

Cambourne Timebank

Cambourne Timebank has been running in Cambourne for four years, supported by CHS Group (Cambridge Housing Society). We would like to ask Cambourne Parish Council for funding of £4,000 to cover part of the costs of running the Timebank. The Timebank is funded until 30/04/2017 by a Local Government Association grant but we cannot re-apply to the same source. We are looking at various funding sources, Timebank volunteers have raised £1,000 through our recent art exhibition and an additional £160 through cake sales etc. We have applied for funding from Big Lottery Fund for a 3 year grant as part of a large partnership bid, including other Cambridgeshire Timebanks and Time Credits – our bid was rejected but we were encouraged to re-apply if we could secure more funding from other sources. Somersham Time Bank is run by Somersham Parish Council and the parish precept funds 50% of the cost. We know of at least two other local parishes looking to develop similar models. We are asking for £4,000 which is around 25% of the annual cost of running the Timebank or it would keep the Timebank running for 3 months.

Cambourne Timebank stats

108 members

4,482 hours exchanged since 2012

Organisational members include:

- Cambourne Crier
- Cambourne Church
- 19 The Coffee House
- Cambourne Children's Centre
- Cambourne Everyone Active (Fitness & Sports Centre)
- Cambourne Library
- Care Network (South Cambs)
- DV Solicitors
- Sunflower Nursery (CHS)
- Baby & Me
- The Monkfield Arms

Cambourne Timebank is a community of people and organisations, a pool of talent and resources. You join the timebank and when you do a task for a Timebank member then you can bank the hours of time that you have volunteered, and you can then use them when you want to ask another member of the scheme to do some work for you. So for example, it could be ringing up a socially isolated older person for a chat and then using the hour banked to ask another member of the Timebank to put up a shelf for you.

In your own family and friendship groups, you may know who to call on when you need help to clear out your garage, put up a shed, or fix your computer. However, some people in Cambourne find themselves living far away from their family and they may not feel comfortable asking for help from friends and neighbours. Timebanking can overcome these problems by increasing a member's social connections and by taking the guilt out of asking for help. A member knows that when they ask someone in the Timebank for help, the person who volunteers will be rewarded for their time with Time Credits, which can either be spent on receiving help from another member or with Time Credit vouchers that can be spent at leisure facilities like the cinema, or learning opportunities.

It is the co-coordinator's job to put a timebank member in contact with people who can be useful connections and potential friends. Cambourne Timebank members can meet at regular coffee mornings and pub nights, as well as at events such as family craft days, the Diwali celebration and the science fair. Often conversations between members will spark exchanges, for example on hearing that Chris has mended Joan's trousers with her sewing machine, Melissa says that she has a sewing machine but doesn't know how to use it and would like to learn, and then Chris offers to teach her, so they arrange a lesson. Melissa in turn advises Tapti on how to set up an online blog. Members are also informed about requests for help and upcoming events by email. Members can contact the co-ordinator when they have a request and the co-ordinator will match them with a member who can provide the service.

Cambourne Timebank is unusual for a community group in that it has a paid co-ordinator. This is useful because there is a reasonable amount of administration and organisation involved in the system. More importantly the co-ordinator's job is risk-management; to assess each exchange for risk and to take action to mitigate the risk if necessary. For example, if a member wants their hedge cut down, the co-ordinator will visit their house to assess whether there is good access and the ground is level, and whether the job is of a difficulty that is suitable for an amateur, then the co-ordinator will find someone willing and able to do the job and ensure that they have the right equipment. As many exchanges are one-to-one and in a person's home, in order to mitigate the risk of one member exploiting or abusing another member, two references are taken for each person when they join. DBS checks can also be done.

Most importantly, the co-ordinator helps people who are vulnerable (people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health issues, the elderly etc.) to integrate into the Timebank, not only as recipients of support, but as volunteers. This is crucial because the feeling of being valued and having something to contribute is necessary to our wellbeing and through volunteering the members gain confidence and self-esteem. Timebanking has the added benefit of connecting members to a large group of local people who can become a support network and Timebank exchanges can lead to real friendships. This can have a positive influence on health, wellbeing and resilience. There are other benefits: 6 members of the Timebank have gained employment after being out of work for more than 6 months and 2 members who were severely isolated have started regular volunteering (on a weekly basis). A professional co-ordinator has the

training in health and safety, safeguarding etc. to support the most vulnerable people to take their next steps.

CHS group is in a good position to co-ordinate the Cambourne Timebank because they have 244 properties in Cambourne across 18 streets. The residents of social housing are likely to be more vulnerable than the average resident. The Timebank co-ordinator works within the Community Investment department, which also includes the customer involvement team (who involve residents in the running of CHS), money matters (who offer money and debt advice), and training matters (who offer training and employment advice) teams. Timebank has received 6 members as a result of referrals from these teams and 9 members from other organisations including Richmond Fellowship, Job Centre Plus, Care Network, Illuminate and Cambourne Foodbank. In 2016 we have helped another 5 vulnerable people using Time Credits from the Community Pot, as those people needed help but they did not join the Timebank. The Timebank co-ordinator can also signpost Timebank members to sources of support, including our own teams and partner organisations.

Timebank benefits families on low incomes who lack the money to pay for treats or basic social activities for their children through our two Time Credit voucher schemes: Cambourne Everyone Active vouchers for sports activities and Spice Time Credits, which can be spent on a wide variety of leisure activities across Cambridgeshire. This summer one Timebank member, a mother of 4, was able to pay for cinema tickets for her son and 10 friends with Time Credits for his birthday party, this represented a substantial saving and they wouldn't have been able to afford it otherwise. Children and young people can volunteer too and earn their own Time Credits. This can motivate an otherwise hard to reach group to engage with community volunteering.

Cambourne Timebank has built a good relationship with Cambourne Parish Council over the years and we are sometimes able to collaborate by finding volunteers for events such as the business fair, Christmas lights, as well as regular litter pickers and volunteers for the Parish Plan door-knocking exercise which was so successful in getting a 50% response rate from residents.

Current and future goals

We currently have a focus on supporting women with low confidence and/or mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, to improve their situation by engaging with their community through our Timebank. Cambourne Timebank would like to strengthen our links with Cambourne Children's Centre, Cambourne Church and Cambourne Parish Nurse who run a 'Shine' course for women to build their self-esteem. People suffering with mental health issues often feel socially isolated and we will build links with our Timebank and develop a community of peer support. We know from members' feedback that our friendly social sessions provide a welcome first step for people who are keen but apprehensive about joining community activities. We will develop our partnership with Cambourne Community Hub (where the Library, Doctors surgery and Children's

Centre are located) to unlock community assets and identify and develop opportunities for joint working between the hub and the community. We will build a referral network between partners active in the local area including CHS, Cambridgeshire County Council, voluntary organisations, Job Centre, GPs and Everyone Active (who run the local sports centre and have a Sports-on-Prescription scheme).

Budget

Total costs of running Cambourne Timebank are as follows:

Co-ordinator salary x 2 days	£10,785	10,785
On costs relating to Timebank Co-ordinator (management time)	10% of £10,785 = £1,078.5	1,078.5
Overheads relating to Cambourne Timebank (£7,600 per 1fte - 2dys pw 40% £3,040)		3,040
Travel		£315
Marketing		£300
Annual subscription Timebanking UK		£100
Food and drink for events		£200
Hall hire		£300
Laptop		£200
Phone contract		£360
Training		£100
Total		£16,778.5

We are asking Cambourne Parish Council to contribute £4,000 in 2017 which is about 25% of the total.

Many thanks,

Laura Papanikolaou

Cambourne Timebank Co-ordinator

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Somersham Parish Council's reasons for supporting a Timebank

It became clear six years ago that the national financial position would impact on our public agencies' ability to maintain public service provision at the level we had become used to. As the council closest to the community and responsible to only that one community, the parish council considered its powers, remit and aspirations to benefit the people it served.

A new Community Plan was formed that not only responded to the concerns of residents, but also included elements that required the foresight associated with community leadership. The council decided it had a duty to be prepared to help mitigate the negative affects of inevitable reductions in services provided by others.

The broad areas of concern were;

- Improved engagement and communication, including the better integration of existing community groups and organisations.
- Improved health and well-being.
- Support for vulnerable people.

We were initially challenged by a few as to why our parish council was going beyond what was traditionally expected. Once we stood back and considered those three areas of activity that are so important and integral to any community, the challenge was reversed. Why would a parish council not want to help address these problems?

Several work streams emerged from the Community Plan that would make small improvements, but none were likely to have the impact we were looking for. When the County Council was looking to trial some local initiatives and suggested Timebanking, we immediately grabbed the opportunity and are very pleased we did.

The Timebank helps address all three of the concerns above. It has provided a network of willing residents who are happy to share skills and offer each other favours in a flexible way with minimum commitment. The vulnerable can acquire help without feeling indebted, advice and referrals are routine, and events and inclusive activities are organised. The membership of community organisations now also means that they work more closely and cooperate by pooling resources.

An enthusiastic and effective coordinator is essential to ensure that good governance is assured, safeguards are in place and the benefits are maximised. Coordination is a significant commitment for a volunteer, so in Somersham we took an early decision to recruit a paid coordinator to the council staff. The council underwrites this role to the tune of £12k per annum from the precept, whilst taking advantage of outside funding whenever possible. It has enabled us to achieve our desired outcomes with minimum involvement of councillors. It is probably the best decision we have ever made.

Steve Criswell

Chairman, Somersham Parish Council.