

Cambridge Centre
for Housing &
Planning Research

Evaluating the Public Health Outcomes of the Cambridgeshire Time Credits Project

Emerging findings paper 2

Wisbech Time Credits – partner organisation case studies

Dr Gemma Burgess

Dr Dan Durrant

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The evaluation

The Public Health Practice Evaluation Scheme (PHPES) enables people who are introducing innovative public health initiatives to work in partnership with the National Institute for Health Research School for Public Health Research (NIHR SPHR) to conduct rigorous evaluations of their effectiveness. This scheme is particularly focused on local initiatives.

The aim of the evaluation of the public health outcomes of the Cambridgeshire Time Credits programme in Wisbech is to determine its potential to tackle social exclusion, loneliness and deprivation and to assess the extent to which it can reduce health inequalities. The Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (CCHPR) is carrying out this research in collaboration with the Cambridgeshire County Council Community Engagement Team, Spice, and the Cambridge Institute of Public Health (CIPH).

The research uses a mixed methods approach that engages service users, practitioners and policy makers through interviews, surveys, focus groups and ethnographic research methods. One of the key research objectives is to analyse how this type of programme can best secure positive health outcomes and how it could be sustainably established in other localities, should these benefits be demonstrated.

The main outputs will consist of an interim and final report with research findings detailing outcomes for individuals, organisations and the wider community, disseminated in a range of accessible formats, e.g. a film, and a user guide aimed at local authorities, those commissioning and delivering health and social care services and those involved in establishing Time Credit projects.

This report presents some emerging findings in the form of individual Time Credit partner organisation case studies.

For more information about the evaluation please contact Dr Gemma Burgess on gib36@cam.ac.uk or 01223 764547.

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Introduction

Spice Time Credits are a tool for building stronger communities and for delivering co-produced services. The Spice model is driven by a vision of wellbeing and social cohesion, and uses Time Credits as a way of recognising and celebrating the time people spend volunteering with a local organisation, community group, volunteer group or a statutory sector service provider. In exchange for their contribution, the volunteers 'earn' a Time Credit note, one for every hour they give. These can be 'spent' on a range of leisure and other opportunities, typically donated by organisations, local businesses and corporations to allow the community members to take advantage of their spare capacity (Apteligen 2015; Weaver et al, 2015), as well as on activities at the organisation earned with and to trade time and skills with other individuals¹.

This report is the second of a series of papers on emerging findings from the evaluation. It draws on in depth face to face interviews with members of Time Credit partner organisations where people earn Time Credits. Research participants were asked about how Time Credits work in their organisation. They described in their own words how they heard about Time Credits, how and why they got involved, and the difference it has made to their organisation and the people who volunteer with them. The case studies in this report summarise the stories of five Time Credit partner organisations.

¹ Markkanen, S. and Burgess, G. (2015) Introduction to time banking and Time Credits. Cambridge: Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research.

<http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Projects/Start-Year/2015/Evaluating-Public-Health-Outcomes-Cambridgeshire-Time-Credits-Project>

Case study 1: The Ferry Project

About the organisation

Established in 1998, Luminus Ferry Project is an award-winning social enterprise and registered charity that helps homeless people in Fenland². The aim of the Ferry Project is not only to provide accommodation, but to give people the skills they need to enable them to live independently. These include life skills such as cooking and cleaning, education courses, vocational training, volunteering and employment opportunities.

The Ferry Project provides 88 bed spaces, has 25 full-time and 18 part-time employees and has over 100 volunteers a year. In 2011 a night shelter and shop opened and education courses started. In 2012 Octavia's Café opened. In 2013 they hosted their first wedding, started a printing business, and took over management of the Queen Mary Centre. The organisation helps nearly 300 people a year. It only takes people with a local connection to Fenland and supports both men and women.

Why Time Credits are used

The Ferry Project supports people to develop their independent living skills. As part of this skills development, residents are expected to undertake some volunteering. Offering the opportunity to earn Time Credits is seen as being an added motivation and incentive to volunteer, but the organisation also recognises the benefits to residents from spending Time Credits³.

“In the hostel all clients are meant to do some volunteering as part of the support, it gives them a routine and something to get up for.... Time Credits help to encourage people to volunteer and gets them to spend on activities too..... People have very little money and Time Credits spending gives them access to things that help their health and wellbeing such as going to the gym or swimming. It is a motivation to get out and about and not to just hang about in their room or communal areas”.

How volunteers earn Time Credits

The Ferry Project currently has six regular Time Credits volunteers and others who volunteer less frequently. Volunteers can earn Time Credits in the café and kitchen and through gardening. They can also volunteer with the maintenance team, for example, helping with house clearances, delivering furniture from the shop.

“In the café they set up trays, make drinks, serve food, make sandwiches, clean and clear tables....In the kitchen they wash up, chop veg and make soup. If we get a lot of donated veg we get the volunteers to make different soups for the night shelter....Sometimes they have already done a food and hygiene or health and safety or we can signpost to the college. They wear t-shirts provided as a uniform. [Volunteer] wears a white shirt with an apron. So they look the part”.

² <http://www.ferryproject.org.uk/>

³ Also see: Burgess, G. and Markkanen, S. (2016) Wisbech Time Credits – individual member case studies. Cambridge: Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research.

How volunteers spend Time Credits

The most popular ways of spending Time Credits are going to the cinema, the gym and swimming, and on hair and beauty treatments at the college. Some volunteers share their Time Credits with family.

“[Volunteer] passes them on to his wife who takes their daughter to the Oasis children’s centre....A lot go to the gym where they can also go swimming and there are exercise classes. The cinema is very popular and you only need two Time Credits”.

The impact of earning and spending Time Credits for volunteers

The organisation has identified numerous beneficial impacts on volunteers of earning and spending Time Credits. They have seen improvements in skills and confidence.

“She never used to be that confident. She is passionate now about earning Time Credits. She used to work in a café when she was younger. She now lives in move on accommodation but she walks all through town to still volunteer. Volunteering in the café was familiar and has refreshed her skills. She enjoys it”.

The organisation feels that it has improved the chances of volunteers entering paid employment through improved skills and confidence, but also by learning the routine of work.

“It increases their prospects, especially if it is a job in an area where they volunteer. The process shows they want to go to work, shows willing, that they can keep to a routine. Employers take them more seriously”.

The organisation has seen improvements in the physical health of volunteers.

“It gets them up and moving. It is a bonus for some people just to get up. It is good to be on their feet all day. [Volunteer] said that she is too busy when she is here to go out for a fag except on her break and so she has really cut down a lot on smoking”.

There has also been an improvement in the mental health of volunteers.

“[Volunteer] is always in a happy mood when she is here, she always has a smile on her face. It doesn’t faze her when we are busy. She enjoys what she is doing”.

The impact of Time Credits to the organisation

From a practical perspective the volunteers have helped the organisation when they have been short staffed. But it has also helped to change the relationship between the organisation, the volunteers and the customers to one that is more equal and reciprocal.

“They know they will get something at the end and feel more appreciated as they get something back for it....The regular customers are used to the volunteers. It helps to build a whole picture of who we help and why. The customers are all for it”.

This more co-productive way of working has been rewarding to the organisation.

“It feels more rewarding. Instead of someone volunteering and just saying thank you, you can give them something in return”.

Case study 2: Orchards School

About the organisation

The school has 519 students including a nursery. The school faces numerous challenges, being in one of the most deprived wards in the country, above the national average for free school meals and half of the children are EAL students (English as an Additional Language). Orchards is the only school in the area to have a wellbeing team. They deal with behaviour, speech, language, social skills, physical issues, medical needs, family issues, nurturing, and transitions e.g. to secondary school, to other schools. There is a family worker who deals with social services. The team is full time and they see 70 children every day.

To help deal with having a multiple language student population, the school introduced bilingual teaching assistants 18 months ago who cover most languages and there is a member of staff in the office who speaks five languages. The biggest non-English language group is Lithuanian.

Why Time Credits are used

There is no funding for after school clubs but opening up the school after core hours provides more opportunities for children. However, the key driver behind the introduction of Time Credits was to try and engage people from the local community, particularly parents, with the school.

“The school wanted to get involved with Time Credits in order to build relationships between staff and parents and to make more of a community out of the school and give it a community feel. The school and community are very diverse and were not engaged. The school tried parent/teacher groups but they never took off. The staff are so busy. Parents are scared of the school”.

How volunteers earn Time Credits

To the end of February 2016, 128 Time Credit members had given time to the school. There are currently 25 volunteers actively giving their time to the school. Some are called on only from time to time because they have particular skills.

“There is a man with a special needs son who cannot commit much time but who is good at decorating so we call on him for this and he does three or four sessions a year”.

Staff can earn Time Credits and the other volunteers come from outside of the school. The non-staff volunteers carry out numerous different activities to earn Time Credits. This includes painting, gardening, reading with children, sewing and administrative support. Staff mostly earn Time Credits by volunteering to attend the after school clubs that are managed by volunteers.

How volunteers spend Time Credits

Volunteers spend their Time Credits on going to the cinema, going swimming and sometimes on trips e.g. to the seaside. People prefer to spend their Time Credits as a family and with other families.

“They do it as a family, they don’t want to spend individually”.

The impact of earning and spending Time Credits for volunteers

The school are very proud of the way in which Time Credits volunteering has led to paid employment for some volunteers. They have seen volunteers become more aware of their skills, learn about a work environment and develop the confidence to apply for jobs.

“What I am most proud of is getting people into jobs. These people would not apply for jobs and now they have paid jobs....[Volunteer] now also has a job. I really had to persuade her to apply as she was worried her English wasn’t good enough. People often have skills they didn’t know they could use. It makes them feel valued as a person”.

There has been a wider benefit to families and children as Time Credits enable volunteers to do activities with their children.

“One lady, her kids never left the house but she will use Time Credits to take them out in the holidays”.

The impact of Time Credits to the organisation

The school has seen significant impacts from being able to offer Time Credits. It has enabled them to offer more activities to children in a deprived area and to increase available capacity and skills.

“There is a retired teacher of dyslexic children from Cambridge who comes once a week which fills a gap here to be able to draw on these skills”.

It has enabled the school to engage with the local community in a way that was not possible previously and in particular allowed links to be made with groups of parents that they have not managed to communicate with before.

“There is a traveller community here but you never get the parents in. But we ran two events with a gypsy, Roma traveller group supported by Time Credits. We lit a fire and travellers told stories of their youth and families talked about their life histories”.

Engaging with different people within the community has changed the attitudes of staff at the school and has challenged stereotypes.

“It has also changed staff attitudes. Some staff thought that ‘these people’ volunteering would be a hindrance not a help. Then they realised that they have skills. The staff started to see them in a different way”.

Using Time Credits has fostered engagement with the community and a more co-productive environment.

“It has been a success in engaging diverse groups. Now we get the EAL families. They did not think they would be welcome but now they feel they can participate. Understandings have changed”.

Case study 3: The Staithe

About the organisation

The Staithe provides accommodation in Wisbech for young people from across Cambridgeshire who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness. They take people from 16 – 25 years old, however, clients tend to be at the younger end of the age range. They offer ten supported accommodation units and also have four ‘move-on’ flats for young people who are preparing to move into their own accommodation.

Why Time Credits are used

One of the key reasons why Time Credits are used is that they fit well with their aim of encouraging the young people living at the Staithe to develop ‘meaningful use’ of their time. After a slow start Time Credits have really taken off.

“We’ve got our heads round it [and seen] more opportunities...I think we’ve just tried to embed it into everything that we come up with to do”.

How volunteers earn Time Credits

There are numerous opportunities for volunteers to earn Time Credits. These include basic domestic work such as cleaning windows and housework for the communal areas of the building. In addition, there are opportunities to earn Time Credits by preparing communal meals. There are also a range of additional activities, many of which reflect an ethos of co-production in that they are either suggested by or developed with the young people living at the Staithe. The most noticeable of these has been a garden project where over the last 18 months the clients have worked alongside staff members to reclaim the outdoor areas, many of which had become badly overgrown.

How volunteers spend Time Credits

The cinema is very popular as it gives young people learning to budget, often on very low incomes, the opportunity to access leisure activities that they would struggle to afford otherwise.

“If they were to go to the cinema or go to the gym or go to the college and have their nails done, that would be a lot out of their weekly money. It’s a way for us to motivate them and say that you can get this for free if you give something back to the community.”

Staff and clients are also beginning to work together in a co-productive way to identify opportunities for them all to spend their Time Credits and as of late summer 2016 are planning a trip to London. This requires the organisation to fundraise to cover transport costs which in turn creates an opportunity for the young people to get involved in fundraising activities such as a craft stall at the Wisbech Rock Festival.

The impact of earning and spending Time Credits for volunteers

As mentioned above, many of the young people living at the Staithe would struggle to afford the gym or to go to the cinema. Indeed, most acknowledge that if they did have spare cash they would be unlikely to spend it on these more constructive leisure activities.

“It gets me out more, If I don’t have the money I can just earn Time Credits and go and do it.”

There is a clear, direct benefit to members in the way that their volunteering enables them to demonstrate how they meet the criteria required for them to move on to more independent accommodation.

“[Volunteer] wants to move into the move-on flats. And we have said to her that one of our move-on criteria is a meaningful use of time and she’s struggled to get motivated. And I think because it [earning Time Credits] is so relaxed it has been a way of getting her started and now she’s about to start her work placement...So I think it’s helped bridge that gap, its shown her that she can do something.”

The experience of earning has been credited with encouraging at least one former client to find permanent employment and another has secured a work placement with the Ferry Project. Earning Time Credits also provides a way to recognise skills such as cooking and craft skills and knowledge of healthy eating gained through current college courses and for this to be acknowledged and valued both by peers and by the organisation.

“They get lots of skills out of it as well which are transferable over to employment or college, they get so much more out of it.”

For one resident in particular the opportunity to earn Time Credits has contributed to the development of his own garden maintenance and groundwork business. Staff have supported him in securing a donation for £500 for the driving lessons he needs.

“We supported him to write letters...and we’ve used all the voluntary work that he’s done [for]Time Credits as the basis of those letters. It just says he’s a lad that’s put a lot into the community really.”

The impact of Time Credits to the organisation

The most obvious contribution to the Staithe is the way that Time Credits have been used to encourage general housework.

“I think it’s about them having ownership of the building, I like to encourage them more because they take pride, and care, of their environment really. Obviously we have cleaners. It would be done but it’s an add-on.”

The contribution to the feel of the place is noticeable with staff commenting on the way that the young people enjoy working together as a team and for the young people themselves describing the group as “like a little family”.

Developing internal spend opportunities is another area where staff and clients have worked together to come up with group leisure activities based around Time Credits in the wider spend network. This also provides the young people a chance to expand their geographical horizons. Time Credits have also contributed to the increasing engagement with other voluntary sector organisations and their different client groups. Recently the Staithe has been developing activities such as a trip to Hunstanton and a tea and cake morning with residents at Morton Avenue, a sheltered housing project for elderly people in nearby March. There are also plans to develop a coffee morning with Macmillan Cancer Support for which the young people can earn Time Credits for baking the cakes. The use of Time Credits at the Staithe is well documented with the staff collecting plenty of photos. A record of the garden project, events and trips are all kept in a large scrapbook, held in the office which covers various activities over the last two years.

Case study 4: Community House

About the organisation

Wisbech Community House was founded in 2002 to provide advice and guidance to people living in Wisbech and the surrounding areas. The building itself is owned by the housing association Circle Housing Roddons whilst staffing is provided by Fenland District Council with funding secured, at least for the current financial year, from the Department of Work and Pensions.

The project employs a manager and full time Community House Officer who is also the Time Credits Coordinator and is based in the house five days a week. It is open from nine to five, Monday to Friday and people can arrange meetings to improve their IT skills, develop their CV and to work on building confidence and managing anxiety about returning to work. There are also two drop-in sessions, a gardening group on Tuesday morning and a social group on Thursday mornings.

Why Time Credits are used

Time Credits have been used to encourage volunteering and also to give those who do volunteer something tangible in return.

“Getting something back they can actually see.”

Something that is “more beneficial to the actual person.”

They have been used to maintain the community garden and to build a core of committed, regular volunteers who contribute to the running of the house.

How volunteers earn Time Credits

Time Credits can be earned by members participating in the garden group on a Tuesday morning. There are also a number of opportunities for members to volunteer to either support the work of the Community House and the people who attend and also to develop new activities. Members provide support to people who attend the Community House to access the computers or develop their IT skills as well as befriending people who attend, for example, spending time with a man to improve his language skills as part of his recovery from a stroke. There are also minor administrative roles for which members earn Time Credits as well as occasional opportunities to deliver leaflets locally to publicise the services offered by the Community House. Recently a number of events have been developed such as a quiz night held at the Oasis Centre and also a table top sale. Members have earned Time Credits preparing for the events which has included drafting request letters and approaching local businesses for contributions such as prizes for the quiz night.

How volunteers spend Time Credits

Whilst some members do store up their Time Credits, others distribute them to friends and family.

“I’ve obviously given some to some family members as I volunteer and get one for every hour I work, so obviously I’ve got quite a few, so I don’t mind using a few, but at least you know you are giving someone something for them to do.”

Some also share them with others who attend the Community House as a way of encouraging and enabling them to have leisure opportunities that might not be available to them.

Quite a few people who use the Community House have families and, as they are often unemployed, Time Credits provide leisure opportunities such as swimming with the children or family visits to the cinema which would otherwise be difficult to afford. Gifting or donating Time Credits is also encouraged and some volunteers have given Time Credits they have earned, supporting other community members to access the spend network opportunities.

“I’ve been to the Hudson swimming, that’s all I’ve actually used mine for, but I’ve given a lot away.”

As a group staff and volunteers have also begun to develop spend opportunities such as fundraising events such as the quiz night and table top sale where people can pay for their stall or entrance fee with Time Credits.

The impact of earning and spending Time Credits for volunteers

For many people volunteering at the Community House offers an alternative to the isolation that often accompanies unemployment.

“It’s got me going places I wouldn’t normally go; I wouldn’t have gone to the cinema.”

In some cases, there has been a clear benefit to the individual in the way that they have become less withdrawn and more active in their community with one person noticeably taking much greater pride in their appearance since they have been involved. For some people their unemployment might be as a result of physical or mental illness or due to their learning disabilities. Time Credits provide a structured environment where there is a reward for the time they contribute but one that is more flexible with less pressure than paid employment; something many people would struggle with. Even where this is the case Time Credits enable people to retain the habit of working and the motivation to look for work and in at least one case a Time Credit member has begun part time work since they became involved in the scheme.

The impact of Time Credits to the organisation

Time Credits have enabled the Community House to offer a level of service and support that would be hard with just a single staff member.

“Being here on my own I need all the help I can get”.

For example, the garden group works virtually without supervision with tasks set at the beginning of the session and checked at the end. This frees up two hours of the Community

House Officer's time. This also means that it is possible to keep on top of a large community garden for which there is no maintenance budget. Simply sitting and talking with someone, such as the gentleman recovering from the stroke, is an important additional service that can be offered, but again if it were down to a single member of staff it would come at the expense of some other activity. Time Credits have also helped the organisation engage more with the wider community through publicising the work they do and also through running joint events such as the quiz night.

Case study 5: The Spinney

About the organisation

Wisbech Adventure Playground, or the Spinney as it is known locally, provides a space and equipment for children to play freely in a child led environment. It is owned and managed by Cambridgeshire County Council and it provides a service mainly to children between the ages of eight and thirteen, although they also offer 'Stay and Play' sessions during the week when parents can bring toddlers. The playground is open 24 hours a day although playworkers are only there after school four days a week and five days during school holidays. Whilst it is hard to get exact numbers, events held at the Spinney such as the National Playday in August attract huge numbers, possibly over 1000 people, from a wide area.

Why Time Credits are used

Time Credits have been used to attract volunteers.

"It's quite hard really some people will come here to volunteer and it's very easy for them to be put off, especially if they come to a session where we might have a lot of challenging behaviour... it can be very hard, but then again we have a lot of our older young people, that started from the age of 13 that will come and volunteer but they know that if they come here there is always something for them to do."

The playworker's time is often limited and volunteers also help with running additional activities, in particular, fund raising activities.

How volunteers earn Time Credits

There are a wide range of different opportunities for members to earn Time Credits at the Spinney.

"It ranges from litter picks to helping with the 'Friends of' café, serving food and drink, helping to clear up and sometimes light maintenance, taking small equipment apart and putting it back together, sometimes a bit of woodwork, helping in the workshop. Helping with the 'stay and play'."

Volunteers from other local Time Credits partner organisations such as the Children's Centres and Orchards School also earn Time Credits with the Spinney helping to run events and also carrying out gardening and litter picking.

How volunteers spend Time Credits

Swimming and the cinema are always popular, the latter particularly for the younger volunteers, with some members getting beauty treatments at the College of West Anglia.

"The girls go to the college and get their nails done and that sort of thing."

A number of volunteers also save their Time Credits up for the holidays when they can spend them in Hunstanton, the local seaside resort where a number of the facilities accept Time Credits.

The impact of earning and spending Time Credits for volunteers

Volunteering at the Spinney has been important for some volunteers in regaining their confidence.

“Take [volunteer] for instance, it has practically turned her life around, she never used to go out much, she has a lot of responsibilities, she looks after her grandchildren, two of them live with her full time. She has grandchildren that she has quite a lot, every week almost. So she's always tied down and I think she kind of lost the confidence to go out much, or coming somewhere like here, without knowing somebody, she found quite hard...I got her to start volunteering, and she really enjoys it...she brings members of her family to help as well... it's a big family and they all get involved, and especially at Christmas time. But coming over here, sometimes, is like a social day out.”

Volunteering can help address potential isolation and increase social contact.

“It gets them out, they don't always have to be with their children. They come here or they take part in other activities in other places and they're mixing with other people so they're not just at home with people they know. So they're meeting new people all the time.”

Other volunteers have had the chance to practice maintain their skills, for example, in the beauty treatments offered in exchange for Time Credits at the National Playday.

“Especially young people who've got families often don't have the spare money to take their children to Hunstanton and go to the Sealife, because it's so expensive. Like [volunteer] will come and earn her Time Credits and they will go swimming or go to the cinema and they wouldn't be able to do it if they couldn't earn their Time Credits, so it's a really big thing.”

Particularly for members with large families, it allows leisure activities that would be difficult to afford otherwise. It means that a visit to the cinema with the children or grandchildren is possible and also, given that there are a number of spend opportunities in Hunstanton, it is possible to save up the Time Credits for family holidays.

The impact of Time Credits to the organisation

Time Credits have been beneficial in encouraging people who might not otherwise volunteer to contribute to the work of the Spinney. The Spinney is located in Waterlees, one of the most deprived wards in Cambridgeshire and so it is significant that local families have been encouraged to volunteer. There are also benefits in the way that volunteers enable the additional activity that is crucial to the organisation, such as fund raising.

“[Volunteer] does the ‘Friends of’, and she opens up the cafe, we wouldn’t be able to have that because playworkers don’t have the time to take an hour to be serving food and drinks, because there’s only really three of us on a session and we get very busy out there, we have to be out there all the time. So she’s doing us a massive favour and not just us but its bringing money in to spend on the children. It goes back in to more food and drink for the children, or their discos or their bouncy castles”.

Finally, volunteering and earning Time Credits has introduced young people to volunteering and it has also encouraged young people who have attended the Spinney to stay involved, to contribute and to maintain the relationship.

“So very often if they come back, like the National Playday they like to come and help. Like for example [volunteer] and [volunteer], they were some of our regular children that attended in the evenings, signed up for Time Credits and would always help. And now they have grown up and they’re a lot older they will come back for Playday and they will help, and they’ll be here all day and they’ll work really really hard”.

Conclusions

As part of the research, a conceptual model of how we expect the different activities associated with earning and spending Time Credits to generate public health outcomes and reduce health inequalities was developed (Figure 1)⁴. The interviews provide data to help evidence these pathways to positive health outcomes.

Where the evidence is the strongest for individuals is 'opportunities to feel needed and capable of making a positive contribution'. Here there is very clear evidence that many of the volunteers for whom there have been obvious benefits have had problems of isolation, low self-esteem and self-confidence and that earning and spending Time Credits has helped considerably. This tends to be predominantly among the group of volunteers for whom Time Credits have a clear economic benefit in addition to the benefits they derive from volunteering.

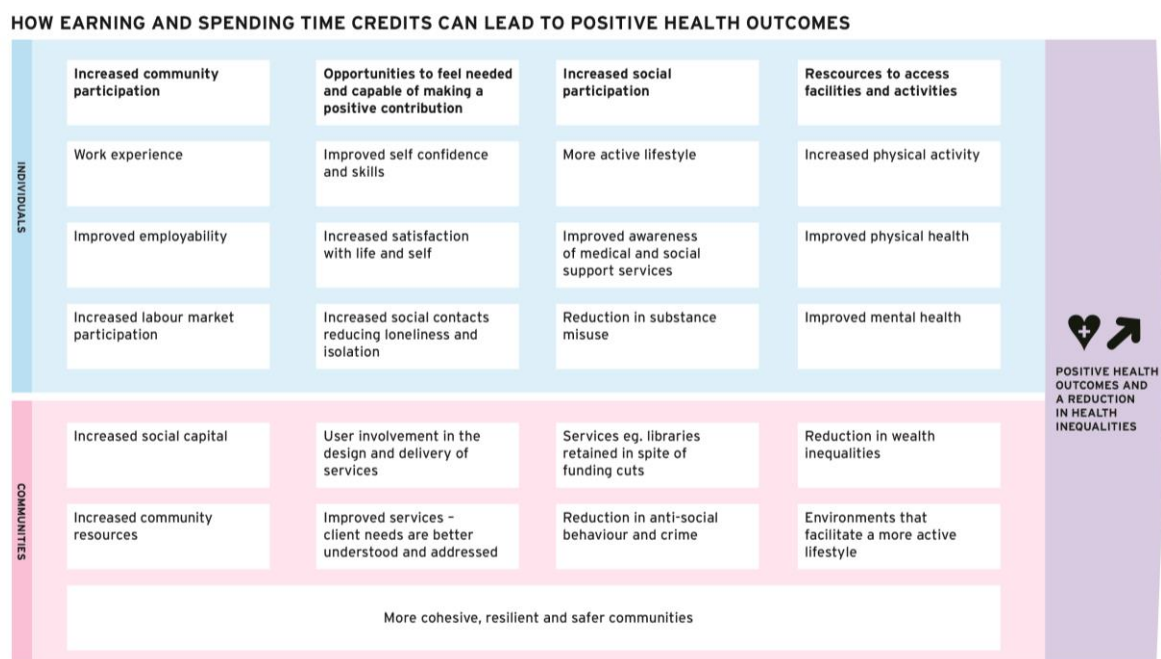


Figure 1

The model does include some pathways to positive health outcomes that relate to organisations. This includes user involvement in the design and delivery of services, improved services because client needs are better understood and addressed, and services being retained despite funding cuts. The case studies show that the use of Time Credits has helped organisations to attract and retain volunteers, including people who are not traditionally those who volunteer. They provide not just an incentive for volunteering, but a reward that has enabled the organisations to develop a more reciprocal relationship with volunteers by directly recognising the input people have given.

⁴ Burgess, G. (2016) Evaluating the Public Health Outcomes of the Cambridgeshire Time Credits Project: Interim Report. Cambridge: Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research.

Using Time Credits has helped to support the core activities of some organisations and provided them with vital capacity to deliver services. They have also supported them to deliver their goals of requiring members to engage in meaningful activity. Time Credits activities have in some cases helped organisations to engage a more diverse community.

There are numerous activities through which people can earn Time Credits. These are helping people to maintain and develop skills, retain and learn work habits, and, for some, are providing a step into paid employment. Volunteering has had a positive impact on the confidence and self-esteem of many volunteers.

Time Credits are spent on activities which can increase social contact and increase physical activity such as going to the cinema, swimming, going to the gym, beauty treatments, days out and at spend activities organised by the earn partners. The opportunities for these community spend activities have been developed in dialogue with volunteers, helping to foster co-productive relationships.

Both the earn and spend activities can help to address isolation and increase social contact. Some volunteers share Time Credits with friends and family, thus distributing the benefits and opportunities more widely and strengthening family relationships in particular through shared activities, many of which families would not otherwise be able to afford.