

PORTOBELLO TIMEBANK

Annual Report September 2018

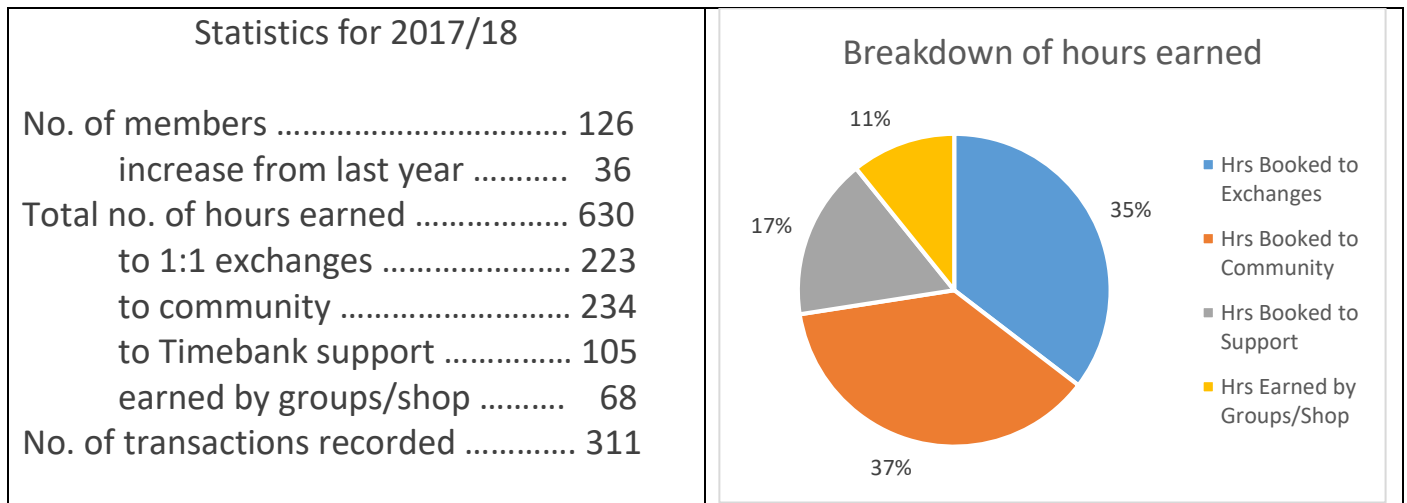
(for period April 2017 – March 2018)

In last year’s report we described how, after an initial two and a half years of modest growth and activity, we adopted a multi-pronged approach to energise the membership and to establish Portobello Timebank as a recognisable entity within the community. By taking part in more outward-facing activities, we raised the membership to 90 and gave members the opportunity to earn hours in a group setting (with our litter-cleaning and fund-raising activities) in addition to 1:1 exchanges.

In 2017/8 we consolidated this approach by extending our collaboration with several external organisations (including Edinburgh Council, Asda, LOOPs (Local Opportunities for Older People), Edinburgh Tool Library, Tribe Party, the Rotary Club, Action Party, etc.) in a variety of new ventures that could be reported either in the press or on social media. Gradually this exposure is helping to give the Timebank a more memorable presence in the local community.

The profile of our membership is diversifying in a most satisfactory way. We now have reliable (if somewhat overused) handymen who can sort out a multitude of household jobs; we have professional people willing to offer their specialist skills, and others who are mostly attracted by the community work; we have a growing number of young people new to the area who have joined to get to know the locals. Our main challenge is the older person who has no computer access – arguably a demographic that should be high on our list of priorities – but our current management structure does not have the capacity to support them adequately.

ACTIVITY STATISTICS



HIGHLIGHTS

1:1 Exchanges:

- The variety of activities taking place has evolved as the range of skills in the membership has increased.
- We continue to adapt to the particular requirements of our membership - a Goods Exchange category has been added to accommodate the exchange of produce, the loan of equipment and space rental.
- The hOurworld Time & Talents system often has very few requests logged because many are actioned straight away. As members get to know each other, exchanges are organised without being logged in the system (although, of course, the hours are recorded). This all shows that jobs are getting done!

Community:

- The litter activity has grown to rival 1:1 exchanges in size, and is a great advertisement for the Timebank.

- After a year of fire-fighting, a litter survey of the Magdalene Glen area was conducted early in 2018, resulting in a letter from Tommy Sheppard MP being sent to Asda and The Range, suggesting initiatives for reducing littering and trolley dumping. Additional large bins have been sited at key spots.
- The community work attracts its own grants, which are ring-fenced to support their activities. One notable example was the commissioning of a rustic bench from the woodworkers of the Edinburgh Tool Library, incorporating an abandoned telegraph pole. Situated on the Daiches Braes stretch of the Brunstane Burn, 'our bench' acts as a meeting place for litter and conservation work in that area.
- The fifty Edinburgh Leisure passes donated by the Council in return for our efforts were exchanged for hours over the year.

Timebank Support:

- Fund-raising and recruitment events account for this now significant proportion of our expended hours, with the added benefit that the members get to meet while they're helping out (and arrange 1:1 exchanges).
- We established some signature events that have the potential to become Timebank traditions. Chief of these is the Repair Café, which is a great showcase for demonstrating Timebank skills. First done in September 2017, the format has been rolled out twice since. The bonus outcome of the first Repair Café was discovering a huge demand for a tool sharpening service, which has evolved into tool sharpening workshops.
- While last year's GQT was a great success, depending so heavily on input from outside the Timebank was not sustainable, so our fund-raisers have gone in-house with two seasonal coffee mornings. The spring and autumn themed events are a showcase for the gardening and baking skill-sets so prominent in the membership.

Off the Clock:

- Following a request from LOOPs and Community Caring, we entered a joint venture to run a regular drop-in centre twice a month. This has been running regularly in the Jaffle Joint since January.
- Following suggestions made at last year's AGM, our members' meetings have featured talks by our own members.

LOOKING FORWARD

The above programme, plus the activities of the subsequent six months that take us to the present day, have been hard work for the management committee. We lost two of our original members and have not been successful in replacing them, while a further twenty-eight new applicants have joined the Timebank since March.

The current Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are prepared to extend their tenure into a third year, in the absence of any other volunteers. Supported by the three remaining committee members they will continue to carry out the core work of running the Timebank on a voluntary basis. There are, however, several discrete jobs that could be delegated to members who are interested in lending a hand to maintain our organisation. This will ease the burden on the current management group and ensure that we can continue to grow and improve.

Irene Thomson
 Chair, Portobello Timebank
 16 September 2018