyle et al. (2006) distinguish between 'generic' co-production, or the mutual support of individuals and service delivery, and 'institutional' co-production, or the involvement of institutions in timebanking (p. ix). They express the view that co-production can:

- Provide opportunities for personal growth and development to people who have previously been treated as collective burdens on an overstretched system, rather than as potential assets.
- Invest in strategies that develop the emotional intelligence of people and capacity of local communities.
- Use peer support networks instead of professionals as the best means of transferring knowledge and capabilities.
- Reduce or blur the distinction between clients and recipients, and between producers and consumers of services, by reconfiguring the way services are developed and delivered. Services seem to be most effective here when people get to act in both roles – as providers as well as recipients.
- Allow public service agencies to become catalysts and facilitators rather than central providers themselves.
- Devolve real responsibility, leadership and authority to 'users', and encourage self-organisation rather than direction from above.
- Offer participants a range of incentives – mostly sourced from spare capacity elsewhere in the system – which help to embed the key elements of reciprocity and mutuality. (Boyle et al., 2006, pp. 47-48)

Institutional co-production requires building of trust to resolve existing power differentials among partners (see also Gregory, 2012a) and across the community especially if voluntary projects 'see

themselves in competition with each other for resources'. Overall there also needs to be changes in the ways professionals operate, as co-production essentially means 'reorganising the way professionals work – as connectors, facilitators and agents of change' (Boyle et al., 2006, pp. 36, 37-39).

### 3.2.3 SCOPE AND SCALE OF TIMEBANKING

Timebanks have been introduced in a variety of settings. They can have a community focus, for example, the justice system for both youth and adults, mental health, older people, youth or depressed housing estates (Coote, Ryan-Collins, & Stephens, 2008), or have a focus on a recognisable community groups such as a school (e.g.,Hallgarten & Reed, 2002) or a defined group of citizens that take the form of local nodes or micro-communities (e.g.,Collom et al., 2012).

Coote et al. (2008) and Collom et al. (2012) offer two different taxonomies for the classification of timebanks. According to Coote et al. (2008), timebanks can operate in three different modes:
1. Person to person, often hosted by a third sector agency, where exchanges are mainly between individuals, although membership is open to organisations;
2. Person to agency, where individuals are involved in a program conducted by an agency and exchanges are between a person and the agency; or
3. Agency to agency where exchanges are between agencies.

In England timebanks have usually adopted the person to person model (Coote et al., 2008), whereas in Wales the person to agency model predominates (Gregory, 2008, 2012b). Conversely, Collom et al. (2012) classify timebanks as either:

1. Standalone timebanks, having their base in a neighbourhood or community; or
2. Agency based timebanks, that is, "'embedded' in an organisation" (p. 10) of which there are two types.
    a. Unrestricted membership, where membership is open to the community; and
    b. Restricted membership, where membership is restricted to the members or clients of the agency.

Embedded timebanks were found to have older members (27.8% compared with 21.2%, p. 68). In general the operating costs of embedded timebanks are lower and in the US most timebanks are of the embedded types (Collom et al., 2012).

Although Coote et al. (2008) and Collom et al. (2012) offer two different taxonomies for the classification, there nonetheless appears to be similarities between embedded restricted type of Timebank (type 2.b.) and Coote et al.'s (2008) person to agency mode of operation (mode 2). Based on their observations, Collom et al. (2012) surmise that the social advantages of timebanks are likely to be greater when timebanks are embedded in organisations (type 2) than as a standalone community scheme (type 1). They suggest that being hosted might present boundaries that increase the comfort level of participants. Furthermore the dynamics of timebanks are not uniform and likely

"to produce various benefits for various participants" (p. 170). In short, timebanks are to be adapted to local needs and circumstances as there is no universal model (Seyfang & Smith, 2002).

Timebanks can be small or large. While in some cases the memberships of a timebank can extend to some thousands, this is a rarity and the reality is that averages fall far shorter than that especially if active membership is taken into account (Collom et al., 2012). A survey in the UK in mid-2002, three years after the first timebank had begun in 1999 found that the average timebank had an average of 61 members exchanging an average of 71 each (Seyfang, 2004a, p. 64). Current figures from the UK (as at 25-11-2013 http://www.timebanking.org/) indicate 294 timebanks with over 30,000 members (around 100 members per timebank) and over 2.2 million hours of exchanges. So duration, focus and hours of exchanges all need to be taken into account when examining size.

In the USA the majority have a membership under 500 and about one third function with fewer than 50 members (Collom et al., 2012). A national survey of coordinators of timebanks in the USA conducted by Collom et al. (2012) in 2010 received a response rate of 75% (96 out of a possible 128). The survey identified that 54% of the 96 timebanks had begun in 2009 and 2010 (23 in 2010 alone); 32% between 2005 and 2008, and 14% before 2005. The size of the timebanks in the study ranged from three to 2,400 members, with an average size of 203. In terms of membership 39% had fewer than 50 members, 28% between 50 and 149 members, and 33% 150 members or more. Closer inspection of documentation on some large timebanks identified they could be hubs comprised of multiple clusters, depending on style of reporting. Figure 1 below provides a recent picture of the situation in the USA, with the majority having a membership of up to 100 (http://www.timebanking.org/).

**Figure 1 Distribution of Membership of Active Timebanks in USA (Data source www. http://community.timebanks.org/ as at 30/7/2013 [Excludes Timebank Hubs])**
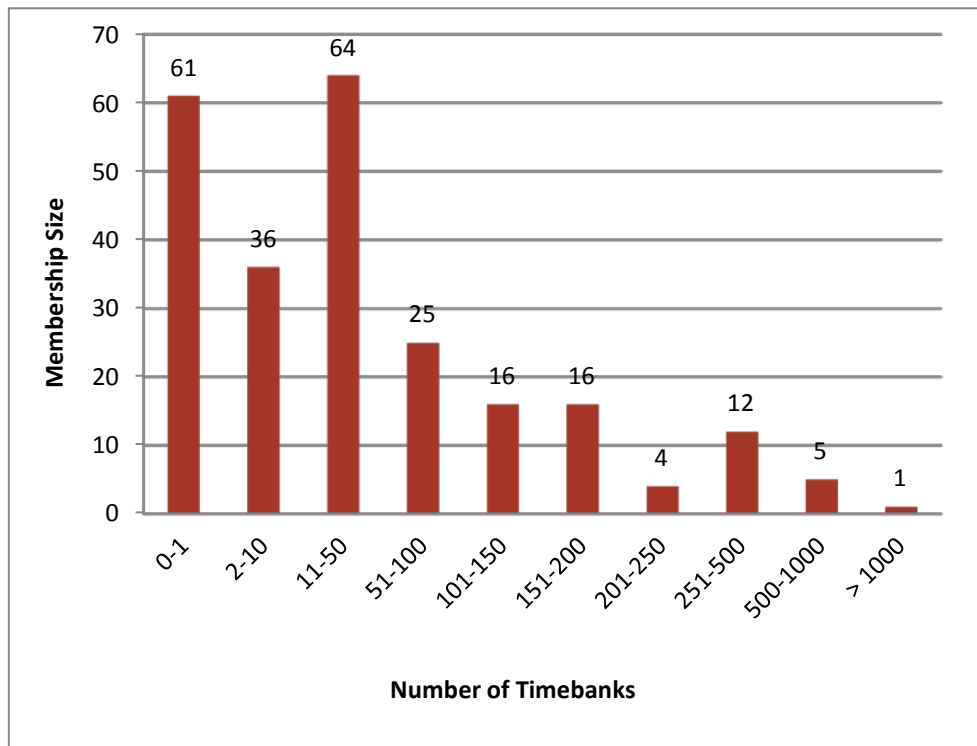


Active members in the Collom study (i.e., those who had participated in the quarter prior to the survey) ranged from 0 to 771, and the average number of active members was 60. The Community Exchange timebank in the US started exchanging in 2000 and membership grew to over 500 by 2011 (Collom et al., 2012). It was clear from this study that the size of a timebank differed depending on location, community and focus.

At present there are few timebanks that are orchestrated across wide regions with diverse social experiences and skills (Coote et al., 2008, p. 19 Table 2). This is where the NSW Timebanking project is unique.

### 3.2.4   TIMEBROKERING

Timebanks need some level of coordination and this is generally referred to as timebrokering. A timebroker is considered to be essential to the success of a timebank and provides a level of credibility and security (Seyfang, 2002b). It is ideally and not unusually a fulltime position (Warne & Lawrence, 2009). The pivotal roles for this coordinator are in the areas of recruitment, planning, monitoring (time auditing), making connections with people, helping members to identify abilities and where they can be used, matching needs and skills, accounting, encouraging and generally weaving the social fabric (Cahn, 2001; Gregory, 2009, 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Ozanne, 2010; Seyfang, 2002b, 2004b).

Gregory (2012a) observes that the time-broker (co-ordinator) has a key role in the development of social capital:

> … Time Brokers operate within these member networks to make connections between them, to share information between the networks and generate new participation opportunities. (p. 255)

The role of timebroker provides support to those who are vulnerable in the community, to ensure secure and supportive contact and assess the best way in which their need(s) can be met. There needs to be staff, whether it is the broker alone, or a with a more extensive support team, to recruit participants, provide orientation, match providers and recipients as needed, track the hours, and distribute statements about their exchanges to members. In general, the literature indicates that the timebroker or coordinator has a pivotal role in setting the focus of the timebank and ensuring its operational functionality. One option is for this role to be performed by their existing service provider.

### 3.2.5   MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION AND RECRUITMENT

Experience in the UK indicates that timebanks attract people who are socially excluded including those from low income backgrounds, retirees, women, people with disabling conditions or long-term illnesses and non-white British ethnic groups (Seyfang, 2002b; Warne & Lawrence, 2009). Furthermore, there is a higher percentage (72%) of persons not in formal employment involved in timebanks compared with 40% involved in traditional volunteering, and almost four times as many as those from low income households who are engaged in traditional volunteering (Warne & Lawrence, 2009).

Three case studies conducted in the US by Collom et al. (2012) identify that on average 64% of membership is female, and was in fact 83% in two of the timebanks studied. Apart from the strong female representation, they found diversity among the demographics of the different timebanks. Hence, the potential of timebanks to draw in vulnerable and socially excluded groups is already established in the research literature.

Timebank members have different motivations for joining a timebank. Seyfang (2002b) reported that motivations of the members of the Rushey Green Time Bank in the UK were: helping others (78%), community involvement (72%) improving the neighbourhood (56%), to meeting others/making friends (44%), need for help (44%), and earning time credits (17%, p. 6). Collom (2011) developed an instrument for measuring motivation and it comprised of seven different scales: needs motivation, wants motivation, instrumental (utility) motivation, social motivation, values motivation, independence motivation and altruistic motivation. According to Collom (2007), the most common motivations for joining one particular timebank were needs and values related and that timebanking provides the opportunity for people to act on their values. Although meeting individualistic needs ranks highly, the timebank provided opportunity for acting out collectivist

values for community betterment, with social motivations being the least important. Also, in two of the three timebanks observed, Collom et al. (2012) found that motivation had very little influence in shaping timebank activity. In both cases, altruism had a role with a substantial range of services provided. Where social motivation was a key motivator, there was less diversity in services received and provided. Although time credits have been reported to be an incentive for recruiting and retaining members (Cahn, 1992), at Rushey Green in the UK only 17% of members said that they were motivated to join by the prospect of time credits (Seyfang, 2002b)

The existence of timebanking can be seen as empowering for social groups that are excluded and do not ordinarily participate in formal volunteering such as those not in formal work or those who receive social services (e.g., Boyle et al., 2006; Seyfang, 2003b, 2006b). One of the main differences that sets timebanking apart from formal volunteering is that the need is mostly for time and everyday skills, rather than competencies developed through formal training (Seyfang, 2002b). Timebanking redefines work so that each person is recognised as an asset, with all work recognised as being of equal value. It thereby embodies a powerful egalitarian element (e.g., Boyle et al., 2006; Seyfang, 2004b; TimeBanks USA, 2012).

International currency networks use social media to maintain contact among members (Seyfang & Longhurst, 2013). While social media offer an alternative path of recruitment this medium is still largely unexamined by researchers. The Australian Government's (2011) *National Volunteering Strategy* notes the increasing use by volunteering organisations of social media and the need to use that medium to communicate and appeal to the young. Fifteen percent of volunteering groups use virtual volunteering, but still it is underutilised (Volunteering Australia, 2012). The Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research (2013) reported that 53% of the members involved in the four Cambridgeshire timebanks did not use social media, hence at present it can only be reasonably considered as one form of communication in the context of timebank networking and recruitment.

It is clear from Collom et al.'s (2012) analysis that recruitment strategies vary according to the individual mission of the timebank. An ongoing challenge for timebrokers that is the recruitment and maintenance of a critical mass of members in order to tap the potential within the network (Collom, 2007, pp. 58-59). Some have suggested a critical mass is 50-100 members (Warne & Lawrence, 2009). Experienced brokers have attested to some difficulty in explaining timebanking as a form of exchange insofar as potential members are typically faced with new and different ways of engaging with services and each other (Gregory, 2009, 2010). It 'takes time and care to establish time banking to ensure that people understand what they are designed to achieve.' (James, 2005, in Gregory, 2010, p. 10).

Word of mouth through family friend,  neighbours and existing social ties more generally are an important consideration in recruitment for timebanking schemes(Collom, 2007; Collom et al., 2012). An effective strategy in one US timebank is for members to actively recruit others to join (Collom et al., 2012). Word of mouth was ranked first by 74% of coordinators and second by 14% of coordinators. Other methods of recruitment in order of success were: newspapers, community

events, website, email, flyers, and 'other' (Table 3.7 p. 78). A problem with word of mouth recruitment is the law of diminishing returns when a member's personal networks are exhausted, so there is a need for broader strategies (Collom et al., 2012). It stands to reasons that recruitment strategies need continual evaluation and refinement.

Targeted recruitment expands resources (community and individual), extending the range of services available, thereby more adequately meeting the range of needs of members. Recruitment also raises the profile and credibility of timebanks in the community (Seyfang, 2002b). The Gorbals timebank in the UK actively targets local organisations alongside a strategy of word of mouth recruitment by local members (Seyfang, 2004a). One other finding in the research is that highly visible offices are effective for recruitment, and also that being embedded in an agency can provide a recruitment advantage (Collom et al., 2012).

One of the already highlighted problems faced in recruitment is that the timebank model is not generally understood. Concepts of reciprocity, time exchange and member trust are not widely grasped. Then there is the matter of matching what people can offer as services with others' needs. Some recruits find it difficult to decide what skills/abilities to offer and what to request in return (Collom et al., 2012) which can be revealed in an imbalance in trading.

### 3.2.6    TRADING AND ITS FACILITATION

As a form of bank that deals in time credits, timebanks require some infrastructure. There has to be methods of recording and matching member needs and services, as well as processing requests and responses or trades. Increasingly, software is used to record and track time transactions, credits and debits (exchange), for example, that supplied by Time Banking UK (Rushey Green Time Bank, 2011; Warne & Lawrence, 2009). Other software packages include the Community Weaver Software and Time and Talents used in the US (Klatt, 2010). The typical model has been that timebanks open as small, manageable operations, but grow and become more complex. There then emerges a need for more sophisticated infrastructure. Not unusually, it may be that an agency steps in to provide or assist in obtaining such infrastructure, as occurred in the UK. In the NSW *Timebanking* trial, this occurred in the opposite trajectory.  The NSW Office of Communities was in a position to provide software infrastructure and design it to the needs of the two trial timebanks. This will be discussed later in the report.

Valek (2012) raises the need for functional and user-friendly software to assist with administration. Moreover, Slater (2011) lists the issues with software as being: accessibility to implementers; encouragement of good governance; exchange between associations; the need to upgrade older software, and the need to support software innovation. Additionally, new open source code software provides opportunities for individual timebanks to adapt it to their own requirements. Cahn (2012) claims that over 200 timebanks are using open source software, and it will become available for smart phones and tablets, thus providing increased access for members.

At the heart of the timebanking mechanism is *what* members exchange. This is what is recorded with the software, and how those recruited are processed and linked to others. A common challenge in facilitating exchanges is that members can be unsure about what they can offer to trade (Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research, 2013; Collom et al., 2012) In order to more easily monitor timebank activity, Collom (2012) has suggested 13 categories of services traded: "Arts and Crafts Production", "Beauty and Spa", "Cleaning, Light Tasks and Errands", "Computers and Technology", "Construction, Installation, Maintenance and Repair", "Entertainment and Social Contact", "Events and Program Support", "Food Preparation and Service", "Health and Wellness", "Office and Administrative Support", "Sales and Rentals of Items"; "transportation and Moving", "Tutoring, Consultation and Personal Services" (Table 2, p. 23).

Limited participation in providing services can be quite challenging to manage. Reasons cited for difficulty include time constraints and busy lives, contact difficulties, lack of availability of matching services, lack of desirable services, members being uncomfortable to approach unknown people regarding providing services, and the desire of those who give not to seek services in return provide (Collom et al., 2012). In this vein, some practical solutions have been reported in some timebanks. For example, debt can be tolerated and even encouraged, though sometimes a member's account is closed if the debt is too big. It needs to be noted debt in the timebanks studied was relatively rare (18% of members in one and 17% in another). Over 80% of members have credit or a balanced account. A smaller percentage of people (5% in one timebank and 7% in another) had credits of more than 100 hours (Collom et al., 2012). In another timebank, 72% of members had time credits (Panther, 2012). Another known but undocumented solution, especially if services are not suited to users' needs in one timebank, is to facilitate exchange through other timebanks, and here hub and spoke or cluster models may apply.

One final point that can be mentioned with respect to trading and membership is that a proportion of members may be inactive. If this is a large proportion it can impact on the viability of the timebank. This particular issue is picked up in success indicators below.

The nature and scope of trading can be influenced by the taxation regime of the country where the timebank operates. In some countries, timebank rewards are regarded as income or indications of availability for formal employment and so can attract taxation or penalties to social service benefits (e.g.,Boyle et al., 2006; Gregory, 2012a; Molnar, 2011; Seyfang, 2006b). Timebank exchanges have been made tax exempt by various governments (Cahn, 2001) and this may add to their appeal especially for those on limited income.

### 3.2.7   SUCCESS INDICATORS AND SUSTAINABILITY

When examining a range of timebank studies it was noted that those that started in 2009 or 2010 were less likely to have paid staff and formal budgets. The eight oldest, founded before 2000 had formal budgets and six had paid staff (Collom et al., 2012). In situations of lack of staff and funding, it is harder to sustain timebanks and Cahn adds that a major challenge is to sustain public funding or at

least reliable funding to support an office, facilities and a timebroker (e.g., Cahn, 2001; Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research, 2013; Collom et al., 2012; Warne & Lawrence, 2009)

A national survey of timebank coordinators in the US by Collom et al. (2012) yielded the following list of factors valuable to sustaining timebanks:

- Dedicated members and volunteers
- Effective outreach programs
- Embeddedness with other organisation
- Nature of the community where located
- Exchange software
- Good staff and funding (Table 7.3 p. 187)

Also it was noted that timebanks have closed owing to funding issues and staff burnout (Collom, 2012, p. 183; Collom et al., 2012).

Gross trading is far from the main indication of timebank success operationally. Another dimension of success relates to the connections that are involved in exchange and there is really no sustained research in this area. Indeed, the conceptualisation of using timebank data recorded in the exchange as way of evaluation and what such data means at the level of interpretation is still evolving. The core indicators, however, as proposed by Collom (2012) are presented in Table 1 below at the levels of both system and individual.

**Table 1 Success Indicators** (Source: Collom, 2012, p. 120)

| Level | Name | Description |
|-------|------|-------------|
| System | Number of active members per quarter | The number of members who are providing and or receiving services within each quarter |
| System | Quarter of first transaction | The number of new members per quarter |
| System | Total number of hours per quarter | Turnover (number of times dollars or hours earned per quarter |
| System | Service categories | Thirteen broad categories to classify services |
| Individual | Total hours of participation | Sum of the total number of hours providing and receiving services |
| individual | Average hours per quarter | Total hours divided by quarters participated |
| Individual | Account balance | Differences between hours earned and spent |

The size of exchange networks, network density, the number of unique contacts, and the number of reciprocated contacts are far more interesting and indicative of the vibrancy of the timebank. Reciprocation is one indicator of 'bonding' social capital. For a timebank to be achieving its core aims, and be in a healthy sustainable state, then people should be growing their networks of trading partners, and this is also another indicator of connectedness and success of word-of-mouth. Collom reveals that it is possible to track and map the density and variety of exchanges. Further useful data

lies in determining the number of services exchanged and the different service categories a member has provided/received (Collom, 2012).

## 3.3 SECTION 2 OUTCOMES

### 3.3.1 EMPIRICAL STUDIES THAT CAPTURE TIMEBANKING OUTCOMES

We located 34 empirical studies (see Appendix B) that capture substantial information on the outcomes of timebanking in the period 2001-2013. For selection, the studies had to have an identifiable methodology and report empirical results, or report the results of other empirical studies not otherwise available (e.g., Drakeford & Gregory, 2010; Gregory, 2012c; Marks, 2012). Sometimes, the studies extend to other community currencies such as LETS (Williams et al., 2001). Some of the more complex investigations are reported across multiple publications. The studies are principally from the UK (15) or US (12) with two studies bridging the UK and US. The remainder are from Japan (3), New Zealand (1) Sweden (1) and Taiwan (1) (see Table 2). They range from investigations of individual timebanks, to comparative and cross-sectional studies, and national surveys. Even using broad categorisations to capture the research methods, Table 2 provides some evidence of the methodological range and complexity by study.

**Table 2 Research methodologies**

| Author | Year | Article Number* | Country | Research area | 1. Questionnaire/ Survey | 2. Transaction data | 3. Qualitative Methodologies | 4. Documents | 5. Economic evaluation | 6. Comparison | 7. Review/ Literature Search | 8. Research Synthesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boyle, D., et al. | 2006 | 1 | UK | Cross sectional analysis of TBs in UK | | | X | | | | | |
| Collom, E. | 2007 | 2 | US | Not named | X | | | | | | | |
| Collom, E. | 2008 | 3 5 | US | Not Named | X | X | | | | | | |
| Collom, E. | 2008 | 4 | US | Not Named | | | X | | | | | |
| Collom, E., et al. | 2012 | 7 | US | National survey of timebrokers | X | | X | | | | | |
| Collom, E., et al. | 2012 | 7 | US | A. Hour Exchange, Portland (HEP); | X | X | | | | | | |
| Collom, E., et al. Letcher&Perlow Lasker, J., et al. | 2012 2009 2011 | 7 18 16 | US | B. Community Exchange Time Dollar Network (CE), Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania; | X | X | X | X | | | | |
| Collom, E., et al. | 2012 | 7 | US | C. Member to Member (M2M), Brooklyn | X | | X | | | X | | X |
| Collom, E. | 2012 | 6 | US | Portland West Time Dollar Exchange | | X | | | | | | |
| Dakin, K. | 2007 | 8 | US | Portland Timebank | | | X | | | | X | |
| Drakeford & Gregory Gregory, L. | 2010 2012 | 9 13 | UK; US | Time Dollar Court; Fair Shares | | | | | | | X | |
| Gregory, L. | 2009 | 10 | UK | Wales | | | X | | | | | |
| Gregory, L. | 2012 | 12 | UK | Wales | | | X | | | | | |
| Gregory, L. | 2012 | 11 | UK | A. Evaluation of Timebanks in Wales B. Action Research - establishing a TB in a health agency | | | X | | | X | | |
| Hayashi, M. | 2012 | 14 | Japan | Fureai Kippu | | | X | X | | | X | |
| Knapp, M., et al. | 2013 | 15 | UK | General economic evaluation | | | | | X | | | |
| Lee, L. | 2009 | 17 | Taiwan | Dharma Drum University – Degui Academy | | | | | | | X | |
| Marks, M. B. | 2008 | 19 | US | A. Review of Timebanking B. 2 unnamed timebanks | | | X | | | X | X | |
| Marks, M. B. | 2012 | 20 | US | Time Dollar Court | | | | | | | X | |
| Miller, E. J. | 2009 2009 | 21 22 | Japan | TB in Japan and China (to a lesser extent) provides vignettes of TBs in UK and US NALC Japan | | | X | | | | X | |
| Molnar, S. | 2011 | 23 | Sweden | TidsNätveket I Bergsjön, Sweden | | | X | X | | | | |
| Ozanne, L. K. | 2010 | 24 | NZ | Lyttelton Time Bank | | | X | | | | | |
| Panther, J. | 2012 | 25 | UK | Steelwear | X | X | X | | | | | |
| Seyfang, G. | 2001 | 26 | UK | A. National survey of TBs UK - April 2001 | X | | X | | | | | |
| Seyfang, G. | 2002 2004 | 27 28 32 | UK | B. Time Banks UK - Data from National survey - July, 2002 | X | | | | | | X | |
| Seyfang, G. | 2003 | 29 30 31 33 | UK | C. Case studies: Rushey Green, The Gorbals, Stonehouse Fair Shares | X | X | X | | | | | |
| Williams, C. C., et al. | 2001 | 34 | UK | A. Survey of LETS UK B. Survey of LETS members | X | | X | | | | | |
| **Totals: 28** | | | | | **11** | **7** | **17** | **3** | **1** | **3** | **8** | **1** |

*Articles listed in Appendix C

### 3.3.2 CATEGORIES OF OUTCOME

Recently, Collom, et al. (2012) sought to undertake a comparison across three timebank sites. They concluded that direct comparison was problematic, arguing that the benefits accrued to timebank members vary according to the characteristics and subsets of members, and found overall there were 'few consistent predictors of the outcomes of participation in our cases' (p. 170). Benefits for each individual may have a unique architecture or stamp that reflects the unique features of their timebank.

From the above work, it becomes clear that outcomes are contingent on the membership and the way that co-production is engaged at particular sites. In other words, there is no one formula that can be applied consistently across all timebanks to achieve successes. In addition, this observation has salience for the interpretation of outcomes across the literature, namely different benefits accrue to participants from the different services and activities of different timebanks. An approach that overcomes some of the difficulty of comparison may be to work from the spectrum of known outcomes.

Appendix B draws on a classification of outcomes framework pioneered by Boyle et al. (2006) with some slight variation based on the review. These are grouped into personal outcomes and societal outcomes. It is also evident from the appendix that there is more attention given to some areas than others. Those outcomes receiving greater attention are the personal outcomes of self-esteem and well-being, health, physical and mental, skills and work, social reach (networks), reciprocity and rewards, and education and personal development, as well as the societal outcomes of social capital and social mobility. Other outcomes not recieving much attention are the societal outcomes of cultural capital, social mobility, organisational culture and economic outcomes, and these four have been mostly flagged by researchers as potentially significant. It is notable that all four fall within societal outcomes; hence, we know more on the whole about the personal than the societal outcomes at this time. Overall, societal outcomes appear to have attracted less attention by researchers, with social capital being the exception. Consequently, this review deals with the first eight categories.

### 3.3.3 CO-PRODUCTION AND INDIVIDUALS

### A. SELF-ESTEEM, CONFIDENCE AND WELL-BEING

Improvement in self-esteem, confidence (self-efficacy) and wellbeing that results from achievement associated with doing something of value and reciprocal relationships with others are reported variously by Boyle et al. (2006), Gregory (2012b), Dakin (2007), Letcher and Perlow (2009), Marks (2008), Miller (2009a), Molnar (2011) and Seyfang (2003b, 2006b) and include people with and without disabling conditions (Letcher & Perlow, 2009). Nevertheless, effects vary for different groups of people. For instance, Collom et al. (2012) report in one of their case studies that improvements in self-efficacy were more likely to be reported for younger participants.

Personal gains through timebanking can spill over into relationships. Marks (2008) observes that in the particular case of timebanking operative in youth justice, there can be improvement in family relationships. More generally, involvement in time exchange is seen to promote the wellbeing of participants (Seyfang, 2001) and feeling useful improves the sense of self-esteem and efficacy (Seyfang, 2003b, 2006b).

### B. HEALTH, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL

Both qualitative and quantitative research studies indicated a perception of improved mental and/or physical health as a result of involvement in timebanking. These improvements were attributed to social interaction, involvement in activities, and the health activities, programs and support made available through timebanking transactions (Boyle et al., 2006).

Conversely, Collom et al. (2012) report that health benefits were rated lower than other benefits across their sites, and investigation of one of three sites using a longitudinal, quasi-experimental design indicated no measurable health benefits. Health benefits were more likely to be reported by younger people at two of their three sites. At one such site, Lasker et al. (2011) found that mental and physical health gains resulted from a sense of belonging and the generation of social capital (cf. Gregory, 2012a; Letcher & Perlow, 2009):

> The six variables that *were* significantly associated with health gains, both physical and mental, were general health change in a positive direction, higher scores on the three frequency of participation measures, and higher scores on the attachment and identification scales (see Table 4). (Lasker et al., 2011, p. 109)

Improvement in health corresponds to participation rates. Physical health improvements were reported by 44% of those with a yearly average of 20 or more transactions a year, whereas only 10% of those with one transaction or less a quarter. The figures for mental health are 60% and 12.5% respectively. Furthermore, Lasker et al. (2011) report that physical health gains are more likely (2.69 times) to be reported by those living alone.

The greater the sense of attachment to the timebank, the greater the likelihood of reporting of physical health gains. Mental health improvement is more likely (3.06 times) to be reported by those also reporting improvements in physical health as compared with those who did not report improvements in physical health. No direct link between health improvement and social participation can be made by the study, though it is an indirect link inferred (Lasker et al., 2011).

Health benefits are also cited by Dakin (2007) and Hayashi (2012). A peer-reviewed review of the Elderplan timebank in the US was not directly accessible, but secondary sources cited in Dakin (2007) and Miller (2009a) report improvement in the physical and emotional wellbeing, with lower rates of hospitalisation (Kyriacou & Blech, 2004 cited in Miller, 2009a) and health insurance being paid for by time credits (Boyle, 2001 cited in Miller, 2009a). Seyfang (2002b, 2002c, 2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b, 2006b) also points to the positive health benefits of timebanking.

A caveat to positive health benefits is provided by Gregory (2012a). Negative health effects may be generated where they produce stress or tension for a member, but Gregory points out that timebanks provide the flexibility to offer members alternate activities, thereby mitigating negative consequences.

## C. SKILLS AND WORK

The search could not locate studies that compared uptake of employment by timebanking members and those without paid employment in other sectors, but several researchers identify gains in employment as a positive outcome.

Gregory (2012a) maintains that timebanks can assist in the return to paid employment, potentially offering a support network. While Panther (2012) reports that 27% of the respondents to their questionnaire indicated that the contacts made through timebanking helped them find employment, Boyle et al. (2006) argue that employability of those on the margin was improved by the provision of training courses that could be paid for with time credits. This was alongside improvement in people skills, outlook, confidence, motivation, 'a taste of working', making network contacts, and a knowledge of community work (p. 22; see also Gregory, 2009, 2012a; Marks, 2008; Panther, 2012). Some of those interviewed by Boyle et al. indicated that they had used timebanking as a stepping stone into paid employment, while others returned to education (p. 17). Collom et al. (2012) also report that members at one timebank cited positive work outcomes for those having less formal education.

One of the aims of The Gorbals timebank in Scotland was to support people in their quest for paid employment by offering time credits for attending literacy and personal development courses (Seyfang, 2002b, 2002c, 2004a). Another timebank offered employment related skills, such as writing a CV (Panther, 2012). In an analysis of timebanking transactions Collom (2008a) observed that those more likely to gain paid employment are in looser networks, are less well-connected, trade with a wider range of people and have a positive balance of time credits.

Although not specifically concerning timebanking, the study by Williams et al. (2001) on Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) and paid employment concluded that:

> [al]though LETS are moderately successful at maintaining and improving employability, they are most effective at providing a seedbed for self-employed business ventures and at providing reciprocal exchange networks so that people can engage in community self-help. (Williams et al., 2001, p. 130)

These conclusions support the notion that timebanking can be structured to support members who are seeking paid employment, but there is still some way to go before strong claims can be made in that direction based on existing literature. Clearly this has to be a more specific focus of future research, but what is indicated is the connection between timebanking and pathways to employment associated with the benefits of participation.

## D. SOCIAL REACH (PERSONAL SOCIAL NETWORKS)

The advantages of timebanking have been listed as: "broader source of potential solutions"; "peer group support"; "ownership"; "deeper involvement"; and "meeting needs" (Boyle et al., 2006, pp. 23-24). Another particular strength is social reach or social networking.

Social reach is increased for participants though the local knowledge provided by the timebank staff and newsletter, 'making useful contacts locally', 'developing new interests and skills' and 'finding employment' (Panther, 2012, pp. 185-188). In some timebanks, extending social reach has been a deliberate strategy (Seyfang, 2001, 2002b).

Timebanking can be focused toward engaging the socially excluded (Panther, 2012; Seyfang, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b, 2006b) and enabling interaction between people of different ethnic backgrounds (Panther, 2012). It also attracts those who participate least in formal volunteering (Boyle et al., 2006; Seyfang, 2003b, 2006b). Such networks contribute to the wellbeing of members (Lasker et al., 2011; Letcher & Perlow, 2009). Boyle et al. (2006) acknowledge the danger that timebanking might become a "ghetto" of the socially excluded; however, Ozanne's (2010) research demonstrates that timebanking operations extend across socio-economic backgrounds.

Panther (2012) concluded that social gatherings increased participants' social reach. They provide opportunities for elders to forge networks and make friendships (Dakin, 2007). Collom (2011) found that younger members and those from low income households are more likely to trade more frequently. In addition, they provide new opportunities for exchanging services (Seyfang, 2006b, p. 14). In Seyfang's (2006b) study of the Fair Shares Timebank in the UK, she found the timebank "facilitated the provision of services which would not have taken place otherwise" for 27% of respondents (p.14), and mobilised support services for 38% of those in need, who would not have received them in any other circumstance.

In two timebanks investigated by Collom et al. (2012) high correlations were found to exist between 'total hours' and two variables 'Contacts' and 'Reciprocal contacts' suggesting that the more hours

spent in transaction the more likely a member has a higher number of contacts and the more likely that person engages in reciprocal trading (Table A5.2 p.141; see also Collom, 2012; Panther, 2012).

Different exchange patterns have been observed between males and females, with generally females outnumbering males (Collom, 2008b, 2011). There are differences in male and female in networks and therefore Gregory (2012a) claims that attention needs to be given to a variety of activities that appeal to the different interests of women and men.

In another timebank, Collom (2008a) noted it to be more successful in the generation of economic and cultural capital than social capital. Those more likely to receive the services they need are in denser trading networks. A variety of outcomes is more likely to be had by those whose motivations for joining were social and those more engaged in terms of time in the system (p. 14).

## E. RECIPROCITY AND REWARD

Timebanking rewards can be intrinsic or extrinsic. Boyle et al. (2006) report that reciprocity appeals more to some than others. The strongest motivation for most involved in timebanking is the desire to do something for others, that is, altruism (Collom, 2007; Seyfang, 2004a). A strong desire to be altruistic can make it harder for some participants to request (Ozanne, 2010) or receive services (Blech, 2006, cited in Miller, 2009a). By contrast, in Japan, personal benefit is the prime motivation for involvement and altruism second (Takama & Sughihara, 2003, p. 40 cited in Miller, 2009a).

According to (Seyfang, 2001) reciprocity increases over time as do the number of exchanges with the development of friendships and trust, and reciprocity is particularly valued by the elderly (Collom, 2008b). Timebank credits function "to promote people helping each other " (Collom et al., 2012, p. 139). In Taiwan, the Degui Academy of the Dharma Drum University offers tuition in return for voluntary service (Lee, 2009).

Benefits accrued by timebank members include social and economic reward in the provision of services which they may not have otherwise received or would have had to pay for (Collom, 2008a; Collom et al., 2012; Seyfang, 2001, 2003a, 2004b, 2006b). Empowerment is another reward and the most successful projects were those where the emphasis on the empowerment of participants was 'most prominent' (Boyle et al., 2006, p. 25).

Some timebanks offer material incentives to attract people to timebanking, especially young people (Boyle et al., 2006). Boyle et al. observe that when material rewards such as driving lessons are offered, then social events tend to suffer, because time credits are spent on the former rather than the latter. The Gorbals Time Bank in Scotland offers incentives such as refurbished computers, theatre tickets, or café meals to encourage participation, but these are called into question by government policy, as they may be penalties for social services (Seyfang, 2004a, 2006b). Gregory (2012a) observes that for some participants the replacement of time credits for material rewards can limit options of involvement and can close ways of co-production (p.209). In Japan two models of timebanking co-exist: reciprocal and "paid volunteering" (Hayashi, 2012; Miller, 2009a).

## F. EDUCATION AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Timebanks provide opportunity for lifelong learning (Dakin, 2007). Within the sphere of informal education, new things are learnt, new experiences are possible (Molnar, 2011), including gaining new skills and ultimately increasing human capital (Ozanne, 2010). This can be from courses run or provided by timebanks or transacted through time credits (Boyle et al., 2006; Gregory, 2012b, 2012c; Panther, 2012; Seyfang, 2002c) or simply learning from helping each other (Panther, 2012) or by being involved (Williams et al., 2001). For instance, individual tuition in relation to an information technology course was provided for a member with autism through time credits and this facility would not be received through other means (Seyfang, 2004a). Time credits have been used to pay for language lessons, art classes (Marks, 2008) or quilting lessons (Gregory, 2012a). Another example is the peer mentoring program where senior students are given training to mentor younger students transitioning to secondary school (Boyle et al., 2006). As already noted, at Degui Academy of the Dharma Drum University in Taiwan, students use time credits to pay for their tuition (Lee, 2009). Mention has been made of the health benefits and employment outcomes associated with the educative functions of timebanking.

The deployment of timebanking as a remedial measure in youth justice in the Time Dollar Youth Court, Washington, DC, has resulted in a reduction in recidivism, in 2004 this was 17% at 12 months compared with 30% for a control group and in 2007 this the 17% had dropped to 14% (Drakeford & Gregory, 2010; Gregory, 2012c). Similarly, Marks (2008) in the US reports on research done with two other youth justice sites with positive outcomes and impacts. These include the enhancement of staff-youth collaboration and engagement and the gaining of positive self-identity and self-esteem in the part of youth as well as competencies.

At Fair Shares timebank in Gloucestershire UK, a link has been made with Her Majesty's Prison Gloucester, with prisoners completing 3,000 hours representing 2,000 assignments in the community to date in 2007, with many credits being donated for redistribution, including the families of prisoners. Furthermore, time credits can be retained by the prisoners themselves in order to develop their own skills or to be used upon their release (Drakeford & Gregory, 2010; Gregory, 2012c). In 2012 timebanks were operating in three prisons in the UK, with 20 more under development (Gregory, 2012c).

### 3.3.4    CO-PRODUCTION AND COMMUNITIES

Timebanks have the capacity to generate social, cultural and economic capital (Collom et al., 2012, p. 170). Little research has been done on the generation of cultural capital by timebanks; however it does receive mention by Collom et al (2012), Ozanne (2010) and Seyfang (2004b, 2006b). More prolific in the literature on timebanking is the mention of social capital. Economic capital is covered by Section 2.e. Reciprocity and rewards.

## A. SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital is more comprehensively researched than some other areas of outcome. The social interaction afforded by timebanks contributes to the building of social capital, social cohesion and/or social networks that offer support, and this is reported as happening to varying degrees as the outcome of timebank activity in the UK (Boyle et al., 2006; Gregory, 2012a; Miller, 2009a; Seyfang, 2002c, 2003a, 2003b), the US (Collom, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2012; Collom et al., 2012; Letcher & Perlow, 2009; Marks, 2008), Sweden (Molnar, 2011), New Zealand (Ozanne, 2010) and Japan (and to a lesser extent China, Miller, 2009a). Social capital is seen as an important ingredient in the deployment of timebanking in justice systems in the UK and US (Drakeford & Gregory, 2010; Gregory, 2012c; Marks, 2008, 2012). Nevertheless, along with glowing reports of the generation of social capital, timebanking is not without strained relationships to be reconciled (Gregory, 2012b).

The various authors listed above distinguish between "bonding" or "linking" and "bridging" social capital. The two aspects of social capital are typified by different trading patterns:

> Trading with members who are similar to oneself is an indication of bonding social capital while trading with members who are dissimilar is an indication of bridging social capital. (Collom et al., 2012, pp. 132-133)

> Findings from all three of our cases indicate the important role that the quality of one's trading network plays in producing beneficial outcomes. Who you trade with and what you exchange is as important, and in some cases more important, than how often you participate. (Collom et al., 2012, p. 170)

Some prefer the concepts of social reach and social cohesion over the term 'social capital' (Panther, 2012). Panther observes that despite low levels of social cohesion, the Steelwear Time Bank encouraged trust among its members, because staff members were reliable in regulating timebanking activities and the system provided a safety net in times of crisis, providing reassurance for members who were more vulnerable. Seyfang (2001, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b) also observes that timebanks build trust in the community, making it a better place to live and encouraging tolerance and diversity (2003a, p. 703; see also Gregory, 2009; Marks, 2008; Miller, 2009a; Molnar, 2011; Ozanne, 2010; Panther, 2012). Collom (2007) found that timebanking also promotes community engagement and volunteering at higher rates than the general US population. Seyfang's (2001) survey of timebank co-ordinators in the UK found that 91% of them believed that community involvement was encouraged through their timebanking projects.

## B. SOCIAL MOBILITY

One could argue that timebanking could have an impact in terms of social mobility through employment, but that is not a specific line taken up in the literature. Primarily, this category of outcome was evident more as facilitating changing roles. In Japan, timebanks are largely focused on the care of the aged in a society where their percentage is rising. Miller's (2009a, 2009b) study of timebanking in Japan demonstrates that the rise of timebanking in that country coincides with the

relaxing of many traditional practices, role expectations and attitudes. One outcome of this is that men have taken on caring roles that were previously regarded as the realm of women. Timebanking provides a structure though which this social mobility can be facilitated.

## 3.4    CONCLUSION

The literature on timebanking, although quite extensive, is largely descriptive, and while the review initially drew on a wide scope of material to position the NSW *Timebanking* trial internationally, and to explore the concept of co-production, reciprocity and timebank scope and organisation, it focused on 34 publications in particular with respect to outcomes because these particular works reported substantial empirical data – both quantitative and qualitative.

The literature reports individual, community and societal outcomes of timebanking, and it is evident that outcomes are contingent on the purpose of the timebank, the organisation that sets it up, and the membership (demographic). As Gregory (2012a) indicates, social policy and the manner in which co-production is co-opted are determining parameters that configure the operation and outcomes of this societal phenomenon.

Systematic and methodical research into timebanking outcomes is still in its early stages, with the preponderance of research pointing to positive outcomes at the personal level and supplying substantial indication of the capacity of timebanking to generate social capital when it is thoughtfully and thoroughly applied. Clearly there remain considerable areas for further research, particularly outcomes in the societal domain and in relation to cultural capital, social mobility, economy and organisational culture. Even the impact in terms of self-concept, wellbeing and the development of human capital has yet to be explored fully.

Timebanking embodies considerable flexibility in the manner in which has been and can be operationalised. The development of timebanking and its position in the array of community currencies is the subject of ongoing research worldwide. The NSW *Timebanking* expansion, given its scope and diversity, will provide a rich opportunity to gain further insight across a range of these 'yet to be explored' areas and offers the potential to contribute considerably to national and international knowledge about the phenomenon. The unique features of the NSW *Timebanking* trial and data that follow already take an important step in that direction.

## 4 SYSTEM DATA EVALUATION

This section of the *Timebanking* evaluation report provides an analysis of the data from:

- Social media (Twitter and Facebook).
- The registration of users to *Timebanking.*
- The use of *Timebanking.*

These three areas of analysis can be used to understand the system use across the Hunter and Central Coast's trial sites. The analysis also informs an understanding of the methods that will allow for greater system use as the NSW Government's volunteering initiative is significantly expanded across 30 additional sites in 2014.

This section of the report is about Timebanking's ability to address 'Strategic Direction 1: Making it easier to volunteer'.

### 4.1 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The majority of the data used for this analysis has been extracted from the *Timebanking* system. In this report, the data is analysed longitudinally from *Timebanking's* launch through to 27 November 2013. The data is compared to the results presented in the interim report (which presented data through to 31 May 2013) identifying any trends and initiatives that have allowed for increased usage of the trial site systems.

As the system has been diffused further into the trial sites, and more users have interacted with the system since the interim report, detailed statistical analyses have been conducted using time-series data. Trends within this data have been identified. This data is used to gain an understanding of how the system is actually used. Based on this information, resources can be appropriately allocated for the further expansion of *Timebanking* in NSW.

### 4.2 SOCIAL MEDIA – MARKETING OF TIMEBANKING

The analysis of *Timebanking* from external data (i.e. data used to increase public awareness of the system through social media) is presented below. Data for this analysis is based on that obtained from the Hunter Volunteer Centre and their records of changes to the social media sites for *Timebanking* that they monitor.

Facebook has been used as a method to interact with potential users of *Timebanking* since October 2012. As at 27 November 2013, there were 711 followers; this is a 101% increase on the number of followers since the interim report. Twitter is a social media application designed for dissemination of short messages to followers. Since the launch of the Timebanking.com.au Twitter account, 232 users have started following the account, an increase of 156% since the interim report. Timebanking.com.au has tweeted 122 messages about *Timebanking*, allowing for followers to keep up-to-date with the initiative.

With this increase in the number of followers on Facebook and Twitter, greater awareness of Timebanking.com.au has occurred. Since the interim report, a number of the social media initiatives that were recommended to increase *Timebanking* adoption have been implemented. These include:

- Consistently tagging all relevant community groups and individuals in posts.
- Cross promotion between Twitter and Facebook to increase awareness of *Timebanking*.
- Cross-promoting other community initiatives and linking these with *Timebanking*.
- Improving community participation through posts that encourage a response (e.g. voting, opinions).
- Use of Mentions, Favorite, Retweet and Reply for engagement with other users.
- 'Sharing' others' success stories of using *Timebanking* or related community activities.
- Links to other news sources (including traditional media) that are publishing articles about *Timebanking*.

The use of Social Media to celebrate Timebanking addresses 'Strategic Direction 5: Valuing volunteers and celebrating their contributions'. Facebook and Twitter have been used as tools to raise awareness and interest in the overall *Timebanking* initiative, which has led to more people discovering and using the system.

We recommend a structure be created where each individual Timebank has its own social media presence. It would be of benefit to have an overarching NSW Timebanking social media presence and strategy for the 2014 expansion.

## 4.3   REGISTRATION FORM ANAYLSIS

On 27 November 2013, the number of registered users of the *Timebanking* system was 3751 (including the administration account), with 3373 of these users being individuals, 345 organisations, eight companies and 24 shared accounts[1]. These numbers have been growing steadily since the launch of the system. With one major event push on 15 July 2013, 2149 new users were signed up for *Timebanking*. This is shown in the large number of registrations in July.

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[1] At 17 December 2013 the *Timebanking* trial database included registrations for 4004 members.

**Accumulated Registrations**
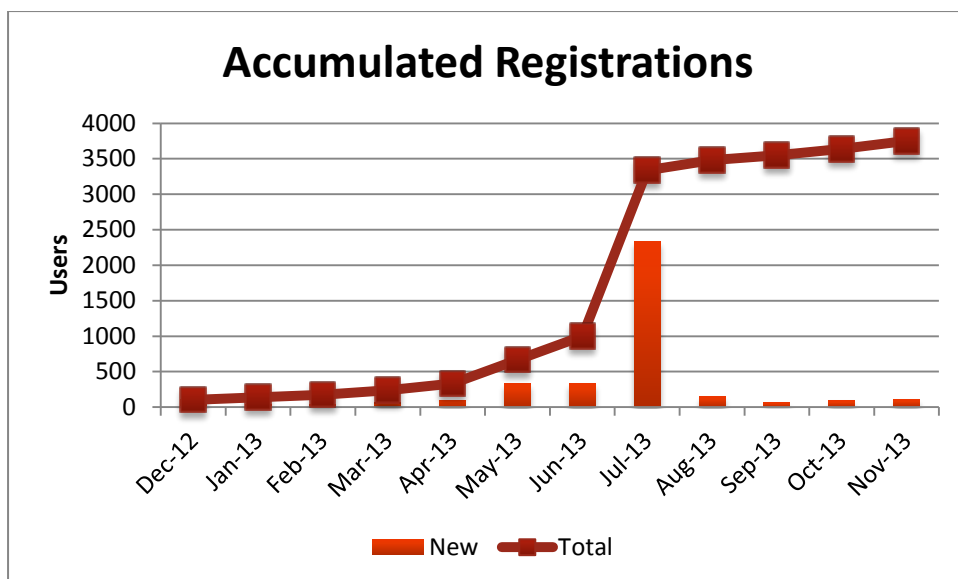
On 18 July 2013, the *Timebanking* summit occurred. At this event, changes in the direction of *Timebanking* were announced: "We are looking at ways to expand the depth and quality of traded activities, and we hope to have about 4,000 members by the end of the year."[2]

Since the interim report was tabled, *Timebanking* has experienced an increase in adoption as more users have learnt about the system through planned events, traditional and social media. Prior innovation literature[3] has identified that the adoption of a product or service can typically be mapped to an S-curve, with the number individual adopters being normally distributed throughout an innovation's life-cycle. For a person to register (adopt) to use the *Timebanking* system they need to intrinsically perceive benefit. This can be achieved through the five perceived attributes of innovation:

1. Relative advantage: the concept that *Timebanking* is better than previous methods.
2. Compatibility: *Timebanking* is consistent with the individual's existing values.
3. Complexity: *Timebanking* is easy to understand and use.
4. Trialability: *Timebanking* can be experienced without overheads.
5. Observability: *Timebanking* can be observed as being used by others.

Based on the data from the first year of *Timebanking's* operation in the Hunter and Central Coast, the system is currently in a phase where 'innovators' are adopting *Timebanking*. These individuals are typically venturesome with their adoption leading from a local circle of peer networks. Initially this process is slow until individuals learn about the system and its benefits. The work that was conducted by the volunteering centers allowed for increased knowledge about the system. Also, current registered users potentially allow for an increasing effect of new system users as they discuss the system with their personal social networks.

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2

http://www.communities.nsw.gov.au/assets/pubs/media/office_of_communities/volunteering/130718_timebanking_mini_summit.pdf

3 Rogers, E.M. (2003) Diffusion of Innovations 5th Edn, Free Press, USA.

## 4.3.1  REGISTERED USER LOCATIONS

Previous reports indicated that the focus for the *Timebanking* trial was the range of postcodes 2250 – 2339. The table below provides a postcode-by-postcode analysis of where registered members of *Timebanking* reside. It should be noted that 175 registered users have postcodes out of this range (some members identifying overseas addresses). The most common postcode was 2287 (238 users) followed by 2250 (216 users), 2290 (190 users), 2300 (150 users) and 2304 (143 users). Understanding the location of the majority of registered system users allows greater focus on areas in which word-of-mouth can increase the number of system users.

| Postcode | Members | Postcode | Members | Postcode | Members | Postcode | Members |
|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| 2250 | 218 | 2281 | 54 | 2299 | 116 | 2319 | 16 |
| 2251 | 51 | 2282 | 89 | 2300 | 161 | 2320 | 59 |
| 2252 | 1 | 2283 | 131 | 2301 | 1 | 2321 | 20 |
| 2253 | 2 | 2284 | 57 | 2302 | 6 | 2322 | 52 |
| 2256 | 55 | 2285 | 150 | 2303 | 119 | 2323 | 54 |
| 2257 | 73 | 2286 | 12 | 2304 | 143 | 2324 | 63 |
| 2258 | 20 | 2287 | 238 | 2305 | 98 | 2325 | 23 |
| 2259 | 133 | 2289 | 134 | 2306 | 11 | 2326 | 11 |
| 2260 | 19 | 2290 | 190 | 2307 | 30 | 2327 | 8 |
| 2261 | 97 | 2291 | 128 | 2308 | 35 | 2330 | 13 |
| 2262 | 38 | 2292 | 23 | 2309 | 2 | 2333 | 21 |
| 2263 | 42 | 2293 | 37 | 2311 | 1 | 2334 | 4 |
| 2264 | 46 | 2294 | 20 | 2314 | 1 | 2335 | 9 |
| 2265 | 21 | 2295 | 32 | 2315 | 26 | 2337 | 9 |
| 2267 | 13 | 2296 | 28 | 2316 | 10 | 2338 | 1 |
| 2278 | 10 | 2297 | 31 | 2317 | 10 | Other | 175 |
| 2280 | 120 | 2298 | 87 | 2318 | 33 | | |

The analysis of the postcode data can be further supported by understanding the region with which the users associate themselves; this is based on data from the field 'sub-area' in the **user report**. The data extracted from the *Timebanking* system has identified that users have been typically associated with the Newcastle City Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Gosford City Council and Wyong City Council.

**Geographic Location of Registrations**
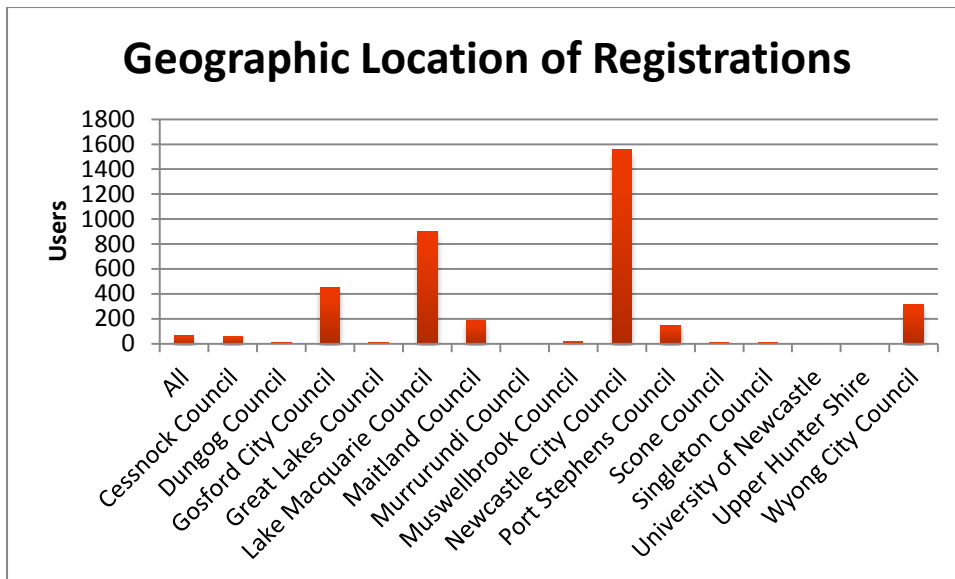
### 4.3.2 REGISTRATION ANALYSIS (OVERVIEW FROM THE INTERIM REPORT)

The interim report presented detailed data based on users' registration information. After the interim report was tabled, this data was no longer collected during the registration process. The following is a summary of the major points:

- During the registration process, questions were asked of users about how they learnt about Timebanking. The figure below identifies the responses to the question "*How did you first hear about Timebanking?*" Analysis identified that the most common response was that users learnt about *Timebanking* "Through an organisation I am currently involved with (e.g. a volunteering organisation)". 115 users identified 'other' as how they learnt about *Timebanking*, with the most common written response being at a "Careers Expo" (53 users).

- 65.6% of users during the registration process identified 'yes' to the question *"In the last twelve months did you spend any time doing voluntary work through an organisation or group?"* This result indicates that 34.4% of the users were new volunteers or had volunteered through *Timebanking* for the first time in 12 months. This result indicated the potential for an increase in fresh volunteering and reengagement in volunteering occurring due to the *Timebanking* system.

  This is aiding in addressing 'Strategic Direction 2: Broadening the volunteering base'.

- During the registration process a question was asked about the individual's employment status. The table below identifies the user responses to the question. The highest group of users of Timebanking were employed part-time or casually (21.3%), followed by fulltime employment (18.3%) and fulltime students (16.5%). 3.7% of the users from the 31 May data stated that they were unemployed and looking for work.

Timebanking has the potential to address 'Strategic Direction 3: Volunteering as a pathway to employment' when Timebanker's are unemployed and looking for work.

The figure below shows the number of times that users had logged on to the *Timebanking* system. There were 3,081 users that had never logged onto the system as at 27 November 2013; this means that 82% of users have never logged into the system after registration. Of the users that have logged onto the system after registration, 232 users have only logged onto the system once, 130 users have logged on twice, 68 users have logged on three times and 52 users have logged on four times. At 27 November 2013, there were 112 users who had logged onto the system five or more times.

**Number of Logins**
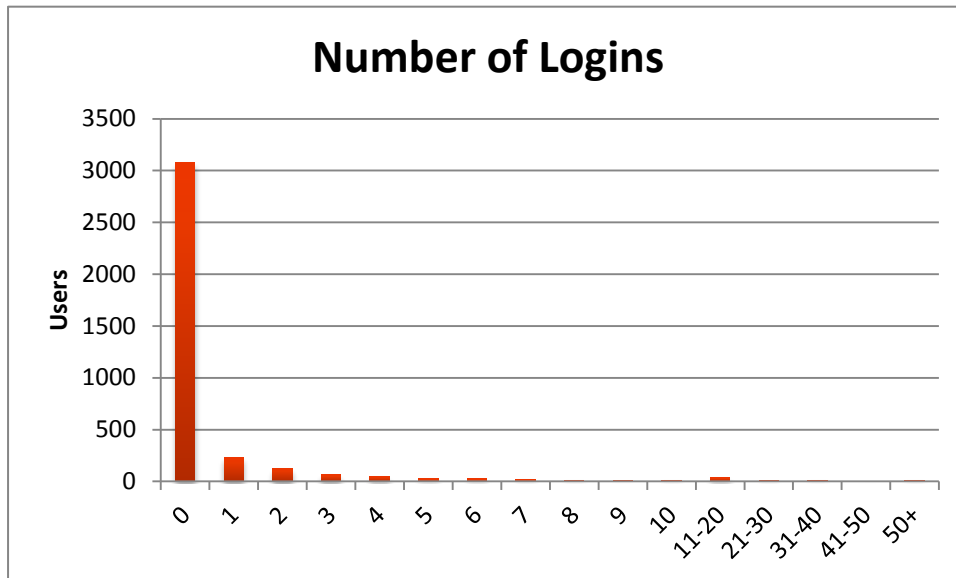
As at 27 November 2013, there were 706 'wants' recorded in the system with 1,159 'offers'. These figures demonstrate the high level of offers compared to wants in the system, meaning that users are wanting to volunteer their skills more than they want reciprocity. This indicates that currently there is a greater level of offers by users, demonstrating the potential level of community volunteering.

There have been 1,156 trades from system launch to 27 November 2013. 6,686.69 hours have been traded in the system since launch, with the figure below identifying a steady increase in the number of hours being traded. The figure below illustrates the trades per month and number of hours traded per month that have been entered into the *Timebanking* system. The average trade was 5.78 hours with a median of three hours. This indicates that smaller trades are more popular in the *Timebanking* system.

The number of trades and the hours traded have increased dramatically since the *Timebanking* summit, showing the shift in focus to "expand in depth and quality of traded activities".

These trades are aiding in addressing 'Strategic Direction 2: Broadening the volunteering base' and 'Strategic Direction 5: Valuing volunteers and celebrating their contributions'.

**Trades and Traded Hours**
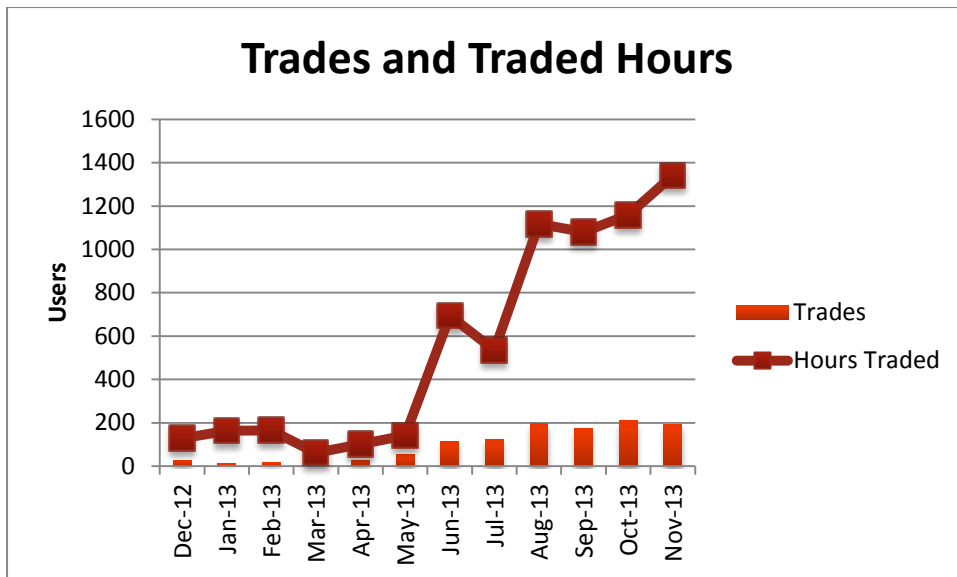
227 sellers and 136 buyers have been involved in the 1,156 trades. 52 users have been involved as both sellers and buyers. Therefore, 311 users have used the system for the purpose of trading. One company and eight organisations have been sellers in the system. A seller has performed an average of five sells in the system and a buyer has performed an average of nine buys in the system.
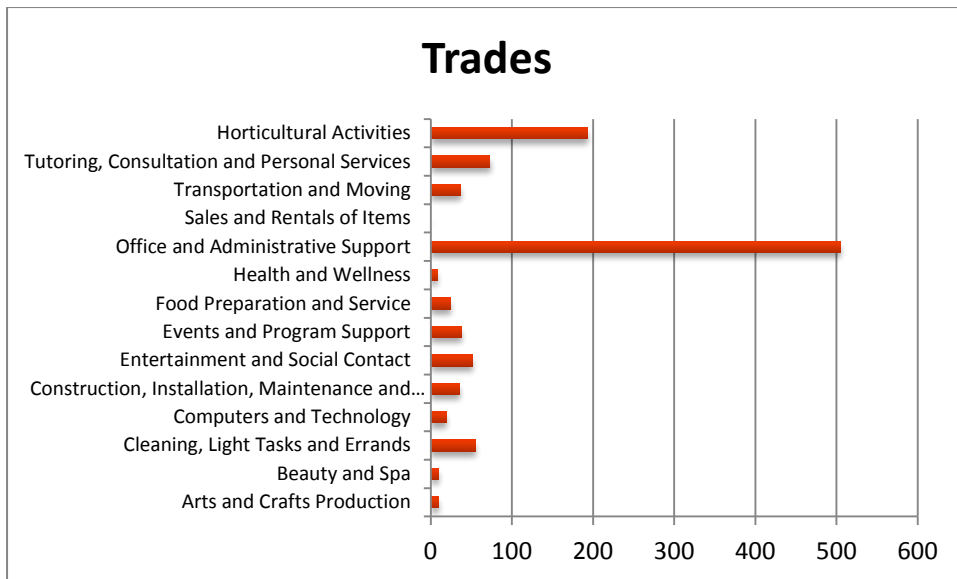
With trades being entered by companies and organisations, this is aiding in addressing 'Strategic Direction 4: Improving recognition and support for workplace volunteering'.

These indications on the nature of service the registered users desired 'wants', or could provide, 'offers' were coded into broad service categories[4] to enable practical comparison. The figure below shows the classifications of the activities performed during the trades recorded on the *Timebanking* system. The most common trade is for 'office and administrative support' (505 trades) followed by 'horticultural activities' (193 trades).

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[4] Collom, E. (2012). Key Indicators of Timebanking Participation, International Journal Of Community Currency Research. 16 (A), pp. 18-29

**Trades**

| Category | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| Horticultural Activities | ~195 |
| Tutoring, Consultation and Personal Services | ~70 |
| Transportation and Moving | ~40 |
| Sales and Rentals of Items | ~0 |
| Office and Administrative Support | ~505 |
| Health and Wellness | ~10 |
| Food Preparation and Service | ~25 |
| Events and Program Support | ~40 |
| Entertainment and Social Contact | ~55 |
| Construction, Installation, Maintenance and… | ~35 |
| Computers and Technology | ~20 |
| Cleaning, Light Tasks and Errands | ~60 |
| Beauty and Spa | ~10 |
| Arts and Crafts Production | ~10 |

*(Horizontal axis: 0, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600)*

## 4.5   SUMMARY

As a greater number of users start trading with *Timebanking* and the system is used for a longer time, benefits related to increased volunteering and addressing the NSW volunteering strategy can be seen. There are currently 3,751 users registered with *Timebanking*; 670 of these users have logged onto the system after their initial registration. Since the launch of *Timebanking*, 1,156 trades have occurred, resulting in the recording of 6,687 hours of volunteering.

Understanding the adoption of the *Timebanking* system at the trial sites in the Hunter and Central Coast will aid in its extended rollout in New South Wales in 2014 to 30 additional sites. Since the interim report and the *Timebanking* summit, the trial sites have made modifications to their approach in response to the feedback they received. These changes have led to an increased level of trades and number of hours traded. Consideration of the trial site experiences can also be useful for informing the broader NSW Volunteering Strategy as a contemporary model for innovative public policy.

## 5    SURVEY DATA EVALUATION

In November and December of 2013, registered *Timebanking* users were invited to take part in an online survey that aimed to:

- gain feedback on the value of *Timebanking.*
- understand how *Timebanking* was used.
- consider how *Timebanking* influenced the life and community of users.
- learn about those who use *Timebanking.*

Online survey respondents were asked if they would participate in a qualitative telephone interview that aimed to examine in more detail their involvement in *Timebanking*.  Results from these interviews - conducted in December 2013 - have been used to provide evidence to support findings from the online survey and have been included as direct quotes.

Findings from the analysis of survey results include five key themes: involvement in volunteering and *Timebanking*, social interaction and personal development, employment, health and quality of life, and social capital.  These findings follow the sample description, which is included below.

### 5.1    SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

A total of 130 *Timebanking* users took part in the online survey conducted during November and December of 2013.  The figure below provides an overview of the ages of the survey respondents.
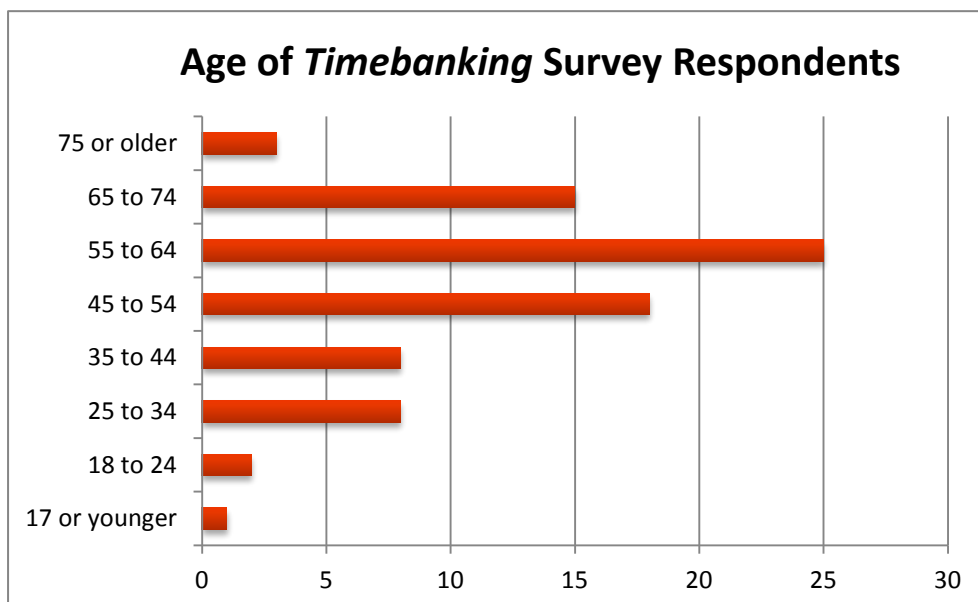


The majority of survey respondents (31%) were aged between 55 and 64 years.  Three respondents (1%) were under the age of 24 and a further three respondents (1%) were 75 years or older.  Overall a majority of survey participants were clustered within the 45-74 year age bracket (72%).

Other survey responses indicated that respondents were likely to speak only English in their homes (87%) while one respondent identified as being Aboriginal. Eighteen survey respondents (22%) were primary care givers and more than half of those who took part in the online survey were either married or in a relationship (58%). Those who were not in a relationship had never married (N=14) or were separated or divorced (N=15). A clear majority of participants indicated that they had a completed an education qualification at a secondary level or above (98%).

## 5.2 INVOLVEMENT IN VOLUNTEERING AND TIMEBANKING

A key component of the online survey was to gain an understanding of how participation in *Timebanking* affected time spent volunteering. The table below identifies responses to the statement "*My involvement in the Timebanking program has increased the amount of time I spend volunteering*".
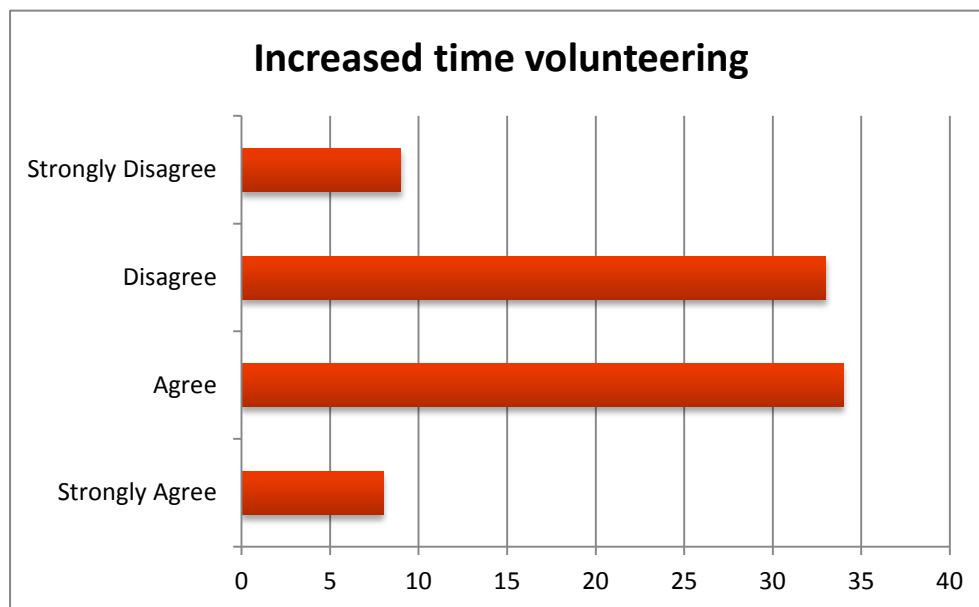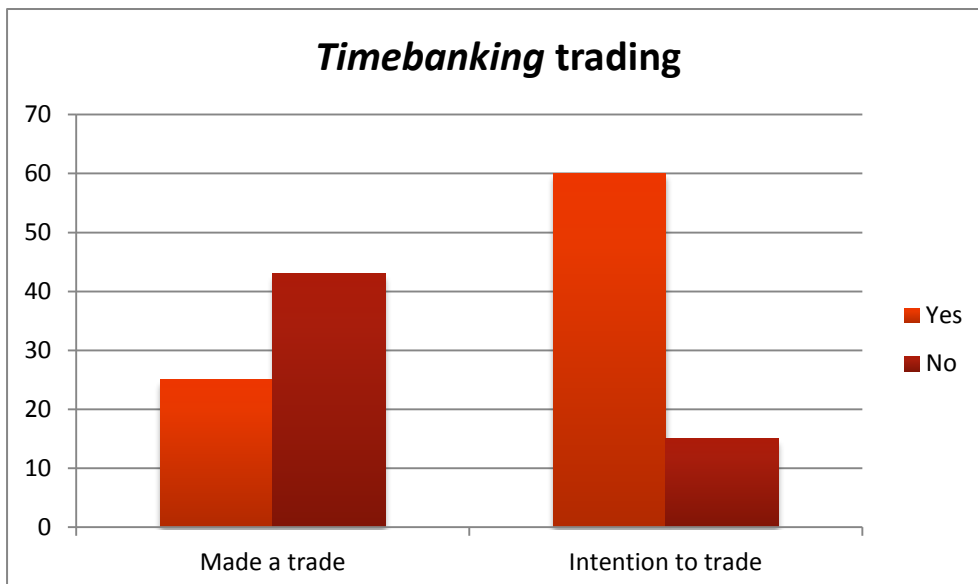


Survey results indicate that 50% of respondents reported an increase in the amount of time that they spent volunteering as a result of their participation in *Timebanking*. It is also important to note that 11% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

So as to gain an understanding of how respondents experienced *Timebanking* and to obtain feedback on the value of *Timebanking*, survey participants were asked to respond to the statements: "*When I have asked for help through the Timebanking program, I have been satisfied with the result*" and "*The Timebanking program treated me with respect.*" The following figure identifies answers to these statements.

## Experience of *Timebanking*
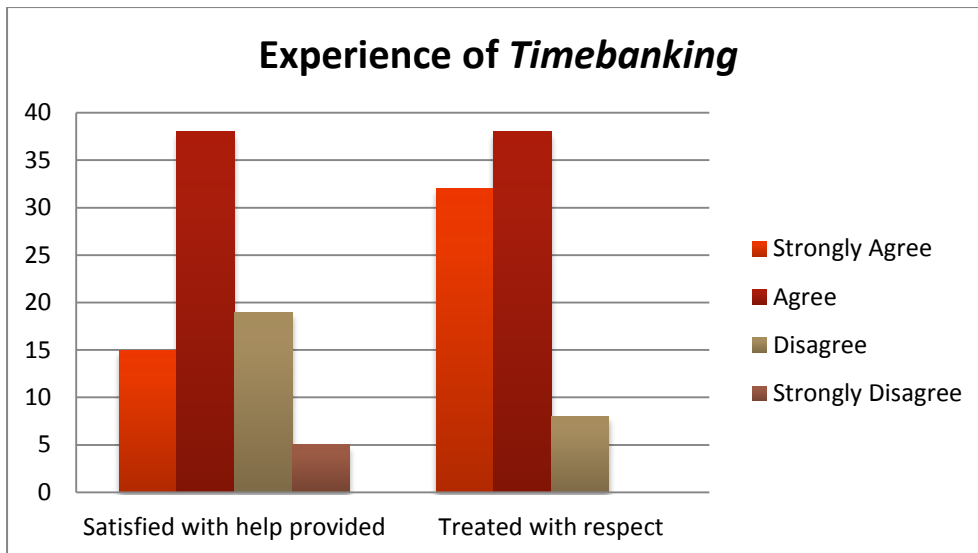


Overall, the results from the online survey indicate that 68% of respondents were satisfied with the result when they had asked for help through *Timebanking*. Survey respondents were also asked to indicate if they were treated with respect by the program. Results indicate that 89% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. These results demonstrate that *Timebanking* participants are generally satisfied with the help provided and that they are treated with respect. These are indicators of a positive reaction to the *Timebanking* program.

Key to the *Timebanking* concept is trading. To better understand how *Timebanking* was utilised by survey respondents, the online survey included two questions regarding *Timebanking* trading. The following table identifies user responses to the questions "*Have you made a trade using Timebanking?*" and "*Do you still intend to make a trade in the future?*"

## *Timebanking* trading



Analysis indicates that 29% of the survey respondents had made a trade using the *Timebanking* program. Furthermore, 75% of respondents indicated their intention to make a trade in the future.

This intent was supported by evidence from the qualitative telephone interviews. For example, one participant firstly cited her frustration with the non-response of some users to the request for trades:

*"After six tries, I'm a little bit frustrated"* (11262013 115PM_3DEC).

However, when asked about future intent to continue with *Timebanking* said the following:

*"If I ever get over this frustration [laughs]…Yes of course I will. Yes. Yes, I'll continue with what I've been doing but I'd like to add to it.  I'd like to get someone to wash my car – because I've never been able to do that…little things like that around the house that are too hard for me to do because of my mobility problems"* (11262013 115PM_3DEC).

One-quarter of survey respondents suggested that they did not intend to make a future *Timebanking* trade.  Participants who provided a negative response to this question were asked to specify the main reason they were not intending to trade.  Key themes are included below and are supported by written answers from survey respondents.

Only wanting to give:

 *"I only wanted to give so I could have stability in the financial benefit I receive from Centrelink, not so I could gain time from a person I do not know"* (11/14/2013 9:51AM).

Not requiring the service that others are providing:

*"Because I don't have the need for any services"* (11/14/2013 8:48AM).

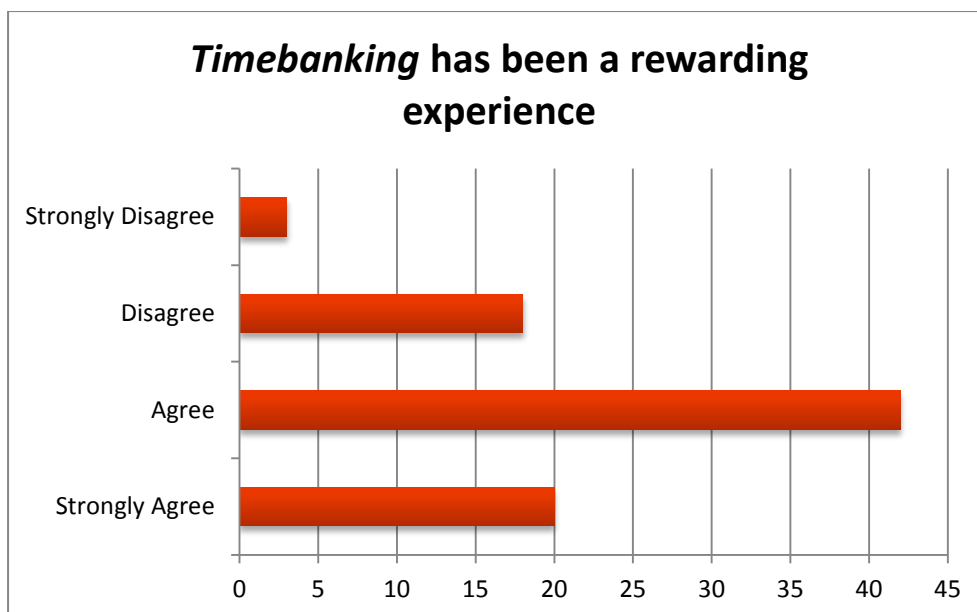Lack of response from others in the scheme:

*"I have had no response from anyone"* (11/27/2013 10:45AM).

Usefulness of the *Timebanking* program:

*"I haven't found it particularly useful as I don't find many offerings are of use to me"* (11/13/2013 5:59 PM).

## 5.3   SOCIAL INTERACTION AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

A key theme identified from an analysis of the online survey and qualitative telephone interviews was social interaction and personal development.  Online survey participants were asked to respond to the statement *"My involvement in the Timebanking program has been a rewarding experience."* The following table identifies responses to this statement.

## Timebanking has been a rewarding experience

| Response | Value |
|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 3 |
| Disagree | 18 |
| Agree | 42 |
| Strongly Agree | 20 |

Three-quarters of all survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that their experiences in *Timebanking* had been rewarding.  Those who took part in the qualitative telephone interviews described the rewards of participating in *Timebanking*.  These rewards included closer connection to their communities and increased social interaction.  For example, one woman who described herself as having a disability, explained how she had become involved in volunteering at the local neighbourhood centre through *Timebanking*:

> *"Because I am doing it [volunteering] in the neighbourhood centre, I am getting to meet more of the community.  So there is more of a community factor involved in that than I probably appreciated when I first put my hand up for it"* (11142013 719AM_4DEC).

Another woman who participated in the qualitative telephone interviews described how she was able to meet new people as a result of her participation in *Timebanking*:

> *"You do meet some nice and interesting people…I mean so far I have met the ladies I did the readings for and the gentleman who did the tiling.  They were all lovely people who I wouldn't have met otherwise"* (11142013 534AM_3DEC).

The online survey asked respondents to answer a question that related directly to social interaction and meeting new people.  Responses to the question "*Participating in the Timebanking program has helped me meet some new people*" are included in the table below.

**Timebanking has helped me meet new people**



No 30%

Yes 70%
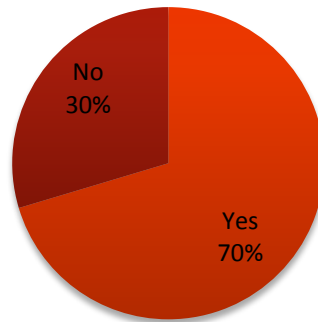
Analysis of the survey results reveal that 70% of those who took part met new people as a result of participating in *Timebanking*, thus increasing their social interaction with others. This is also supported by a written response from the online survey, which made reference to the importance of *Timebanking* for increasing opportunities for social interaction.

> *"Timebanking is a good thing. It gets people out and about who would normally stay at home. It gives back to the community and our fellow man"* (11/15/2013 6:46PM).

Online survey participants were also asked to respond to the statement *"Participating in the Timebanking program has helped me learn something new."* Analysis of responses to this statement is displayed in the following chart and demonstrates personal development.

**Timebanking has helped me learn something new**



No 34%

Yes 66%
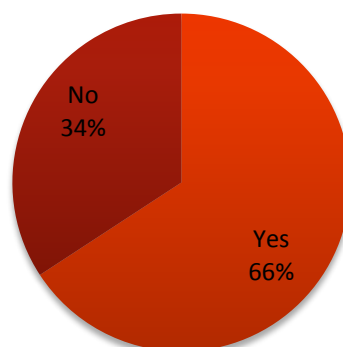
Two-thirds of respondents to the online survey indicated that their participation in the *Timebanking* program had helped them to learn something new.  A written statement from an online survey participant reinforces this:

> *"Timebanking program provides a good opportunity to participate in volunteering activities, through which I can know new people and new things"* (11/26/2013 2:00PM).

## 5.4   EMPLOYMENT

A central theme examined in the online survey included how participation in the *Timebanking* program may influence employment.  Survey respondents were asked to provide answers to two statements indicating this effect.  These statements included "*Participating in the Timebanking program has helped me feel more prepared for paid work*" and *"Participating in the Timebanking program has helped me find paid employment."*  The figure below identifies the responses to these statements.
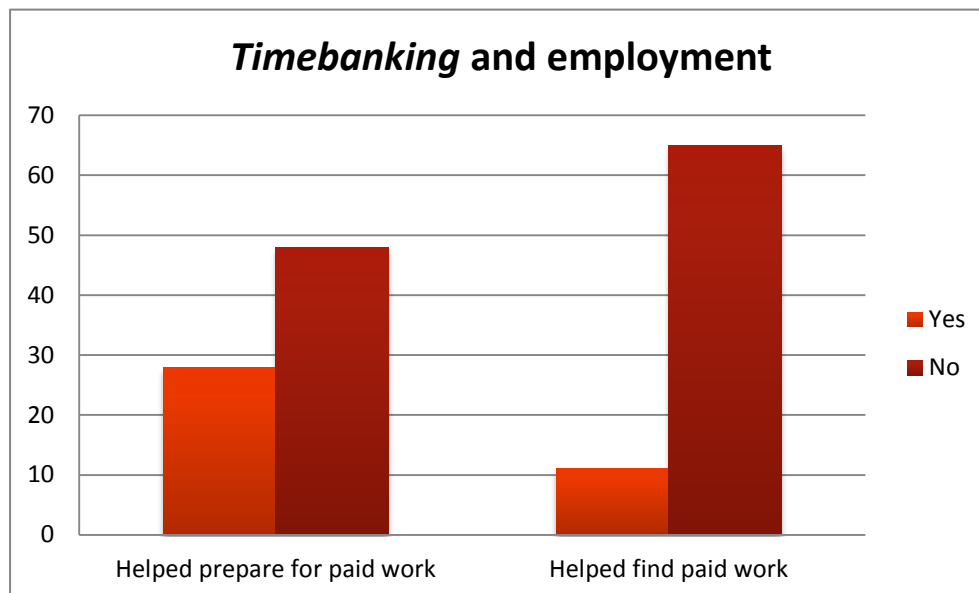


Analysis identified that participation in *Timebanking* was able to help one-third of respondents feel more prepared for paid work.  Furthermore, 15% of respondents indicated that participation in the program and helped them to find paid employment.  Despite these positive results, one online survey respondent had the following to say:

> *"Timebanking program is not an education program or working experience program which can provide systematic training with goal toward a paid work…it still cannot replace a traineeship program for those who want to get paid work"* (11/26/2013 2:00PM).

Key ideas identified from the online survey included health and quality of life.  The figure below identifies responses to the question "*Participating in the Timebanking program has helped me feel better about myself.*"

## Timebanking has helped me feel better about myself
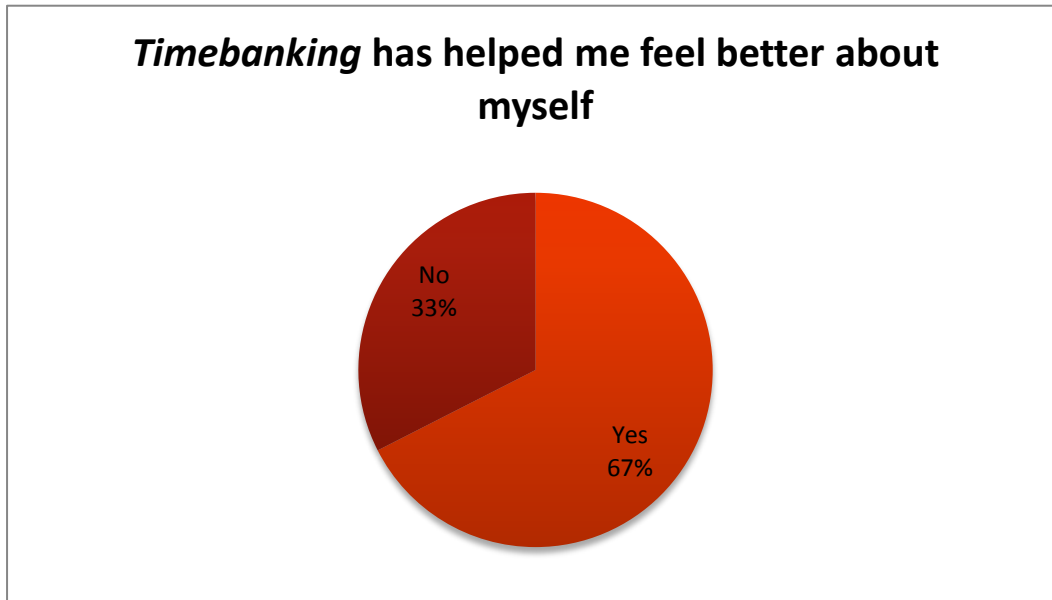


Two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that participation in the *Timebanking* program had helped them to feel better about themselves and their lives.  This is supported by evidence from the qualitiative telephone interviews.  Analysis of these interviews demonstrated how participants had used *Timebanking* to increase their quality of life through the completion of household chores they were no longer able to do due to poor health or age.  For example, a participant who described herself as elderly, had used a *Timebanking* trade to enable her to have the windows in her house cleaned:

> "*I'm not able to do all those things that I use to be able to do.  You know, like the windows.  It was a great, huge, help to me…and its because of my health problems.  It's not because I've become lazy.  It's a help in areas where it will take a lot of load off my body*" (11152013 510PM_4DEC).

Telephone interview participants also indicated that they had used the *Timebanking* program to enhance their quality of life in other ways.  One participant described how she was able to use trades to afford things such as facials and pedicures that she could not have otherwise, while at the same time offering a service to others:

> "*[Timebanking allows] you to get things you might not be able to afford and you can offer things to other people that they might not be necessarily be able to afford…I just like the fairness of it*" (11142013 719AM_4DEC).
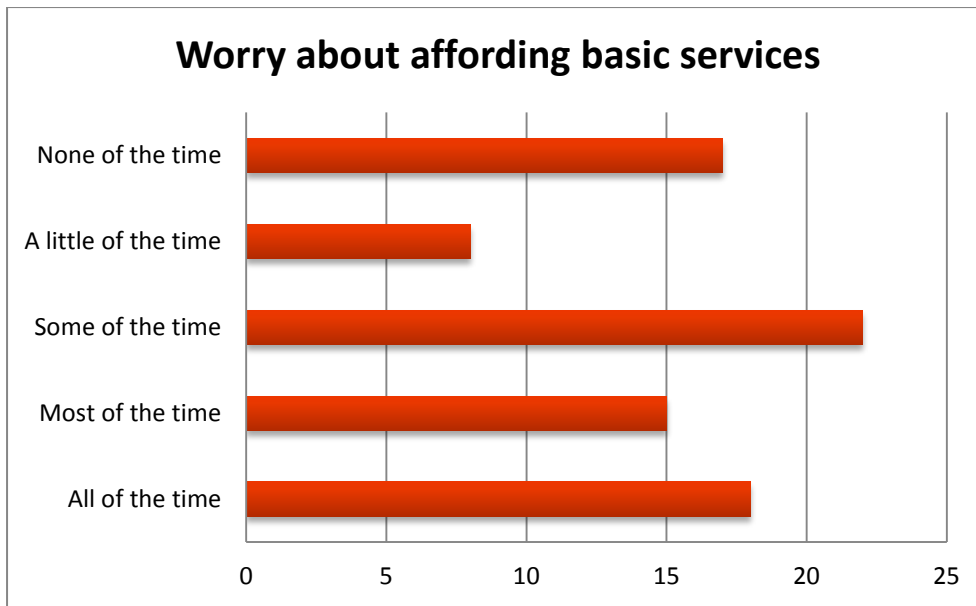
Key to understanding how *Timebanking* may influence the health and quality of life of participants is an understanding of how satisfied individuals are with not only receiving help from others and giving time to others but also with their overall life satisfaction.  The following figure identifies responses provided by online survey participants to three key statements.  These statements included "*How do you feel when you receive help from someone else?*" "*How you feel when you give your time to help someone else?*" and "*How satisfied do you feel overall, in your life?*"



Satisfaction: Overall life, receiving help, giving time
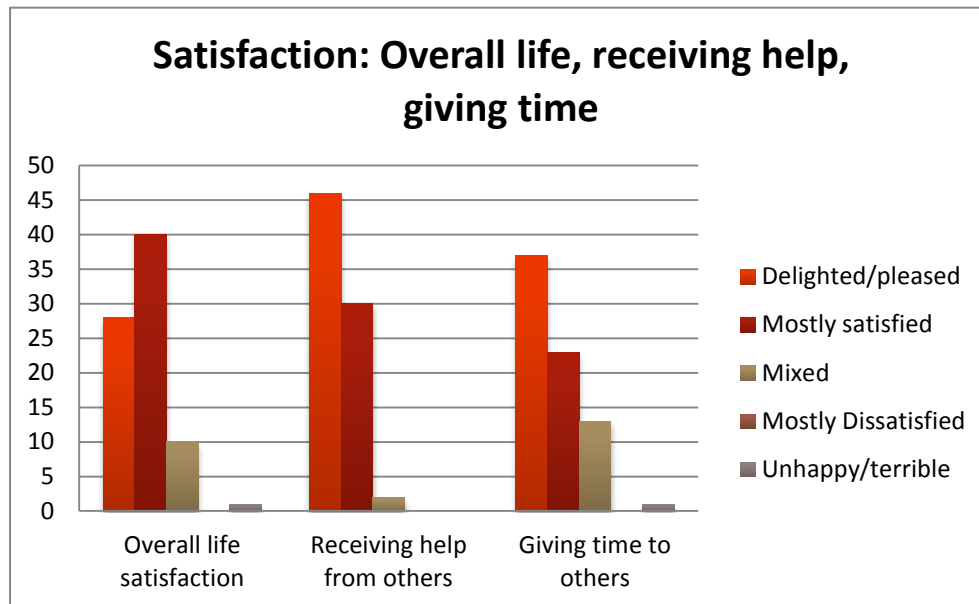
Analysis identified that 85% of respondents were either delighted/pleased or mostly satisfied with their lives overall.  Futhermore, 81% of survey respondents indicated that they were delighted/pleased or mostly satisfied when they received help from others, while 97% of respondents indicated that they were delighted/pleased or mostly satisfied when they gave their time to help someone else.  Evidence from the qualitative telephone interviews provides support for the survey results.  For example, one woman who described herself as having mobility issues, explained how delighted she was to find someone to trade with who was both reliable and willing to help with any household chores she needed:

> "*I struck gold with the first lady I traded with, the one that does the weeding.  She will do anything…she said 'If you ever need me for anything, just ring and I'll come.'  I struck gold with her*" (11262013 115PM_3DEC).

Despite high satsifaction with giving time and receiving help from others, survey respondents also indicated that they worry about affording basic services.  The figure below demonstates user responses to the question "*Do you worry about being able to afford basic services?*"

## Worry about affording basic services

| Response | Value |
|---|---|
| None of the time | 17 |
| A little of the time | 8 |
| Some of the time | 22 |
| Most of the time | 15 |
| All of the time | 18 |

Analysis of survey responses indicates that 69% of respondents worry about affording basic services at least some of the time. Eighteen respondents (22%) indicated that they were concerned about affording basic services all of the time. Money concerns were also cited by one woman who took part in the qualitative telephone interviews and who indicated that participation in *Timebanking* allowed her to get odd jobs done around the home:

> *"I am a pensioner and it's a way of getting extra jobs done around the house without it costing extra money…I just do not have the extra money to fork out to get handymen in for every tiny little thing I need doing here. And the main reason I joined timebanking is to get odd jobs done around the house"* (11142013 534AM_3DEC).

## 5.6   SOCIAL CAPITAL

A central theme identified in the online survey was social capital. An indication of social capital within communities is feeling as though you have a say in communities on important issues. Those who took part in the survey were asked to provide a response to the question "*Do you feel able to have a say within your community on important issues?*" These responses are detailed in the following chart.

**Do you have a say within your community on important issues?**
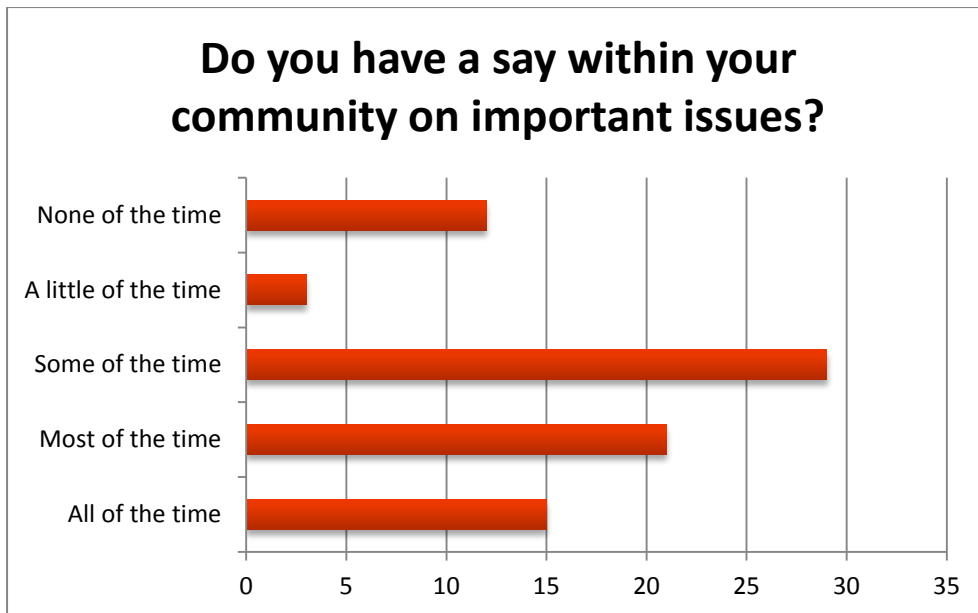
Analysis of results indicated that 81% of respondents suggested that they felt that they had a say in their communities on important issues at least some of the time. This figure includes 19% (N=15) of respondents who suggested that they always had a say in their community on important issues.

The online survey also asked a number of questions in order to ascertain involvement in communities and informal social networks, work provided as a service or activity in the local area, and sense of belonging to a community. These results are included in the following table.



**Community participation and involvement**
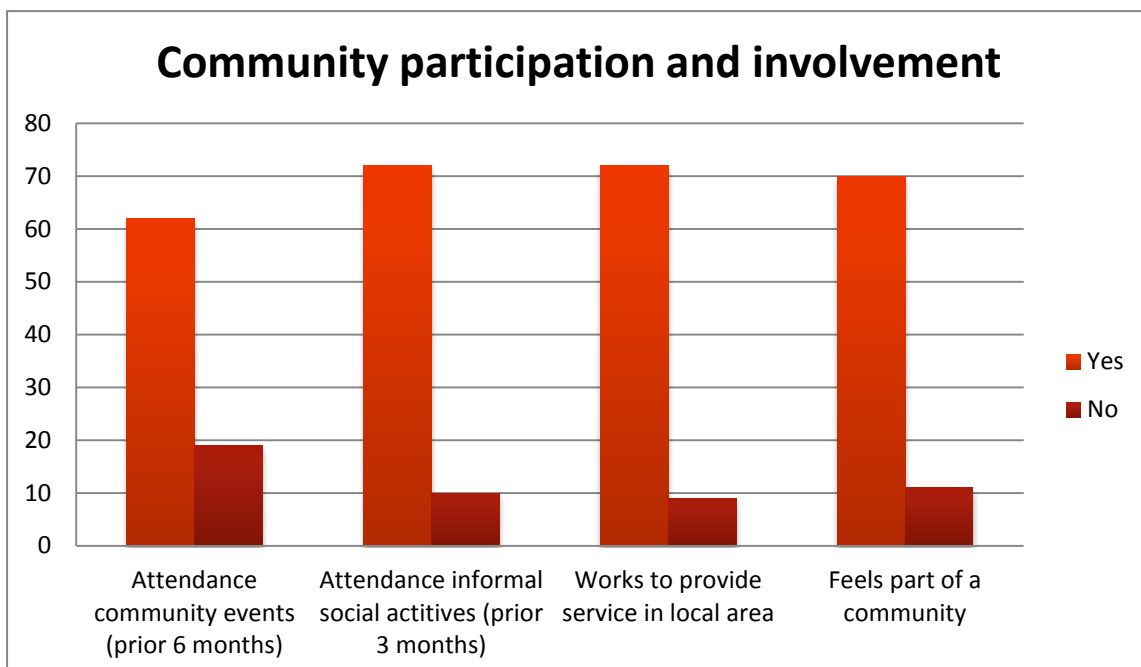
Analysis of the survey results indicate that more than three-quarters of respondents had attended a community event in the six months prior to completing the online survey and 88% had attended informal social activities in the three months leading up to completion of the online survey.

Furthermore, 89% of respondents indicated that they worked in their local areas to provide an activity or service.

These results are supported by evidence from the qualitative telephone interviews. For example, one woman explained how she worked voluntarily in her local garden club that provides both a service and an activity for community group members:

> *"I coordinate everything our group does. I run the seedling market stalls. We're a community garden group but we haven't got a garden as such, yet. It's not far away but to keep our group interested for the five years that we've been waiting, we started doing market stalls and sell the seedlings"* (11262013 115PM_3DEC).

A participant who completed the online survey had the following to say with regard to increasing involvement in social activities as a result of participation in the *Timebanking* program:

> *"Timebanking for the XYZ Community Garden has encouraged members to interact more outside the normal activities of our garden group. Friendships have blossomed. We trade within our group as well as trading with other Timebanking members"* (11/14/2013 9:36 AM).

A large proportion (86%) of those who took part in the survey felt part of a community. Respondents who answered yes to this question were then asked to name that community. Analysis of the answers indicated different types of responses. These included reference to their geographic location:

> *"Lake Macquarie/Newcastle/Gosford/Cessnock/Singleton"* (11/14/2013 9:17AM).

Reference to community groups or organisations:

> *"Red Cross Blood Service, RFS"* (11/14/2013 1:36PM).

Or a combination of both:

> *"Charlestown, the mentoring and Men's Shed communities"* (11/15/2013 6:49PM).

A number of conclusions have been drawn from the findings of the online survey and telephone interviews and are presented below.  These conclusions confirm and expand upon the results from the literature review (see Section 3) and the *Timebanking* System Data Analysis (see Section 4 of this report).

### 5.7.1    PATHWAY TO INCREASED TIMEBANKING INVOLVEMENT

Many of the respondents in this survey were very keen to help others and, at times, some were frustrated by the lack of opportunity to do so. In part, what this reflects is an embryonic process of valuing and embracing co-production that needs to be encouraged as it enables *Timebanking* participants to be more comfortable with the notion of seeking and receiving help from others.  This is consistent with previous research findings that reciprocity takes time to develop and is a product friendships and trust afforded through *Timebanking* over an extended period (Seyfang, 2001). The opportunity for this to happen is encouraging as 75% of respondents were intending to make trades in the future.  The more engaged with the reciprocity embedded in *Timebanking* the more likelihood participants are able to experience the benefits of co-production it facilitates (Drakeford & Gregory, 2010; Gregory, 2009; Ozanne, 2010).

### 5.7.2    WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

While personal growth and direct health benefits were not directly ascertained through this survey, previous research by Gregory (2012a) has established a positive correlation between strong community ties and individual wellbeing. The results of this survey suggests respondents not only felt part of the community but also demonstrated this by their attendance at community events and their volunteer work through the provision of activities and services in their local communities.

### 5.7.3    CO-PRODUCTION AND DIVERSITY

Like previous studies (Collom 2012; Seyfang, 2001), the social capital developed among participants was clearly evident in the strong social and community networks they had established. It is noteworthy that the type and nature of the communities in which these respondents felt a sense of belonging were quite diverse.  This is another important indicator, consistent with the system data analysis discussed (in Section 4 of this report) of the heterogeneous nature the trades that were undertaken and the related diverse characteristics of co-production it is likely to facilitate.

### 5.7.4 INCREASED SOCIAL CAPITAL

One of the most powerful stories to emerge from this data is that respondents recognised and valued the role *Timebanking* played in promoting and facilitating equity and opportunity for *Timebanking* users. As the System Data Analysis demonstrates in terms of socio-demographic distribution of participants, and this survey confirms, a large number of *Timebanking* participants faced significant challenges with their capacity to afford basic services. These respondents used *Timebanking* to address this by seeking help with those jobs that were beyond their capacity either monetarily or physically, contributing positively to quality of life and health outcomes.

In addition, respondents were able to directly attribute positive employment and employment skills development outcomes to their participation in *Timebanking*. Previous similar studies (Collom 2012; Seyfang, 2001) confirm these findings by recognising the power of *Timebanking* as a valuable driver of employability.

### 5.8 SUMMARY

The results of the online survey and the telephone interviews suggest that, for the respondents, *Timebanking* was an overwhelmingly positive experience that facilitated increased current and likely future involvement in volunteering and in their communities. While current participation in trading was relatively low, it is not surprising as *Timebanking* is a new experience for most if not all respondents.

As the literature review suggests, and the findings from this survey support, the co-production that emerges from the reciprocity that is central in *Timebanking* plays a vital role in shifting the volunteering paradigm and accessing the benefits that flow from this innovative approach of connecting volunteerism with co-production.

## 6  EVALUATING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TIMEBANKING TRIAL

The purpose of this section of the report is to evaluate of the management of the *Timebanking* trial; and to identify lessons for the 2014 expansion of *Timebanking* in NSW.

This section of the report draws on some of the themes identified in literature review (in Section 3) and seeks confirmation and insight into those themes based on the views and experiences of professional staff involved in the *Timebanking* trial.  The paid/professional staff members interviewed have held positions in volunteer co-ordinating organisations facilitating the trial; as   co-ordinators at community organisations establishing a timebank; and as project officers and managers working for the Office of Communities in both hands-on and management roles.

The focus in this section on the management of the *Timebanking* trial means that two particular issues from the interim report are picked up – the knowledge, skills and competencies required for effective facilitation of *Timebanking*; and overall issues affecting the sustainability of *Timebanking*.

 A third, more generic issue is also considered – that of the characteristics and outcomes of co-production.  Co-production is discussed in the literature review, and an earlier section of this report considers co-production from the point of view of individual *Timebanking* members.  In this section, co-production is considered from the point of view of the facilitators of *Timebanking*; that is, the local communities, and the enabling agency.

### 6.1   KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

> *"It is clear the Timebank trial represents a significant challenge and learning opportunity for the people and organisations involved." (Interim Evaluation Report, May 2013)*

This section focuses on the knowledge, skills and competencies required for *Timebanking* processes to work.

Interviewees were asked:
- Has participation in *Timebanking* improved your skills/abilities? How?
- Are there other skills/experience you would find helpful?

Responses about what was important fell into three main categories, discussed below:
- Knowledge of the community, the sector, and of volunteering.
- Specific skills and competencies to support *Timebanking.*
- Time required to understand *Timebanking.*

#### 6.1.1   KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMMUNITY, THE SECTOR, AND OF VOLUNTEERING

Local knowledge about the community in which *Timebanking* was introduced was regarded by staff from community organisations and the Office of Communities as extremely important.

*My knowledge of the community sector stood me in good stead – I knew the lay of the land, it made engaging people really easy.*

Professional staff also said that an understanding of volunteering, and of how *Timebanking* is different to volunteering was also very important, not least to be able to explain the difference in communities more accustomed to a traditional model:

*You also need knowledge of volunteering – you need to understand why people volunteer, and all the reasons in and around that.*

*We had our vision – if we were going to see changes in community building, it had to go back to the community, as opposed to the community sector.*

*It has taken some time to educate community-based organisations about how much informal volunteering goes on [that is, volunteering that doesn't happen through them]. It has meant we have had to change people's perceptions.*

However, even if professional staff began with only limited knowledge of the local community, participation in the *Timebanking* trial helped them to build this knowledge:

*It would have been helpful to have better local knowledge of central coast, particularly at the start where the operation there was floundering more, I might have been able to help more. That said, I did improve my knowledge of the communities at the central coast, and who was who.*

*Participation improved my abilities, in my role as co-ordinator, where part of my role is to make connections between government, not-for-profit, community organisations, the university; gave me a better understanding of who's who in the community, so if something came up outside of timebanking, it gave me those extra people with whom I could network.*

This speaks to the benefits that participation in *Timebanking* can bring, in learning about and engaging with local communities, to those new to community and government organisations.

### 6.1.2    SPECIFIC SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES TO SUPPORT TIMEBANKING

Along with this knowledge, professional staff also identified specific skills and competencies that they either had before the trial and found useful or found themselves developing in response to the demands of the project.  These skills/competencies were in the following four areas:

**A. Project management skills**

- Organisational skills, including scheduling, record-keeping, monitoring and reporting.
- Training skills, especially for training volunteers promoting the *Timebanking* and using the technology.
- Technology skills – using the *Timebanking* software, but also communication and information technology in general, including social media.

**B. Working in a public sector environment**

- Working in a complex public sector environment, with different stakeholders to those in the community sector.
- Working in a more formal/more structured environment – "It made me more professional. The mentoring by project manager was really important [in helping me develop]."

**C. Communication and marketing skills**

- Understanding, and being able to communicate, the key messages of *Timebanking* for different audiences.
- Formal communication planning - "Learning about this [from the consultants] enabled me to do what I wanted to do, and improved my skill set in project management".
- Advocacy/Presentation skills – "We had to be effective in a short period, and able to adapt to the specific needs of an audience."
- Marketing skills – "Having stronger skills in marketing and PR from the beginning would have enabled us to get the message out faster and broader".

A fourth area of skill/competency, not specifically named by the interviewees but apparent in their behaviour and mentioned in the literature, is skill in facilitating connections/relationships.

> *"At its most radical, the claims for co-production are that it means reorganising the way professionals work – as connectors, facilitators and agents of change. There was some evidence that this process had begun in small ways, but little that it was being adopted wholesale." (Boyle, Clark and Burns 2006:39)*

### 6.1.3   TIME TO UNDERSTAND TIMEBANKING

The interim evaluation report identified that, because *Timebanking* is a new and largely unfamiliar model of 'volunteering', that it takes some time for those involved in management to understand what is required to successfully support it.

One interviewee was quite eloquent on this issue:"

> *"Because the Timebank is new for us [the community organisation] and also the government, we have had to learn to navigate this different activity; we have had to learn to do something new. For example, we did really foresee how important the brokerage aspect of timebanking would be.*

> *From a management point of view, it takes some time - promoting the program, doing the brokerage, and then encouraging participation.   This requires people who have the time to do it, and can guarantee continuity, to keep it going.*

> *Also, you need to have all the building blocks in place - the technology, the skills, the measurement and monitoring processes.*

A recurrent issue was the importance of building co-operation with other community/volunteer organisations in order to build membership and also activity.  In May, and again for this final evaluation, interviewees agreed building these relationships was a slow process.

Another interviewee said, with a hint of frustration:

*Organisations wanted to 'go slow' on Timebanking – but why?*

The literature confirms that this trial is not alone in facing this issue.

> *"Equally, [data collected implies] that these basic problems – distrust between voluntary projects that see themselves in competition with each other for resources and distrust between rival departments inside agencies – are a major block to the development of co-production." (Boyle, Clark and Burns 2006: 36-37)*

However, as discussed later in this section, trust can be built, with the right people, size and structure, and with demonstrated good outcomes.

## 6.2    ISSUES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

On the issue of sustainability, interviewees were asked:

- Since the interim evaluation in May, what major *barriers* have you faced in running and building timebank/s?
- What do you think is required for *Timebanking* to be sustainable?

Responses about what was important fell into two main categories:

- Educating people and changing their opinions about participating
- Finding the right people, determining the right size and structure.

### 6.2.1    EDUCATING PEOPLE AND CHANGING OPINIONS

> *For each of the first-generation models one can observe a rapid period of expansion, then a period of stagnation, of disillusionment and sometimes of failure marked by its media-relayed demise. Even so, some have enjoyed a second lease-of-life, either by bringing in innovations or because of situations of economic and social crisis (Blanc and Fare 2013: 63-81)*

Interviewees pointed to a demanding but critical education process.  *Timebanking* is a different model of volunteering than that with which many people were familiar and comfortable:

*The biggest barrier was changing people's views. For many years, we've been telling people that volunteering is about helping someone. To embed the change of mindset in the community [that is, to a model of exchange/co-production] took a lot of time and effort, and was the biggest barrier.*

This need for information/education was true for individuals who were potential *Timebanking* members:

> *[One challenge that still exist is] educating people about timebanking. Lots of people, when they first hear about it, think it's a good idea, but don't really know how to make use of the reciprocal service. Once that is overcome, people get more involved in it, make more use of it.*

Community/volunteering organisations also share this need:

> *By later in the year (2013), organisations were more accepting, they'd heard about it. Originally, organisations were very suspicious about rewarding people for volunteering – how dare we? But those barriers have really dropped away as it's become more accepted.*

And, of course, acceptance from stakeholder groups was mutually reinforcing, since individuals were more likely to sign up if the community organisation of which they were a member was supportive, and this was better facilitated when the enabling agencies under the *Timebanking* philosophy and were able to communicate it well.

An important insight about *Timebanking* from one of the professional staff was that it has great potential to radical alter the paradigm of volunteering:

> *For so long, volunteering organisations made all the rules – people had to fit those rules or not volunteer. Timebanking is not like that, it's very flexible. In the end, that will be a key driver in making organisations change their practices. Eg. in [one area], for years we've had organisations say 'No, we don't want that type of person, and you will have to pass this test, and you can only do it on that day'. Timebanking will make them have to compete more for the volunteer hour, because the volunteer makes the running, and might say, 'Well, I want to do this, but I want to do it today, and I'll only do it today'.*

### 6.2.2 FINDING THE RIGHT PEOPLE, DETERMINING THE RIGHT STRUCTURE AND SIZE

On 'the right people', all the interviewees agreed that the attitude and persistence of the *Timebanking* facilitator/s is critical to its success:

> *A Timebank needs an overseer/administrator, to keep track of what's going on. Also people want to know that someone is there, someone to talk to.*

> *The organiser needs the right personality. You need people who are motivated by challenge, not necessarily [only] by doing good works. You need to be able to hand-pick those people for their capacity to <u>drive</u>, their networks, their customer engagement skills, their customer service skills. They need to be flexible - ready to try something different when what they're doing isn't working ... And competitive as well. They're the key requirements.*

*A TB needs a leader, an organiser, an administrator of some sort, to keep it moving.*

And those people need enough time to help people become and stay active:

*There has to be an active facilitator/driver of the exchanges. We have many more offers than wants; then when we have wants, we don't have offers for eg. finding enough people to give massages – all of this takes time.*

*In talking to five organisations in the US, it seems timebanking is run by volunteers. They might put an hour a week or an hour a fortnight, so it ebbs and flows. It doesn't have the marketing and branding visibility that we've had here, with government support. One of lessons you can draw from that is you've got to have paid staff for management and marketing of it.*

On the issue of the right structure and size, there was agreement that smaller timebanking structures with a particular focus, although operating under the overall *Timebanking* 'umbrella', were an excellent arrangement.  This gives the benefits of 'manageable' *Timebanking*, but with the support of the larger system:

*Community Centres are a trusted local neighbourhood hub, and people trust them. If they're looking to volunteer it's one of the first place they would go. So that is a good place for Timebanking.*

*Timebanks can be unique – have their own model, culture, their own demographic, types of offers – that can be a real strength. For example, you could have a Timebanks in a very artistic area of the region; another focused more on trades.  But Timebanks need a 'safe place to fall' – they need a community and/or strong community organisation behind them.*

*We have to get more niche market Timebanks, and put control back out in the community. Organisations or agencies can manage their own. The government can outsource it, or put shop fronts up. Libraries, interest groups, social clubs should take it and run with it.*

> *Especially for first generation schemes, some schemes enjoy local backing in the form of technical or financial support. The most supported of these schemes have been time banks. As seen, many Italian banche del tempo are emanations of the city councils. They then benefit from technical and financial support via, for example, the provision of city premises, a financial contribution for purchasing a computer and for paying overheads, or even for employing a person in charge of the bank (Amorevole et al. 1998 in Blanc and Fare 2013: 63-81).*

One challenge, then, is in determining what tasks are best done centrally, what are best done by a paid facilitator, and what can and should be done by volunteers in individual timebanks.

*Needs regular promotion, regular good news stories; because lots of areas may have transient populations, you need to keep it at the forefront of people's minds; and also with volunteer organisations, so they can promote it to their volunteers.*

*Government likes to get some economies of scale, but being too large may be a barrier to success.*

This goes to the important question of what opportunities exist for co-production, and how best to capture them, which is addressed in the next section.

## 6.3 OPPORTUNITIES FROM CO-PRODUCTION MODEL

> *It was possible to recognise it and to see repeated patterns where co-production enjoys some measure of success …*
> - *Provide opportunities for personal growth and development to people who have previously been treated as collective burdens on an overstretched system, rather than as potential assets.*
> - *Invest in strategies that develop the emotional intelligence of people and capacity of local communities.*
> - *Use peer support networks instead of professionals as the best means of transferring knowledge and capabilities.*
> - *Reduce or blur the distinction between clients and recipients, and between producers and consumers of services, by reconfiguring the way services are developed and delivered. Services seem to be most effective here when people get to act in both roles – as providers as well as recipients.*
> - *Allow public service agencies to become catalysts and facilitators rather than central providers themselves.*
> - *Devolve real responsibility, leadership and authority to 'users', and encourage self-organisation rather than direction from above.*
> - *Offer participants a range of incentives – mostly sourced from spare capacity elsewhere in the system – which help to embed the key elements of reciprocity and mutuality.*
>
> *These should also serve, not so much as a definition of co-production, but as a picture of what organisations will look like when they use co-production successfully. (Boyle, Clark and Burns 2006: 47-48)*

Co-production, discussed in some detail in the literature review (Section 3) refers to a model of volunteering whereby the interaction within and across volunteers (in this case, *Timebanking* members), community organisations, and enabling agencies does more than just transfer value from one to another, but actually creates value and co-produces outcomes through reciprocal exchange.

On opportunities for co-production of outcomes, interviewees were asked:

What benefits and/or opportunities do you identify in *Timebanking*?

- For yourselves, as professional/paid staff?
- For *Timebanking* participants?
- For communities in which timebanks operate?

Responses have been analysed according to these three different types of beneficiaries.

### 6.3.1    CO-PRODUCTION FOR PROFESSIONAL/PAID STAFF

Apart from the development of their own skills and competencies to support *Timebanking* (discussed above), the paid/professional staff involved in the *Timebanking* trial said of their own co-production opportunities that they benefited from improved community knowledge, and the chance to be involved in a very different volunteering model.

On improved community knowledge:

*You can't put a price on it, for me to know what I now know about my local community! I've lived there since 1995, but what I've learned in six months is phenomenal.*

*[My involvement has given me] more people to reach out to; I've become aware of more organisations and what they do; and the possible connections between them.  Timebanking is also a way into a community; if we wanted to do a community strengthening exercise, that is separate to Timebanking but in that community, then my Timebanking connections are a way in.*

On their involvement in the *Timebanking* trial:

*[It's an opportunity for] up-skilling – to be part of a groundbreaking difference in volunteering in Australia*

*For staff here, it's been a different style of community support.  There have been many times when people call and want specific help – traditionally, we have had to say 'no', because we're funded to provide referrals to a not-for-profit.  But, through Timebanking, this type of community capacity-building and support is now available …. It's nice for us to say, 'we can help you'.*

### 6.3.2    CO-PRODUCTION FOR TIMEBANK MEMBERS

Paid/professional staff members were also asked for their views on the benefits of *Timebanking* for members.

Two obvious benefits of *Timebanking* are that people can get help when they need it, help which may be otherwise unavailable (because there is no other existing or appropriate organisation to provide support); and also, for people on low and/or fixed incomes, it does not cost any money.

However, the co-production aspect of *Timebanking* means that individual participants are also encouraged to articulate and claim other opportunities.  This data is consistent with the outcomes for individuals identified in the literature review (Section 3), which specifies a range of physical, psychological, social, and economic benefits for individuals. This data also complements/reinforces the views of *Timebanking* members themselves, reported in Section 5.

*Timebanking* is responsive to the needs of individuals:

*Depending on whether you gave or received services, it can improve individual's independence and confidence; assistance for what you need, tailored to you.*

*Independence that comes from being able to stay at home, because help is available there.*

*People can make up their own mind; they get to choose what's good for them; if they are not comfortable with one option, they can try something else.*

*For people with a disability, and/or home bound, they can volunteer virtually.*

*Timebanking* can support an improvement in self-efficacy and self-confidence:

*I can see that happening person by person or hour by hour. It's amazing how one or two hours can change the lives of our timebankers. Talking to people about 'what are you good at?, rather than 'what do you need?' creates a very different experience.*

*[People really appreciate]the chance to be useful.  People turn around and say "I feel useful for the first time in years" – a gentleman who has a disability, and hasn't been asked to help someone for many years, his sense of pride when he could do something for someone else.*

*Timebanking* supports improvements in social networks:

*There are more opportunities as networks grow. I met my neighbor through timebanking –we'd lived around the corner from each other for years, but I met through my offer on Timebank.*

*I've seen friendships begun between people through timebanking.*

*Timebanking* can be a pathway to employment

*I attended a Jobfinders Expo at the Central Coast, attended by 3500 people. A handful of those people really stood out, I spoke to them about being brokers at the community centre, one came and volunteered, and as it turned out, she's the lady I handed over to, to complete the Trial.*

The *Timebanking* model can be scaled up or down to suit the community:

*It has huge capacity – I could organise a whole raft of things to do for my mother in another town that I couldn't do myself. I would use it for any project I ran. I'm about to set up a foodbank here [in place], because people get something in return, so you're decreasing that disadvantage.*

### 6.3.3   CO-PRODUCTION FOR COMMUNITIES

Finally, paid/professional staff members were asked for their views on the benefits of *Timebanking* for the communities in which they operate.

These participants in and observers of *Timebanking* in local communities were eloquent on the subject of the opportunities available for communities.  However, while the literature review identified community co-production outcomes across a range of areas, including human, social, and cultural capital, and social mobility (Section 3), this group focused primarily on benefits arising from the building of social capital, that is, benefits created when members of a group or community co-operate with one another.

For example, interviewees said of *Timebanking*:

*The social capital – what creates safe children and strong women and happy men – that can be built through timebanking is amazing.*

*Community projects conducted through timebanking, particularly where people are like-minded, eg working on a community garden; but also in exchanges of particular kinds of services, can make people more open, encourage people to look out for each other, improve safety, create greater 'connectivity'.*

One interviewee specifically identified how *Timebanking* may help make communities sustainable::

*[Other systems] are based on exchange of money; whereas timebanking is based on helping people and building communities. It is consistent with the principles of sustainable communities – it provides access, it provides equity, it builds inclusion, it builds capacity … It can really mobilise people, from a small project, to something really big; and at any time, not just when a disaster happens.*

Importantly, interviewees didn't see *Timebanking* as conflicting with traditional models of volunteering, but rather complementing and extending them, to the great benefit of the communities in which they operate:

*The community has been looking for something like this for some time. What I've found is that the community sector can be very discriminatory – if you're young, if you're old, if you're disabled – but Timebank has a way of getting around that. There is nothing that is unwanted. If you volunteer in a not-for-profit, the not-for-profit can tell you when, where, why, how often and who.  But, under Timebank, the offerer can make that decision. Same for the skills that are being offered – playing cards, showing someone how to knit, showing someone how to cook, walking the dog – you don't find those in the more formal not-for-profit sector, and yet they're the services that are being taken up the most. So it doesn't conflict with NGO [non-government organisation] volunteering, it enhances it, because NGOs are funded to do a set job in the community eg. Homelessness, aged care, but Timebank doesn't differentiate, a person puts an offer out there, and someone says, 'I could use that'.  It extends volunteering, but also eliminates some of the more bureaucratic filters that as a sector we put on that giving of time and skills.*

## 6.4   FUTURE POTENTIAL OF TIMEBANKING

Finally, it is worth noting that the paid/professional participants in the *Timebanking* trial see great future potential in it, particularly in *Timebanking* that are adapted for the needs of particular communities:

*I think it already works. They're going to expand it, and in discussions I had when I was working with one of the councils, that has about 8,000 people, they have found that farms have been bought up by corporations and that's encouraging low-income earners into the villages, so you get a greater concentration of disadvantage, many with no transport, in a small town. I think*

*timebanking has a role to play in terms of activating people to help themselves; working with councils, for example, to maintain parks, create micro-enterprise – there can be different models in different towns. They'd take timebanking tomorrow. They'd get a community group like Rotary to run the admin side, and then they'd roll it out across the community. That has huge potential, doesn't it?*

.. or groups within communities:

*Even if it's just done simply – one target group that comes to the community centre, like migrant women who have husbands who are away all day because they commute to Sydney for work – then good things can be achieved. Another example – schools, soccer clubs, all have the same issues – not enough volunteers, the same people always volunteering every time.  If it's linked to Timebanking, they can share the value of a working bee across schools, or school communities. This is still an area of great potential.*

It is evident that participants from all the stakeholders in this trial are feeling optimistic about the future of *Timebanking*.

1. The understanding gained through the analysis as the *Timebanking* database grows and evaluative information is gathered will better inform decisions on the *Timebanking* system and its possible extended roll-out in NSW. It is recommended monitoring and reporting of data on the *Timebanking* continues to facilitate success of the trial.

2. It is evident that with an improved understanding of the nature of timebanks have come better targeted recruitment efforts. It is recommended that these efforts continue and be evaluated in terms of their likely success as the *Timebanking* trial progresses.

3. There is additional scope to engage with current registered members – both for promoting the Timebank directly to these users, and encouraging existing users to promote *Timebanking* to their family, friends and colleagues. It is recommended that the project gathers information from current inactive registered members about why they have registered but have not performed a trade in the system.

4. It is recommended that efforts to create relationships with organisations who might themselves recruit members to join *Timebanking* should continue, but in the context and recognition that this commitment may be slower to come and harder to secure than originally anticipated.

5. Given that in an international context, the *Timebanking* trial is already one of the biggest timebanks in the world, it is appropriate to recommend a review and a re-scoping of the ambitious participation targets for the trial.

6. Further mentoring and formative evaluation is recommended to develop competencies within the auspice agencies in areas of marketing, communication and promotion, to refine and test the concept and strategies to support the implementation of *Timebanking*.

7. It is recommended that the capacity and range of understandings, skills and competencies required by the auspice agencies to manage and govern the *Timebanking* trial be systematically mapped, as well as the capacity to bring together multiple roles as both a service provider and program manager strategically and operationally with these agencies.

8. Targeted market research be conducted in four to six large organisations previously approached to join the *Timebanking* trial, to investigate important interests to be addressed, and any barriers to participation.

9. A new initiative being trialled by Hunter Volunteer Centre, linking *Timebanking* to a specific community (Stockton in Newcastle) is one which evidence from the literature suggests has a good chance of success. It is recommended that the Stockton initiative continue and that further micro-trials be considered in areas of more concentrated membership, to evaluate the merits of adopting a multi-nodal model of *Timebanking* across the region.

## APPENDIX B: TIMEBANKING OUTCOMES

| First author | Personal Outcomes | | | | | | Societal Outcomes | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Self-esteem, well-being | Health, physical and mental | Skills and work | Social reach (Networks) | Reciprocity and rewards | Education and personal development | Social capital | Social mobility | Cultural capital* | Organisational culture* | Economic benefits* |
| Boyle | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | |
| Collom | 7 | 7 | 3, 7 | 3,4, 5, 6, 7 | 2, 3, 4, 7 | | 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 | | 7 | | 7 |
| Dakin | 8 | 8 | | 8 | | 8 | | | | | |
| Drakeford | | | | | | 9 | 9 | | | | |
| Gregory | 11 | 11 | 10, 11 | 11 | 11 | 11, 12, 13 | 10, 11,12, 13 | | | 11 | |
| Hayashi | | 14 | | | 14 | | | | | | 14 |
| Knapp | | | | | | | | | | | 15 |
| Lasker | | 16 | | 16 | | | | | | | |
| Lee | | | | | 17 | 17 | | | | | |
| Letcher | 18 | 18 | | 18 | | | 18 | | | | |
| Marks | 19 | | 19 | | | 19 | 19, 20 | | | | |
| Miller | 21 | 21 | | | 21 | | 21 | 21, 22 | | | |
| Molnar | 23 | | | | | 23 | 23 | | | | |
| Ozanne | | | | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | | 24 | | |
| Panther | | | 25 | 25 | | 25 | 25 | | | 25 | |
| Seyfang | 26, 30, 33 | 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 | 27, 28, 31 | 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 | 26, 29, 31, 32,33 | 28,31 | 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 | | 32,33 | | |
| Williams | | | 34 | | | 34 | | | | 34 | |
| No. of publications | 11 | 15 | 11 | 19 | 15 | 14 | 23 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| No. of authors (17) | 9 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 |

For publication numbers in cells, see Appendix C

## APPENDIX C: PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED FOR TIMEBANKING OUTCOMES

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