

CLAIMANTS GET GO AHEAD FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS TO CONNECT WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES BY USING A NEW KIND OF SOCIAL MONEY

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It's true – there is a new currency in town and it's called 'time'.

Timebanking UK is the Charity that supports the development of time banks across the country where people exchange time instead of money. One hour of helping out a neighbour earns you one time credit, which you can use to buy in something you need from another member of the community. There are over 30,000 people who are part of time banks in the UK already and who have exchanged almost 2.5 million hours. Everyone's time is equal no matter what is exchanged.

"It's all about focussing on what people can do – their strengths, their talents, their knowledge and interests – rather than focussing on what they can't do and on their needs or problems."

says Sarah Bird, CEO of Timebanking UK.

"Everyone has something they can do to help another person, whether it is showing someone how to bake a cake, or write a CV, offer a helping hand to tidy a loft or give some advice on what to wear for a job interview. We know that time banks connect people, increase self confidence and self esteem and help people along the road to gaining paid employment."

Timebanking UK is a part of a growing global movement and there are time banks in 33 countries.

The Department of Work and Pensions have informed all job centres across the UK about the benefits of timebanking. Job centre staff are being given information about how timebanking works and how to locate their nearest time bank by searching on Timebanking UK (TBUK) website www.timebanking.org. People on benefits are already exploring the ways of getting involved in their local time bank. They report that it is really important to feel useful and to be a positive influence and be able offer practical help to people who live nearby. They also value the chance to widen their social networks, skills and knowledge. Research shows that the wider any person's social network the more opportunities, like finding a job, come their way.

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Official statement as approved by DWP about timebanking

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