

Portobello Timebank AGM 2023

Chair's Report

This is the first year that Timebank has been able to get back to full in-person activities after the Covid episode. It happily coincided with our 10th anniversary, so there has been a lot to celebrate.

Membership

Timebank membership is very healthy. We have **had 29 new members** join since the last AGM. This brings the total **membership up to 216**. Many new members have attended **induction evenings** with Richard and Christine: a total of **18 inductions** have been held over the past 13 months. Inductions are also open to existing members who might feel they need a refresher.

We extend an especially warm welcome to any new members here tonight, and hope that you will find Timebank a useful resource and an opportunity to get involved in your community.

The Committee

The committee has **met monthly** (with a break over the summer) to discuss Timebank development, work on the members' survey and its results, plan events and review what has been achieved.

The committee currently has **6 members**, including the chair, secretary and treasurer, plus three ordinary members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for the many hours of work they have put into the Timebank this year, for all the ideas they have produced and for their helpful, positive and often humorous contributions at meetings.

Activities

Timebank's activities have been many and varied over the last year. We have held:

- **3 talks in Bellfield:** bees, early days of the BBC, Scotland's rainforest - all these have been well attended and also provided a chance for networking over coffee and cake
- **3 major litter cleans:** November around Windsor Place, Jan in Magdalene Glen, Feb downriver along the Brunstane Burn
- **5 craftalong sessions:** notebooks, Christmas wreaths, painting papier-mâché pots, sewing eye pillows, pop-up cards

- **A few pub meet-ups** in the evening which have proved popular with those not free to socialise during daytime.
- **Birdwatching:** Botanics, Musselburgh lagoons, Figgate park, Bawsinch, Aberlady Bay
- **Gardening** at Morton Street Triangle, Figgate Lane and Portobello High School

Our Events:

- Carol singing in December
- Open committee meeting January
- 10th anniversary tea party with tombola, games, tool sharpening and plant sales in April

Help with other’s events:

- An equinox bonfire on the beach
- Party stonefest
- Providing the refreshments for the Northfield and Willowbrae environment fair in September

Donations were taken at the talks (towards cost of venue hire), during carol singing (proceeds to Social Bite), at our spring coffee afternoon (50% given to charity, half to DEC and half to Rock Trust) and at the Environment Fair (75% of takings to charity).

Timebank development

The committee set itself some **goals** to assess how well we had managed to recover.

SMART goals:

- 1) return to 2019 levels of transactions in terms of number of hours and
- 2) convert 30% of non-active members into active members

We’ve got some statistics comparing 2019 (before the lockdowns) to 2023 (to date):

Year	1:1 hours	Community project hours	TOTAL
2019	434.75	199	633.75
2023 to date (9 months)	262.51	316	578.51
%	60.4%	158.8%	91.3%

1a) First, the **1:1 swaps on hOurworld**.

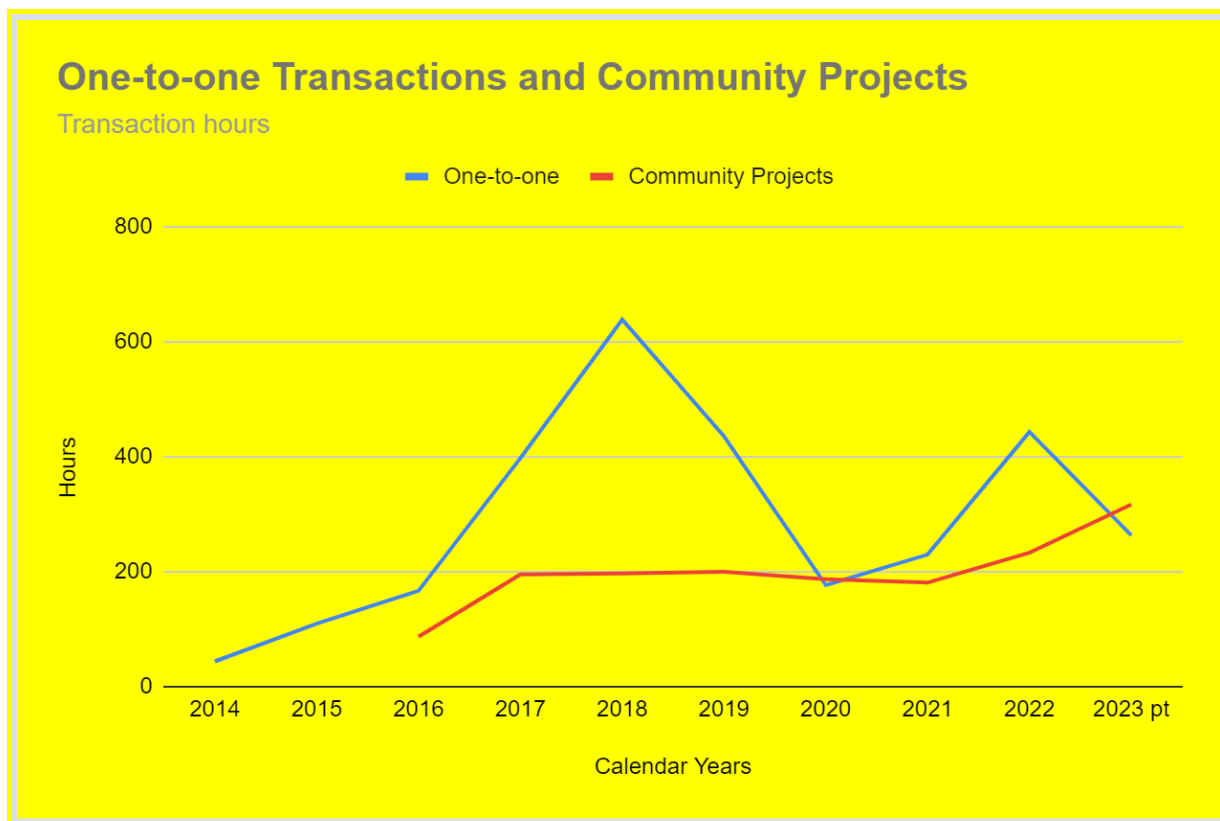
So far this year, there have been fewer hours logged than in 2019 (60.4%), but given that this is only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year, we might reach the target of achieving the same hours as 4 years ago by the end of 2023.

1b) Second, the **community project hours**.

These have increased markedly compared to 2019, with 50% more hours so far this year. The increase in community project hours could be an indication of all the wonderful work that other groups do in Portobello, as you can claim hours for voluntary work done elsewhere, e.g. the Bellfield Friday Cafe, the Porty Fridge, etc.

Overall (1:1 and community hours) we have already reached over 90% of the hours done in 2019, so it is clear that we are well on the road to recovery.

Year	One-to-one	Community Projects
2014	43	
2015	108.5	
2016	165.65	86
2017	396.5	194.25
2018	637.6	195.75
2019	434.75	199
2020	175.6	186
2021	228.75	180
2022	442.25	232
2023 pt	262.51	316



2) Converting non-active members to active members

Difficult to assess as some people may have moved away without telling us. We've got about **10% back to being active**. But please, **everyone has a part to play** in this! When chatting with your neighbours or local friends, please mention the Timebank and how wonderful it is! If they aren't a member yet, you can tell them all the benefits. If they say "oh, I joined ages ago but haven't done anything with it/anything in a long time" you can.....tell them all about the benefits and how wonderful it is! We are stronger together.

Timebank Survey

The **survey** was developed as a follow-on from the ideas generated at **last year's AGM** and was sent out to members in the **autumn**. The **results were collated in the new year** and we have been **working on the feedback**.

There was a common theme on **publicity**, which we are working on. We have been on the front page of the Party Reporter, and are trying to do more on social media. However, this is something for which we **really need extra help on the committee**. The **newsletter** got really good feedback in the survey, and we have taken on the plea to include more photos.

There was also a common theme of Timebankers wanting **more opportunities to meet** other Timebankers. We have tried to create these opportunities, by e.g. having more socialising time at the talks, and by introducing the pub nights, which have become very popular. The speed networking later this evening also comes under this heading!

Other points from the survey:

You said	We did
I would like an e-mail notification of a new request or offer on hOurworld.	This is now a feature on hOurworld! As we have included in a couple of newsletters now, you need to update your profile on hOurworld, but then you can get a notification when a new offer or request is added. If you're not sure how to do this, please contact a committee member and we can support you with this.
Induction refreshers for longer-standing members/ more social inductions	All members are welcome to our inductions, and we have started doing these in small groups monthly in person. Online is also available.
Social events: talks were the most popular option, followed by the others listed below	We have had 3 in the last year and those planned for winter are: dark matter, colour theory and renewable energy.
Social events: evening meet up at a local pub.	Pub nights were started and have gathered momentum with up to about 15 people attending! Next one is on 8 th November at Portobello Tap
Social events: indoor games night	We had a number of people in the survey say that they would be happy to arrange social events, so maybe someone who would be interested in an indoor games night could put a

	request on hOurworld and find like-minded folks?
Social events: daytime meet-up for coffee	We have occasional meet-ups as part of the Bellfield café on a Friday morning, however attendance is low, so maybe this is not a priority.
Events: Litter picking events are very popular	We will have more of these starting soon , once ground vegetation has died back and we can see all the litter again!
Community gardening	Josephine heads up the gardening and says: We have an amazing gardening team who have transformed Morton Street triangle, Figgate Lane and more recently the garden in Portobello High School . The community/guerilla gardening is a great example of commitment, dedication, consistency and creativity. Plants have been generously donated by multiple Portobello residents and adorn these hitherto neglected spaces. Benches have been repaired and painted and this has been rewarded by children's parties and live music playing in Morton street. The beauty of the plants and the tranquility of the space has created a delightful community space. Figgate Lane which was very neglected and had attracted a lot of rubbish is now a verdant space with currant bushes, herbs, architectural artichokes and multiple other plants. The school garden is a work in progress. On Friday October 6th an incredible team of 8 volunteers transformed the space and planted a number of sensory plants. The proposal is to develop a sensory garden and Timebank has generously offered to fund some plants to enable this to happen.
Events: Tour of a local interest place	We have tried to get in touch with the energy-from-waste site (where we had an excellent visit pre-Covid) and the rail depot, but have not heard back. If anyone has good contact details for places, or ideas of where you would like to go, please pass them on! Apparently groups can arrange visits to the

	National Gallery of Scotland store at Granton, would anyone here be interested in that?
Events: 'Craftalong' i.e gather at a members house to learn / share a new craft skill	There have been 5 Craftalongs and more are planned for the coming winter.
Events: 'Cookalong' i.e gather at a members house to learn how to cook / bake and share skills	Cookalongs will also be planned over the winter. Any specific requests? Ask on hOurworld.

Looking Forward

We're doing a lot as you have heard and **we'd like to do more**, but this needs **more people on the committee**. Currently, with our long-serving member Richard about to stand down, we are **challenged to maintain the level of activity** that we have just now. Richard does so much, we reckon we'll need three people to replace him.

An example is the weekly newsletter which is shared between Richard and myself at the moment. I can't commit more time, so, if it's not to become fortnightly, we'll need someone to take over that task.

Every event or activity we organise requires time and energy from one or more of the committee, **so to help to keep Timebank active and busy, think of joining us and helping to make more of what we want come about.**