

# Portobello Timebank AGM 2024

## Chair's Report

Timebank has had a busy year with a busy exchange of services and many events, both for Timebank as a whole and in the interest groups.

### Membership

Timebank has continued to attract new members. We have welcomed 12 new members since the AGM in October 2023. Inductions have been offered to all new members and any existing members who wanted a refresher. Since taking over inductions from Richard, I have held 6 sessions, many with help from Jospheine, for a total of 11 people. Members can request an induction by e-mailing myself. Inductions are recommended to become familiar with Timebank's software hOurworld and also for any questions that new members may have.

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 and the day-to-day running, and to plan events and review what has been achieved.

The committee currently has **7 members**, including the chair (Lynda Hepburn), secretary (Anne Stevenson) and treasurer (James Carver), plus membership secretary (Flo Cairns) and three ordinary members (Annette Woodham, Caren Moffett and Josephine Petersson). 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 contributed and for efficient and enjoyable committee meetings.

As of tonight, James and Anne will not be standing for re-election.

### Activities

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

- **4 talks in Bellfield:** on colour (Ben Craven), dark matter (Joachim Harnois-Deraps), history of parchment (Erika Freyr) and Water of Leith bridges (Lynda Hepburn) - all

these have been well attended and also provided a chance for networking over coffee and cake

- **Historic walking tour of Portobello:** a walk around Porty with Eric Wishart in May to point out and explain various plaques and points of interest
- **3 major litter cleans:** November, January and March
- **5 craftalong sessions:** notebooks, Christmas wreaths (3 sessions), Christmas cards, origami boxes, making mozzarella (multiple sessions) and gardening aprons
- **A few pub meet-ups and coffee mornings:** the former in the evening have proved popular with those not free to socialise during daytime.
- **Birdwatching:** many meet-ups, especially in the autumn and between February and June at locations such as Figgate Park for birdsong in spring; Musselburgh lagoons to see the waders and ducks; Bawsinch for a mix of songbirds and mammals; and Aberlady Bay to watch thousands of pink-footed geese. It has been a great year for Timebank bird lovers.
- **Gardening:** community gardening commitments continue, with weekly sessions in Portobello High School. Figgate Lane and Morton Street Triangle have weekly sessions in the growing season. Timebankers also help with work at Joppa Pans. All this contributes significantly to enhancing our community spaces. Huge gratitude is extended to our dedicated participants.
- **The new French Group:** set up in January 2024 and running weekly since then, has proved a very popular new activity with a core of participants plus others joining from time to time. Discussions range from “my first school” to “a favourite film”.

#### **Our Events:**

- Carol singing in December
- Open committee meeting in January
- Afternoon coffee fundraiser with tombola, games, plant sales and a vast spread of cakes in April

Timebank runs events for all Timebankers to join in. Our annual carol singing round the streets of Portobello is a firm favourite. The fairly recently introduced open committee meeting is a chance for members to take part in the committee’s discussions. Our April fundraiser has now become a popular event for all ages, welcoming not just members but the general public for refreshments, a tombola with dozens of prizes, plant sales and a chance to network and learn about Timebank for those new to it.

The AGM and potluck – introduced last year – is another chance to participate in planning the future of Portobello Timebank plus socialising with fellow Timebankers.

### **Help with other's events:**

- Providing the refreshments for the Northfield and Willowbrae environment fair in September

A Timebank team helped with this annual event for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running. As well as being a very worthwhile and interesting event to attend, it is a chance for Timebank to publicise what it does and to raise funds from the sale of bakes and snacks.

Donations were taken at the talks (towards cost of venue hire), during carol singing, at our spring coffee afternoon and at the Environment Fair. Further details are in the treasurer's report.

### **Timebank development**

After the retirement of Richard Wright a year ago, the Timebank committee had to concentrate on integrating new committee members and training them and those already in post to cover the many tasks that Richard had previously taken care of. Suffice it to say that this required at least three people to learn the ropes of various aspects of running Timebank!

Our focus was therefore on keeping business running (the newsletter; enrolling new members and providing inductions in hOurworld software; organising Timebank talks and other events; and monitoring offers and requests on hOurworld).

**In 2023** our focus had been on ramping up exchanges following the lull during the Covid years. We reported on progress at the last AGM.

Here is an update one year later:

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

The total exchanges to end-of-year 2023 – at 352 hours – were lower than the peak year of 2018 (637 hours) and also lower than 2022 (442 hours) – which was rather surprising.

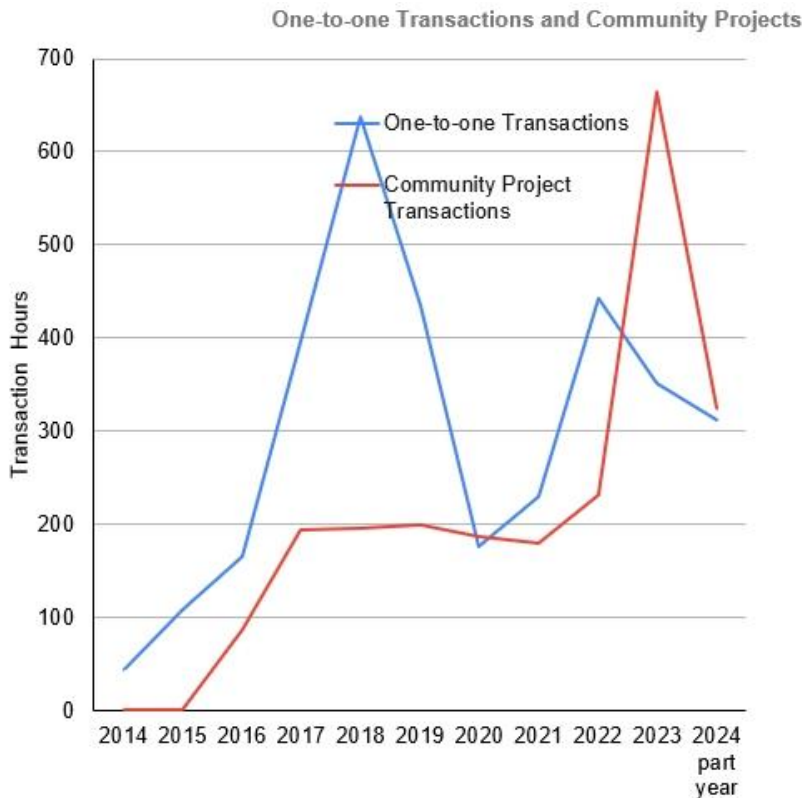
Currently, part-way through the 2024 year, we have clocked up 311 hours of 1:1 swaps, which is 50 more than at the same point last year. So it looks as though we are potentially aiming to reach the 2022 level again.

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

Community hours have continued to increase, with a massive jump in 2023 compared to 2022. 663 community hours were logged in the last full year, almost triple that of the previous year. This year again looks set to reach a high record with 314 community hours logged to date.

Much of this increase in community hours is due to Timebankers offering their time for the Portobello Community Fridge, but also to all the hours put into community gardening, as well as time spent helping the Friday café at Bellfield. It is very welcome to see such community involvement at a personal level by so many in the Timebank.

YEAR	TRANSACTION HOURS	
	One-to-one	Community Projects
2014	43.00	0.00
2015	108.50	0.00
2016	165.65	86.00
2017	396.50	194.25
2018	637.60	195.75
2019	434.75	199.00
2020	175.60	186.00
2021	228.75	180.00
2022	442.25	232.00
2023	352.01	663.50
2023 October	262.51	316.00
2024 (to October)	311.80	324.15



### 2024 aims

The committee began work on a new aim this year: that of strengthening our community links. We have not made a lot of progress to date, with the exception of recruiting many members to Timebank from the Porty Fridge, plus the expanded efforts with community gardening. This goal will be ongoing.

### Timebank Survey

Our **2023 survey** was developed as a follow-on from the ideas generated at **the 2022 AGM**. During 2023 we followed up many of the ideas produced in the survey, increasing publicity (the longer newsletter) and providing more opportunities for Timebankers to meet up socially.

The committee feels it may be time for a new survey, to gauge people's needs and wishes from their Timebank. This is partly due to a noticeable decrease in attendance at some events e.g. litter clearing and the informal social meet-ups in the pub and for coffee, where attendance has now waned to a point where it could be concluded these are no longer required. Birdwatching outings also do not attract as many members as previously.

The committee are always happy to hear of new initiatives that anyone would like to set up. The new French group this year is one example. While committee themselves do not have

more time to devote to this, any member can suggest an idea and the committee can help to gauge interest and provide support with its organisation. **We look forward to hearing any ideas!**

## **Looking Forward**

The committee are now losing two long-standing and valued members: our treasurer James Carver and secretary Anne Stevenson. Fortunately for all of us, Richard (who stood down last year) has taken back some of the IT tasks he used to cover – we are very grateful!

In order for Timebank to continue with what we're currently doing – and hopefully do more in future – we do need people to join the committee. We are currently a small group of 5 and it would be ideal if we could get 2 or 3 new people to pitch in and help keep Timebank active and hopefully expanding.

As well as replacing James and Anne, we need ordinary members to attend meetings, share ideas and take on some of the many tasks of running Timebank: **please think if this could be you!**