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**CHANGE TAKES TIME: EXPLORING STRUCTURAL AND  
DEVELOPMENT ISSUES OF TIME BANKING**

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper draws out key conclusions from a recent research project into a voluntary sector time bank in the Welsh Valleys. The aim of the research was to explore the structure and organisational issues of time banks in relation to the development of co-production. Such an analysis attempts to make clear how time bank development fosters the values of co-production as is claimed by research and literature on time banks. The argument in this paper is that whilst time banks can be set-up for a range of purposes, not always tied to co-production, the practices and ideas embedded in the time bank mechanisms do gradually develop the values of co-production. However this is a slow process and requires a successful, initial time bank pilot project to encourage further support for expanding the practice. For those who advocate the development of co-production this paper provides information of time bank development which can support their efforts to promote the idea within the public sector.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Time banks were established in the UK as social interventions designed to rebuild and support social networks within communities. To achieve this time banks reward each hour of volunteering individuals give to their community with one time credit. These credits can then be used to access goods and services provided by others in the community, thus facilitating the development of social capital and social networks. Underpinning time bank practice is the idea of co-production: where service providers, service users and their communities jointly plan, design and deliver services. Time banks are perceived as the embodiment of co-production and research into this initiative is dominated by examinations of the outcomes for members caused by participation (Boyle, N.D and Seyfang and Smith, 2002). As such, this focus on the outcomes of time banking doesn't give a full consideration as why time banks generate co-production.

This paper seeks to consider this issue by drawing on recent research into the organisational structure and development of one time bank in the Welsh Valleys (Gregory, 2008). Here non-participant observation at the time bank and semi-structured interviews with staff have been used within an ethnographic approach to uncover the interactions involved in organising and developing time banks. Following a review of time bank and co-production research, this paper explores the origin, values and context in which the time bank has developed; the relationship of the organisational structure with members and the role of time bank staff in maintaining and developing the time bank. This facilitates an examination of how the structure and development of the time bank has fostered the values of co-production. As a result of this analysis the paper offers an exploration into time bank structure providing insight into the relationship between organisational structure of time banks and co-production.

## **TIME BANK AND CO-PRODUCTION THEORY**

Time banks were designed, in the 1980s, by the US civil rights lawyer Edgar Cahn (2000) as a resource for rebuilding deteriorating social networks and informal neighbourhood support which forms the "core economy". Time banks operate so that individuals volunteer to help their neighbours earning one time credit for each hour. For example Claire takes place in a youth group litter pick for two hours each weekend, earning two time credits. She uses these to access a two hour guitar lesson from Gordon who earns two time credits, and he uses one time credit each week to have Sam tidy up his garden. These transactions are monitored by the time broker who keeps a record of the number of credits each member earns and spends. Time banking was established in the UK ten years ago with Fair Shares in Gloucester, starting a gradual growth in the movement. As of 2008, around 109 active time banks exist in the UK and have been involved in health promotion, work in prisons, community redevelopment and youth services (nef, 2008a). Initially following the neighbour-to-neighbour approach outlined by Cahn, time bank models now a "time centre" model where interactions are between individuals/community groups and the time bank promoting collective activity towards a specific outcome, e.g. improved local education opportunities.

Underpinning time banks Cahn developed co-production, which he considered to be an important aspect of social programme delivery. Cahn saw that success or failure of social programmes depends heavily on "consumer labour": the effort a service user puts into achieving the service outcome by helping themselves. For example a drugs rehabilitation programme needs users to participate and make an effort to end their dependency to be a success. Time credits are therefore seen by Cahn as a way of ensuring that this labour is forthcoming. Furthermore this mechanism allows service users and providers to *co-produce* the service. Cahn outlined this idea of co-production to have four core values: people as assets; a redefinition of work; reciprocity; and social capital.

By treating people as *assets* it is no longer acceptable to define people by what they need, but by what they can contribute, and what they are capable of doing. Where *work is redefined* it includes the contributions by women, families and the community thus ending the exploitation of these contributions by the market economy with time credit reward recognition. Furthermore the *reciprocal* nature of the time bank system ensures that along with rewards participants can have control over shaping and delivering their services. Finally *social capital* is generated by the interaction between members, thus reinvesting trust, reciprocity and involvement in communities allowing the community to build, restore and sustain their localities. Consequently there has been an interest in the role that co-production can have in delivering public services in the UK, and some of the interest is to be examined in the next section.

The New Economics Foundation (nef), have expanded research into this idea to explain co-production as a practice ‘to engage and involve the beneficiaries of a service in the delivery of the service itself’ (nef 2004a: 5) and have considered the potential of time banks within public services (see below). Yet recent research by Bovaird (2007) develops a useful typology for analysing forms of co-production. Using case studies Bovaird’s typology shows a variety of forms of co-production depending on the roles adopted by professional service providers, service users and their communities relating to service planning, design and delivery. Bovaird (2007: p.6) identifies seven co-production relationships and explains that each form of co-production develops from different backgrounds and motivations on behalf of both professional service providers, service users and their communities. Subsequently his typology shows a range of co-production relationships formed by professionals, service users and communities.

### **TIME BANK RESEARCH**

The ideas of co-production have been examined by nef and others such as Needham (2007); whilst the impacts and uses of time banks has been explored by Seyfang and Smith (2002) and Seyfang (2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2006). Where co-production is concerned nef have argued that ‘welfare and public services work most effectively when they are jointly produced by both the professionals and service deliverers and service recipients’ (nef, 2004b: 3). Furthermore they claim that as a model of service delivery based on a *public benefit model* (nef, 2007), co-production not only replaces the failed efficiency model of public service delivery, but also encourages a paradigm shift. This shift will alter welfare systems to allow participation within services, supporting the growth of self-reliance and collective efficiency. Subsequently this ends the practice of defining people by their needs and altering service delivery systems to: operate within mutual support and problem identification; establish social networks and develop supportive relationships. As such the central aspect of co-production is that it seeks to encourage public services to move beyond defining people by their needs and then “fixing” them, but to define people by their abilities and enable them to put those abilities to work. Thus it is possible to build up social networks which tackle the root of the problems rather than just treating the symptoms (nef, 2008b).

Yet resistance to change exists. These challenges have been outlined by Boyle (ND) highlight: the difficulty service providers may have in understanding co-production; potential reservations in handing over responsibility to users as well as staff objections to the peculiar working hours involved (the end of standardised office hours to opening times which suit “user” needs) and a rigid hierarchical nature of organisations which prevents the potential gains and changes caused by adopting co-production. This work has been associated with time banks and the benefits of membership.

Seyfang and Smith (2002) first evaluated UK time banking, finding that social, economic and political citizenship can be generated through membership, each of which provides different benefits. For example social citizenship benefits include: social interaction which benefits health; bridging generational gaps in communities; and where used by organisations can forge stronger links between the community and the organisation. Whereas economic benefits include the provision of services and helping community members to re-enter employment. Subsequently time credits as a community currency can be seen to be ‘a radical challenge to existing structures and values by creating an economic space for social inclusion outside the mainstream where social, environmental and ethical rationales drive exchange behaviour, in addition to economic rationality’ (Seyfang, 2004a: 64). Consequently time banks work towards building social capital by reinforcing “weak ties”: those connections between dissimilar groups and social networks within a community. This is an idea expanded upon by James (2005) who explains that the “bridging social capital” developed by time bank member interactions can encourage positive interactions between different generations and groups within the community.

Additional research into time banks has explored issues beyond social capital. Seyfang (2006: 441) explains that the work undertaken by the social economy, where a different set of values and principles to those of the market economy exist ‘constitute[s] alternative regimes of work, exchange, value and wealth creation’. Consequently time credits, as a form of community currency, provide a space for the expression of values which don’t fit mainstream social and economic systems. However where issues of structure and development are concerned research remains sparse. Seyfang (2004b) does highlight some development issues, claiming that stable growth is possible where time banks are operated through existing organisations; they engage local organisations; and have intensive co-ordinator support. Yet what remains unexplored is the relationship between organisational structure and implementation with outcomes. Such research can highlight a range of issues important not only in spreading time bank practice but also developing co-production in service delivery.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Policy delivery rests upon associated structures, operations and practices and so ‘[a]ny analysis must therefore assess the performance of the organisations and staff whose job it is to realise policy’ (Drake, 2001: 137). Evaluations of time banking have focused predominately on outcomes with little reference to organisation or practice. Considering the importance of such issues in developing services based on co-production, this is an issue which merits close examination. Starting from the idea that time banks tend to be set up by pre-existing organisations the researcher sought to explore the impact of structure and organisation. To fully explore this potential impact on the operation of time banks and their outcomes, qualitative methods were utilised to gain detailed and in-depth data. The research design drew upon ethnographic ideas (Hammersly and Atkinson, 2007) to carryout non-participant observation at the research site. This involved the researcher spending a week in the valley alongside the time broker and other time centre staff, gathering data on interactions and activities related to operating the time bank. This was analysed and discussed with nine research participants through semi-structured interviews (Spradley, 1979; Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Key categories developed from the analysis of observation data were explored with participants whilst maintaining the flexibility to follow up on other issues raised by informants. Interview participants consisted of key members of the time bank staff and development trust (including the time broker, chief executive), and some time bank members (Street Ambassadors – see below).

All data was analysed using constructive grounded theory (Charmaz, 2005) to develop ideas and themes which formed an analysis tied to the data. This approach allows a researcher to

critically investigate and code data into analytical concepts which are then built up into theoretical codes to explore the relationships which may exist between the data. This ensures a rigorous and plausible analysis, producing results closely tied to the data and qualitative view of informants. The research site was located in the Welsh valleys within a development trust (a community-based organisation engaged in creating economic, environmental and social regeneration changes within a specific geographical location) which established the time bank to encourage active citizenship. It was chosen through theoretical sampling based on its perception as a successful time bank and its status as a model of good practice within Wales.

## **EXAMINING THE STRUCTURAL OUTCOMES OF TIME BANKS**

In this section the intention is to explore the key findings of the research in relation to the time banks origins, member participation in relation to co-production, the role of the time broker and the overall impact on structure. Subsequently it will be possible to consider how time banks foster co-production.

### **Origins and Context**

Exploring the origins of a time bank verify an understanding as to why and how time banking is used. It can also show how the development of the time banks structure and how membership has grown. In order to understand this there is a need to explore the context, in which the time bank is developed, the values which underpin this development and how the initiative is organised and developed.

The time bank is located within an isolated community in the South Wales Valleys. Previously a mining community, the closure of six mines in 1984 led to a decline in the number of residents as well as an increase in levels of unemployment. The Welsh Index of Multiple-Deprivation 2005, which ranks 1,896 Welsh communities in terms of their levels of deprivation (based on an assessment of employment, education, health, barriers to services and housing and living environment), ranked this community 871 in Wales; where 1 is the most deprived and 1896 the least (BCBC, 2006). Consequently the community is within the 20% most deprived range, but does not come under Communities First support (which focuses on the top 10% most deprived communities). Communities First is a Welsh Assembly Government initiative which seeks to improve the living conditions and prospects of people living in the most deprived communities (WAG, 2007). Within the village a need to tackle the geographical isolation and erosion of community activity and deprivation since the 1980s led to the establishment of the development trust and subsequently, the time bank.

Exploring the origins of the time bank focuses on the values of the founding organisation and how these inform the decision to develop time bank practice. This is an important consideration because values will shape how a time bank is used. The development trust, which set up the time centre, believed that the currency was a way of increasing active citizenship, a means by which people can be rewarded for volunteering in their communities and re-build social capital. These aims are not therefore those of co-production as outlined by Cahn, rather they follow a pattern highlighted by other studies: Seyfang and Smith (2002) evaluation includes GP based time banks which sought to improve health outcomes through social interaction and the Gorbals Initiative time bank wanted to build capacity in the community and promote social inclusion (Seyfang, 2004b). Whilst there are links between these ideas and co-production, it becomes clear that the mechanism of time banking can be applied to a wide range of ideas and concerns without prioritizing co-production.

*'So we came up with the idea then that we would set up a time centre which is a person-to-business exchange, which suited us great because it meant we could get more people in the*

*hall, get more people externally volunteering, we could reward volunteers who were already out there doing good things...'*

Whilst the development trust believed time banking would help develop active citizenship in the community, they also aligned the practice to their values. During interviews, participants reflected upon a perceived history of the community where everyone "came together". This was related with the miner's welfare societies where community members came together socially but also in a "practical" sense to help each other. Time banks were therefore seen as a means of re-building this sense of community, which had been lost with the closure of the pits.

Building on this sense of community the development trust implemented a pilot project offering educational courses in exchange for time credits. The success of the pilot led the development trust to seeking further funding to employ a time broker and events co-ordinator to expand and develop the time centre beyond this educational facility. Subsequently the time broker focused on expanding membership and means of earning credits – firstly by engaging existing, local community groups and encouraging their membership. Simultaneously the events co-ordinator secured funding to expand the potential uses of credits. Here the time centre benefited from their location within the old Workman's Hall, built when the village was a mining community: subsequently providing the centre with a stage and hall and various rooms (now a computer room, dance studio and digital lab). Through these facilities it was possible to expand the use of credits to move beyond educational services and include events: such as comedy nights, community-based and external group pantomimes and cabaret nights.

This development has been possible due to the initial partnership between the development trust and the Welsh Institute of Community Currencies (a Wales based organisation supporting time bank development), which then expanded to include the time broker and time centre staff to develop new ways of spending and earning credits whilst increasing membership. The time bank has also worked with other development trust staff to develop the role of time credits in other projects within the community. This brief history of the time bank has shown why the time bank was established and by who, yet it can also indicate how the time bank has grown and expanded throughout the community.

Building a time bank faces two key problems. Firstly the spread of time banks across the UK remains limited. Compared to other community based initiatives, such as credit unions, it is unlikely that neighbouring communities or community members will have had experience with the time bank ideas and practice which can inform the work of those setting up the organisation. Secondly time banks operate on an idea which is based upon a new way of thinking and acting. To continue the comparison with the credit union we see that credit unions use a practice of saving and borrowing which is an established idea and practice within society; whereas time banks offer something new and different. Community currencies such as time banks operate with different value systems and practices which can be difficult for people to grasp at first. This latter problem can prove to be a barrier to membership expansion as people may be reluctant to get involved not only with something they don't fully understand, but with an organisation that they don't know and trust. To overcome these issues the time bank originally built its membership up through groups that already existed in the community. It was possible not present the idea and practice to large groups of people at meetings and potential members were able to get involved through known and trusted organisations, thus earning credits for the activities in which participated. Consequently this new currency was introduced in a way which didn't radically change people's existing volunteering and group affiliations. Although this approach expands membership it doesn't automatically result in co-production.

Yet local people are involved with the time bank and founding organisation are important considerations when exploring time bank structure in relation to co-production. Time bank members earn time credits through some form of voluntary activity which benefits the community, and then spend those credits accessing various events and services. Through this activity social networks are created as neighbours interact with each other. What remains unclear is the impact members have on service planning, design and delivery of the development trusts projects: fundamental activities of co-production.

### **Member Participation**

Seyfang and Smith (2002) show that time banks are a means by which organisations can reinforce ties with their community, and one way this is achieved by the time centre is through Street Ambassadors. Street Ambassadors are community members who have volunteered to act as a liaison between the development trust and local residents. This role allows them to take ideas from the community (on re-development issues or new events) to the time centre and to take up local problems which the time centre can help resolve. They are also responsible for getting the latest information to the community about the time centre and development trust's activities. Each Street Ambassador earns time credits for their activities.

This role highlights two important considerations: how the time centre develops local leadership and how the structure of time banking develops to facilitate the position of local people in decision-making procedures. This latter is the focus here for it shows how different types or levels of membership are created within the structure. Co-production aims to involve service users and providers in the design and delivery of services and time banks are seen as a means of achieving this. But as yet research into time banks has not uncovered how this link becomes a practice reality. Here it is possible to see the early signs of co-production developing. Whilst not fully involved in design and delivery decisions, these Street Ambassadors have been brought into decision making processes which generate ideas for and the direction of increasing the activities of the development trust, for the benefit of the community. Thus a structure is formed where members' concerns and issues can be incorporated into the redevelopment activities of the trust. This system indicates a potential means through which co-production ideas can be gradually introduced by building good, effective partnerships rather than challenging service providers and users to outright adopt radically new ideas.

Yet co-production can also involve service delivery and signs of this activity can be seen in the research. Whilst the Street Ambassadors show the potential of service users impact on the overall direction of the development trust, by looking at some examples of services/activities it is possible to explore how service users are involved with delivery. For example a clay sculpting class initially set up by an external tutor through the time bank has now been taken over by members who are running and organising the class. Consequently one member has now taken it upon herself to organise the facility, distribute and collect time credits as necessary as well as ensure new users sign up to the time bank. This practice has also expanded in other areas, such as the cooking class which started in May 2008, established by two local community members have to teach people how to cook homemade meals.

These developments seem to occur for two reasons. As can be seen with the cooking class, the foundation of the service is firstly an interest of members to participate in such a class, as indicated by their membership forms. Additionally it relies on local people willing to lead the class and a facility where the class can be held. This process is similar with the sculpting class, although the initial use of an external tutor alters the context slightly. This process emphasizes the potential of the time bank approach, which treats people as assets, to allow members to take over these services. Shortly before the fieldwork commenced, the funding

for the pilot project, the education courses came to an end. Without this funding it would not be possible for the time centre to put on the wide range of classes, the success of which created the time bank. Within a service provider not operating a community currency, like time credits, this would be the end of the service, unless further funds could be secured: but this is not the case for the time centre. As the time broker explained:

*'What we are going to, I hope to set up now, is that these people who have learnt these basic skills, like computers, to pass these skills on to other people in the village, for time credits... That's how you can take that forward in the time banking system, as it is beneficiaries actually teaching beneficiaries... it shows that time banking really does work as people who have learnt skills through the time banking centre pass them on to other members...'*

Community currencies provide an additional resource for services when money is unavailable. By rewarding volunteers who use their new skills to teach others the development trust can continue to provide education classes, a change of practice which allows the trust to deliver education services locally to build up community capacity and increase the employability of its membership; treat members as assets; and give members control over how services are delivered.

### **The Time Broker**

Whilst this discussion has highlighted the origins and growth of the time bank and the gradual increase in members with regards co-production practices, this analysis needs to go further and consider the catalyst behind these changes: the time broker. The role of the time broker is to manage the time bank. This involves expanding the membership, the range of activities that earn time credits and the range of uses of time credits. This individual is also responsible for the stability of the time bank. It is this idea of stability which allows the time broker to achieve the three expansion activities, but also ensures that the flows of time credits are monitored.

The time brokers' role can be separated into two distinct aspects: membership and time credits. Where membership is involved the time broker must seek out new groups and individuals and encourage them to become members. By engaging existing community groups to reward them for their current activity and then use these members to reach out to individuals in the community through word of mouth. The time broker also has a key role in establishing a network throughout the community and with other communities and organisations. This not only increases membership, as occurred when a mental health service joined the time bank (see below), but also provide a means of spreading time bank ideas. This latter is an important issue because it tackles the barrier of limited knowledge and use of time banks to establishing the initiative. With the time broker actively promoting the time bank system it is possible to share knowledge and experience with those seeking to set up time banks of their own.

As membership grows and the use of time credits becomes heavily involved in the daily operation of development trust projects, the trust depends on a stable system to achieve its project and overarching aims. This stability is achieved by ensuring that community members both earn and spend time credits, by relying on membership forms records of members interests, the involvement of the Street Ambassadors and the time brokers own ability to come up with ideas:

*'...and I just thought that "wouldn't it be nice if we just had our own caravan"... you know, these things just come off the top of your head sometimes. I was sure that, that would be a good idea so, now of course, I'm looking for funding to get this caravan so we can buy it.'*

The underlying thinking for this practice can best be described by the time broker, and leads into a discussion of the vital activity which makes stability possible:

*'You have to know how many people are earning time credits and how many are actually using them. Because you are issuing time credits and receiving time credits and you need to know how it all balances, you don't want to be issuing 40,000 if you are only getting 5,000 back because there is something wrong if you are... we know that they are using them to access the events and other things we put on, like courses. So you know that you gotta keep a good record of that so you know where you are going basically.'*

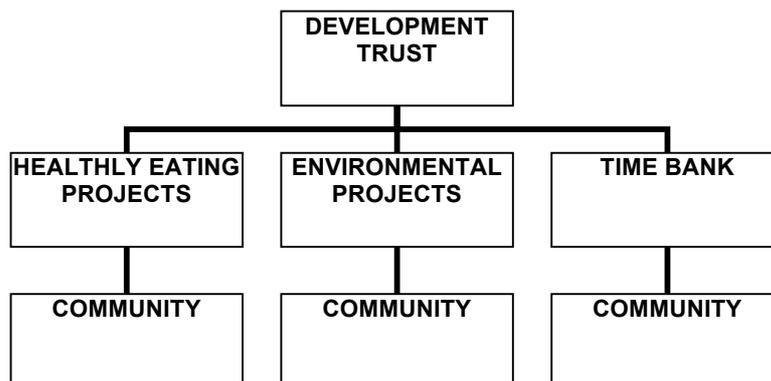
Time auditing allows the time broker to maintain the stability of the whole system by monitoring the flows of credits (the amount of credits that are given out against those used to access services and events). Thus ensuring members continue to view the value of the time credit as a form of currency and as a reward for community activity, consequently continuing to both earn and use credits. There is a concern that credits need to retain value in the rewards they can access to maintain people's motivation to earn time credits. Yet this fear is not based on the idea that without meaningful rewards people will stop their volunteering, rather if people stopped using credits, the time bank could not be sustained thus undermining the work of the development trust. Furthermore by maintaining a record of credit use a picture develops of successful and popular events and services, thus directing what future events and activities are to be put on. These are important issues for the development trust because their aim of developing active citizens is tied closely to the time bank system. Any depreciation in the perceived value of time credits may impact negatively on these outcomes.

### Structural Development

This paper has explored the origins of the time bank, the way it has facilitated member participation in the development trust's decision making and project delivery and how this is supported by the time broker. It is now possible to consider the organisational changes resulting from these developments and how they relate to co-production.

Where a time bank is established within a pre-existing organisation consideration must be given to where it is located within the structure of the founding organisation. The pilot project which led to the development of a larger time centre was operated as a project by the development trust. Consequently the expanded time bank was also maintained as one project delivered to the community by the development trust. As such the time centre was kept separate from the other health and environment projects (see figure one).

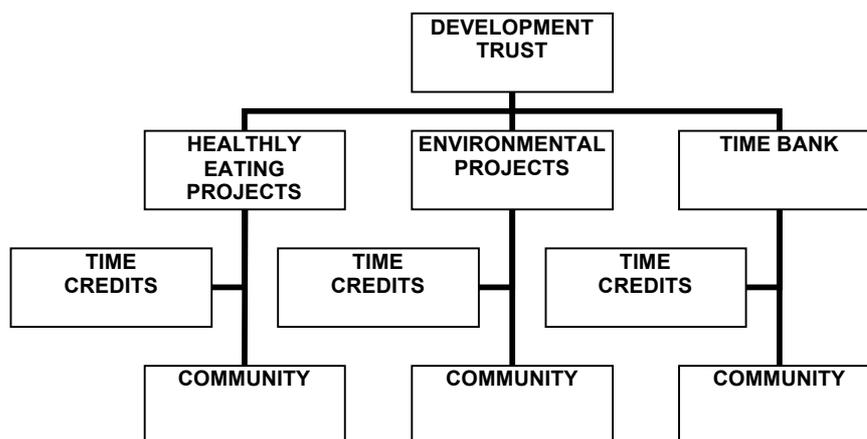
Figure One: Project Delivery Structure



Adapted from: Gregory (2008: 55)

However as the time centre expanded the range of activities and services it was involved with, time credits became a useful tool for engaging people in the other projects delivered by the trust. Consequently the popularity and success of the time centre caused a change in the structure and time credit involvement with the activities of the development trust (see figure two).

Figure Two: Embedded Time Credit Structure



Adapted from: Gregory (2008: 55)

Thus the currency moves from a narrow use through one project, to become embedded within the structure of the organisation as a whole in all of its activities. Time credits subsequently move from a currency to reward community based activity to a means by which the community as a whole can interact with the development trust. As such time credits can be used to achieve things beyond the means of the market economy as they are not only suited to encouraging and supporting different forms of activity but provide additional resources through which the development trust can expand its activities.

### **Resources and Goals**

Using time credits as a currency to reward volunteering ensured that the development trust achieved their aim of increasing active citizenship. However this currency had an additional benefit which was not initially anticipated: it provided community members with an additional resource with which they could access services and events. It also provided another means by which the development trust could achieve some of its goals where money was not available. For example a redevelopment project which established a local park used the skills of community members in the clay sculpting class to create a bench to form a centre piece in the park – with those members who gave their time to work on the sculpture earning time credits. This additional resource was not only beneficial to time centre members, but also the development trust. The currency therefore supports community members to develop their interest and skills in clay sculpting, whilst rewarding use of those skills in project delivery. Time as a currency can therefore accomplish what lack of money prohibits. This resulted in the development trust expanding its operations within the community as it is now able to depend upon additional resources and an active membership to deliver its projects.

Yet this use of credits in supporting project delivery can also lead to changes in project goals. Prior to the establishment of the time bank, the development trust sought to deliver a number of its health and environmental development projects. Where health was concerned this focused upon healthy eating, and through the use of time credits it has been possible to

expand on this. The clay sculpting class for example provided an initial avenue for a council run mental health service to become involved with the time bank as their members were able to access the class, using time credits. This provided health benefits through social interaction. These benefits are also possible through the ways in which these service users can earn credits: by helping out at the local café and collecting and delivering food co-op parcels to service users. The result of this is that the trusts health objectives now go beyond healthy eating to include an overt recognition of the health benefits of social interaction.

Additionally the use of time credits as a means of delivering on environmental-change goals also illuminate how the success of time banking has altered the perceptions of the development trust. As one interviewee explained:

*'We sit together, a lot of us sit together, and any new projects that come along we look at them and we decide if you can earn them [time credits] doing that project or we can use them, it all depends on what comes in.'*

The successes and expansion of the time bank has led to the community currency becoming the mainstay of project delivery. This can be most clearly illustrated by the development of a rural time bank. The development trust was successful in securing the responsibility of managing a large section of forest in the valley. In order to achieve this it was decided to set up a rural time bank specifically for people interested in learning the skills necessary to maintain and manage the forest. As such time credits are no longer seen as a way of only promoting active citizenship, but a resource to be incorporated into projects and used as a vital part of achieving the project aims. Consequently the value of using time banks and the impact the mechanism can have on an organisation is changing as the system develops and the currency is increasingly used within the community showing an interactive, perhaps reactive, relationship exists between the time bank and the founding organisation. The development trust is able to use time credits as a community based currency for increasing active citizenship, whilst the time bank starts to impact on how projects are designed and delivered. Due to this interaction small, but important, changes occur which can lead to the development of co-productive.

### **Co-Production Relationships**

The research has shown how time credits can bring members into service delivery, which has taken two forms in Bovaird's typology. Firstly the 'user co-delivery of professionally designed services' co-production relationship has occurred between the development trust and the community. Here the development trust plans services to be delivered with the beneficiaries. For example the park redevelopment and forest management projects were planned by the development trust, with time bank staff determining how local people could be involved. Thus time credits are used to deliver the projects aims. Secondly time bank activity follows Bovaird's 'user/community co-delivery of services with professionals without formal planning or design' relationship where responsibility for activities is taken up by the community with professional service expertise accessed when necessary. Community interests determine what services are to be developed and these interests determine the need for professional service provision. For example, the cooking class was established by local people and delivered by them without any consultation, just the use of time bank members recorded interests. Yet when services such as clay sculpting or education courses were set up this drew on professional expertise from outside the community and as these projects progressed local people were able to assist with teaching, and have now taken over service delivery.

Consequently there are multiple relationships between the time bank staff and members and development trust staff and managers. The relationships of co-production are not limited to one form and are in a constant state of change as the time bank expands and develops. For example, the most recent development of Street Ambassadors shows a means for community members to become involved with the decision making procedures of the development trust and time bank: putting them in a position previously inaccessible. Yet the number of Street Ambassadors is limited and in interviews they reported limited impact despite attempts by the time bank and trust to bring their ideas and views into service planning. Consequently it is too early to determine a clear co-production relationship. What is apparent is that these multiple relationships between stakeholders develop different co-production relationships depending on how time credits are used to engage members with the organisation.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has considered the relationship between organisational structure of a time bank and co-production. It shows that as the structure of the founding organisation develops to incorporate time credits this can foster co-production. Yet the form of co-production established depends upon how the time credits are used. In this setting time credits have involved community members in delivery of professionally designed projects and in creating new services with professionals. More recently initiatives to involve members in formal decision making processes have been implemented: although success as yet is unclear. This is therefore an important issue for other time banks to consider: how are time credits used to support the organisational structure to involve members in the planning and delivery of services, and what co-production relationships develop from this.

It is therefore possible to consider a number of policy changes to support co-production. Firstly, the use of time banks need not be to develop co-production. The time bank in this study set out to achieve active citizenship, but as the time bank structure expanded across the organisation different co-production relationships soon developed. This shows that time bank use need not be about radical change from day one: but pursuing the organisations outcomes. Secondly a successful application of time banking will facilitate its growth. Time banks need not alter the whole service. It starts with one small project, and if successful will encourage time bank use in other parts of the service. In this way potential barriers to co-production are over come by internal success. However this research has focused on the voluntary sector and it will be necessary for further research to explore the impact of successful pilots on the organisational structures of public sector services. Finally these changes depend on a time broker – an individual who manages the time bank, helps develop the initiative with new ways of earning and spending credits and actively grows membership. This is complemented by ensuring the stability and use of time credits by members to maintain it as a viable resource for service delivery. Overall this is a gradual process, but one which secures a sustainable time bank structure within the organisation where time credit use can foster co-production.

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