

RUSHEY GREEN TIME BANK ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014



15



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

A big welcome to you all from me! I am Tina Farage, chair of Rushey Green Time Bank. Time banking is my passion and for several years I was a broker at another time bank. I have been a board member of RGTB for just over 3 years and much has happened during that period. However, the pace has accelerated in the last year with new projects, new staff, new trustees and new members! As RGTB reaches its 15th year, it's great to share how it has evolved in this last year.

Indeed, RGTB has expanded greatly with our new project called "Lewisham Local", planting 5 time bank 'hubs' dotted around the borough of Lewisham – in Crofton Park, Bellingham, New Cross, Sydenham and Downham. Membership has increased by 200 members and a lovely monthly newsletter goes out to everyone involved in the Lewisham Local project. We now have a new online digital platform "Time & Talents" which will give us more exposure in the borough and beyond as members will be able to post their time bank exchanges, share news, promote all their group activities and events and directly access their balance of time credits.

Needless to say that to manage this evolution requires a strong infrastructure and skills. 5 new trustees have joined the board this year, and they have been kept busy! We all work hard behind the scenes dealing with strategic planning and supporting our staff. Being a new team we recently held an Away Day in London with trustees and staff so that we can all get to know each other better, review what RGTB has achieved and concentrate on what's important to our organisation for the years ahead!

We have 3 great staff that are passionate about time banking. They work hard and well together. They hold great events for our members and the community, and are great fun to be with. They are an inspiration to us all and we would not be able to have a time bank without them! Finally, we have our lovely members, who accrue thousands of hours in the year exchanging time and skills with others, either on a one to one basis, as a group, exchanging at home as well as helping at the office. Our members are the reason why we have a time bank and why we are here.

15 years of existence is no mean feat and during that time RGTB has become expert as to what works and what doesn't work in time banking, the benefits and challenges of co-production. It is able to advise other organisations. Our experience and work are quoted everywhere, worldwide. So, we could not do it without everyone playing a part. We are all cogs in a wheel that is in motion! We are grateful for members that have worked tirelessly to raise funds or donated to keep this work going. We also thank funders and supporters, Lewisham Council, Lewisham NHS, London Catalyst, the Rushey Green Ward Assembly and not least the Rushey Green Group Practice.

Let's continue having a great 2014-15 year.
Let it be as good as the last one!

Tina Farage - Chair, Rushey Green Timebank

...MY JOURNEY THROUGH RUSHEY GREEN TIMEBANK



STEFANIA

Hello fellow time bankers!

My name is Stefania and I have been a member of Rushey Green Time Bank since March 2006, then 36 weeks pregnant with my first child. I started by taking part in the group walking at Ladywell Park together with Michelle, previous timebank broker that some of you have had the pleasure to meet. My baby arrived four weeks later and a new adventure began. I was new on this job called motherhood and, alone all day as my husband was working and with no family support around (both our families are in our countries), it was not long before I started to struggle. However, timebank was there and Michelle got me involved in setting up a timebank baby and parent group, in the tea & chat room. I felt part of another family at the most vulnerable point in my life.

I became a really active member earning lots of credits, which I have used by attending Spanish classes taught by another member. Although my life as full time mum was somehow rewarding, I started to feel the need of nourishing myself as well as my own child. When he was 3 years old I embarked on a training course designed for unemployed mums with children under five to help them getting back to work. As part of my course, I had done a two weeks placement with Rushey Green Time Bank as Philippe kindly agreed to take me on board. It was very rewarding helping out in the office, and it could be said that my confidence was now growing stronger and stronger. It follows that, few months later, I was offered a job as part-time Receptionist at the Rushey Green Group Practice. That was the opportunity I was desperately looking for. I felt a woman again and not just a mum anymore! Moreover, just over a year later I got a job with NHS Lewisham to work with the health visiting team as part-time support worker, my current job which I truly enjoy. Within a year I fell pregnant with my second child.

While on maternity leave I trained as a Breastfeeding Peer Supporter with the NCT and I volunteer in the community at the breastfeeding support groups (now called baby cafe' locals) in the maternity ward of our local hospital, alongside juggling my daily job and two young children. However, this is not the turning point as this year I have applied to university to start midwifery training and I have received an offer from University of West London! A completely change of career path which I am absolutely looking forward to.

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This is my journey since joining Rushey Green Time Bank. I have met amazing people of all ages and I really felt valued. I have helped set up a service for mums and

babies living in Catford, and sharing my own experience with other mums was really helpful to me; it made me realise that I was not the only first time mum to feel the way I was feeling and, most importantly, it was ok to talk about it (Postnatal depression, which is thought to affect at least 1 in 10 mothers).

I believe that this was just the start of a new life for me, which helped my confidence gradually build up and in return gave me the opportunity to achieve what I have achieved so far. I cannot thank Rushey Green Time Bank enough to have helped me getting where I am now. It has been an honour to be part of such a lovely little family. At present I am not as active but I still keep in touch with Philippe who keeps me up to date with what goes on, especially now as I am working in Rushey Green. Looking back I could easily say that I came through a long and tortuous journey to get here, but I believe that this is just the starting line and that more still have to come!

...THE JOY I GET FROM THIS OVER SIZED FAMILY



MAY WITTER

I joined in 2009 but it seems so much longer ago but only because I have done so much in the time. My favourite memory is a fabulous day out when we went to Brighton but we didn't just go to Brighton. Half way there we stopped and went to visit the Bluebell Railway. This is a fabulous working railway and we had the opportunity to take a ride on the restored trains used by the railway. Before we got on the trains we had a chance to soak in the atmosphere of the old railway station. Having enjoyed our train trip we went onto Brighton to get sand between our toes and have our fish and chips. A long day but very enjoyable.

Timebanking has been in Lewisham for 15 years and goes from strength to strength.

As a member of Rushey Green Time Bank I have always felt included and it has felt an inclusive organisation. Our Crafters group is a great group. Helping each other improve and share our skills, chatting together in a friendly atmosphere and even helping to raise some money to help support Rushey Green Time Bank.

I would love that more people could experience this and the joy I get from this over sized family. For the future I would like to see our Time Bank keep growing, offering more activities and skills and find a place to get young people involved with this great idea. The Big Society is an idea that has come and gone but Timebanking has been in Lewisham for 15 years and goes from strength to strength. Long may it continue to thrive.

May Witter, Rushey Green Time Bank member



In the company of time bankers, from left to right Hamida, Ottis, May, Pauline, Gene and Elsa



LEWISHAM LOCAL

The Lewisham Local Time Banks project funded by Lewisham Council started developing activities across the London Borough of Lewisham in early 2013 with a target of three local hubs of time banking activity across the Borough by the end of March 2014. By July 2013 Jane and Simone had launched hubs in Bellingham and Sydenham, held a successful Bring & Fix event in Bellingham and its members had contributed towards activities at Lewisham People's Day, along with the rest of the Lewisham Time banks Network hosted by RGTB.

By December 2013 the project had over 100 members across six hubs in Bellingham, Sydenham, Deptford, Downham, Crofton Park and St Johns, doubling its target of three hubs. The project had also held several additional events including a winter disco and second Bring & Fix in Bellingham, another Bring & Fix in Sydenham and weekly drop in sessions in each hub area. The team was also spreading the word about Timebanking at community events, ward assemblies and other activities across the borough.

Simone Bothe,
Community Hubs
Coordinator



This has created some great partnerships between RGTB and groups including Lewisham's Talking Newspaper, Eco Communities, Community Connections and Lewisham Police Cadets, to name a few.

In January 2014, with the view that quality would win out over quantity, the St Johns hub was closed and better use of the new 'Time & Talent' online digital platform was made. Time & Talent allows indutes and let others know what exchanges they are interested in as well as see what other members are interested in exchanging at the click of a button.

By March 2014 the project had exchanged over 1,000 hours from over 150 members, across five hubs. Members are now running their own events and developing their own projects. They have successfully bid for additional funds to support their exchanges and are recruiting new members to the RGTB family. The successes of the project and its members were celebrated at a Project birthday party, held at St Lawrence church hall, on 12th April 2014. But this is just the start and with a second year of funding confirmed, the project can only go from strength to strength in 2014/15.



AGM



We had fantastic attendance at our AGM on Friday 25th October 2013 to celebrate our members' achievements and contributions to RGTB, although we know that some members could not attend, and they were much missed. It was also a great opportunity for members to meet existing and new trustees for the first time. Highlights included the wonderful poetry that was shared, the excellent sketch with Simone and Jane illustrating the progress and development of the Hubs, and of course the wonderful food, where the members truly excelled!

Highlights included the wonderful poetry that was shared

We heard a riveting speech from Juney Muhammad who urged us to keep on loving, listening, giving, sharing, tolerance - powerful ingredients for a thriving inclusive community, and we were also very fortunate to have our local MP and long standing supporter Heidi Alexander in attendance, who spoke about the difference RGTB has made to the community

RUSSIA



In December Philippe and I had the great opportunity to visit Russia to attend the opening of the first Time Bank in Moscow and the Time Bank in Nizhny Novgorod that was to run the first Bring and Fix in Russia.

The Moscow Time Bank was being sponsored by the council and we had great hopes for this. It was hosted in a community building with many other activities going on, what a natural home. An hour for an hour appeared well understood and people seemed to be coming up with lots of different skills.

I even travelled 2,000 miles to get my over coat fixed!

That evening we went by train to Nizhny at 40mph, over 6hrs under moonlight and through snow. The Time Bank in Nizhny has been running for 7 years and is hosted in a community building and appears to be thriving. Alex runs several community groups including Nizhny TB and the local Erasmus volunteer programme. Nizhny TB 'only' has 2,000 members and has two brokers both called Olga. I must point out that the whole trip was only possible because of one of the Olga's excellent translational skill and patience with two old blokes.

As well as meeting several community groups in Nizhny we got to see their first Bring and Fix. They used a local community cafe working on the Ziffer-platte cafes where you pay by time spent not by drink. They took over the whole cafe and in all they had three rooms. One was given over to games, one

to talk topics and craft, and one to repairs. Some of the topics included legal advice, interior decor and software. I even travelled 2,000 mile to get my over coat fixed. Repairs were going well with items including cameras, computers, kitchen equipment, toys and phones. What was

exhilarating was to see the fixers getting the idea, getting caught up with the enthusiasm and the almost inevitable swapping of phone numbers. A great day. The event was picked up by local newspapers, radio and two local television stations sent crews along.

We not only met new Time Banks but hopefully established new links and understanding for future exchanges and partnering

Robert -Rushey Green Time bank Broker



NEW BOARD AND TRUSTEE AWAY DAY

Over the past year, we have acquired a number of trustees, nearly doubling the size of our board!

The reason for this is to make sure we have a larger, more varied group to help steer key decisions and develop our future strategy as RGTB reaches its 15th year.

In order to make sure that this larger board can have impact, in addition to the monthly board meetings, an Away Day was organised principally by Adrian Bartlett and Robbie Philips.

The purpose of the Away Day was to learn more about the journey RGTB has been on, share learning lessons from other community initiatives and then brainstorming ideas for the future strategy of RGTB, which we all agree is to build a network of relationships between people that benefits both members and the community.

We were also joined by staff members Robert, Simone, Philippe, and had a great day together.

AN INVITATION...

In December, in partnership with Voluntary Action Lewisham, we hosted an 'ABCD' event at the Lewisham Town Hall. ABCD is an asset-based approach to community development that encourages local people to connect with each other to shape their ideas and resources by focusing on what is strong and not what is wrong. It is based on looking at people's strengths rather than problems or what they don't have, and then organise around what skills and knowledge people do have.

People see 'problems' around them and they will voice their ideas and dreams on how things could be different. "Something needs to be done" but often we have relied on - expected - an outside agency, group, an individual or specialists to 'sort it out'. And yet, so much can also be done through people that can with a bit of community spirit, creativity and muscle, turn things around. It's about people power - we have our skills, knowledge and time at our disposal. These are our assets.

Sometimes these assets remain under-utilised because we just don't know what is and who exists around us. Find out! Our knowledge, our skills and our passion collectively are a remarkable force in our



We can work better together and do more by sharing and complementing our assets. The ABCD approach argues that little is achieved by identifying 'needs' and rather the emphasis should be on the 'assets' in any given community. While the needs-based approach tends to prescribe 'solutions' by creating agencies that deliver services to clients, the ABCD approach focuses on empowering citizens. The Asset Based Community Development approach espouses the belief that local residents should identify their own community's problems and the solutions to those same problems. It's about ownership, feeling useful and empowered to make a difference in the space I live.

Lewisham has people with ideas and there are many exciting projects and communities already in place. But what are your dreams? Do you have new ideas? Do you feel like or do you know someone who has skills and knowledge that are not being used but it needs a catalyst to bring people - assets - together?

This, in nutshell, is inviting you to get actively involved, join us and be part of transforming our, YOUR neighbourhood!

Philippe Granger - CEO, Rushey Green Time Bank



TIMEBANKING IS...

...about using the community's assets to benefit everyone else.








At RGTB we believe everyone in our community is an asset. Each individual has skills they can offer to support another and what is most valuable of all is time.

In modern times, where people rely on smartphones to network and do not speak to their neighbour, the value of the timebank and the heart of RGTB is built on the compassion of its community and its wonderful members.

Timebanking is not about receiving a reward for services – it is about reducing isolation and building a cohesive community.

As we celebrate 15 years together, we look back at our busy year in this review and then look forward to many more happy years to come.

THANK YOU TO...

-  **Our principal funders - London Borough of Lewisham, Lewisham NHS, London Catalyst**
-  **Those members of RGTB who have worked hard raising funds for the time bank**
-  **Those members and friends who have financially supported the work**
-  **Those members who actively take part in organising and supporting the activities of the time bank**
-  **The Rushey Green Group Practice for space and amenities at the Primary Care centre**
-  **Trustees for their commitment, efforts, encouragement and wisdom**
-  **Friends, encouragers and mentors - cheergivers and positive people that understand and share the vision, stand by you and provide practical help**

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Principal Funding Sources

London Catalyst,
The London Borough of Lewisham and the
Lewisham Primary Care
(now Lewisham NHS)

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Jane Fifield – Partnerships Manager (until
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Company registration No 4681564

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