

EVALUATION OF IMPACT

TEMPO TIME CREDITS



May 2020

TIME CREDITS

www.wearetempo.org

Tempo



timecredits



@tempo_tweets

hello@wearetempo.org

Apteligen 

Apteligen is the trading name of Apteligen Limited, registered in England and Wales under registration number 7419975.

Disclaimer In keeping with our values of integrity and excellence, Apteligen has taken reasonable professional care in the preparation of this report. Although Apteligen has made reasonable efforts, we cannot guarantee absolute accuracy or completeness of information/data submitted, nor do we accept responsibility for recommendations that may have been omitted due to particular or exceptional conditions and circumstances.

© Apteligen Ltd, 2020

Any enquiries about this report should be directed to: corporate@apteligen.co.uk

With thanks to the Nesta / Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Second Half Fund for supporting this research.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	4
Headlines	5
Part 1: Context and scope of this evaluation	6
1 About this report	7
2 About Time Credits	7
3 The Time Credits Theory of Change	8
4 Scope and objectives of this evaluation	10
5 Overall approach and evaluation methods	10
Part 2: Findings	21
6 Levels of participation and retention of volunteers	22
7 Personal wellbeing	30
8 Social connections and support networks	37
9 Social capital and community resilience	39
10 Health and physical activity	41
11 Impacts on network partners	45
Part 3: Discussion and learning	48
12 New insights about Time Credits from these findings	49
13 What we have learnt from doing this evaluation	52
14 How Tempo plans to respond to this learning	54
Appendices	
15 Appendix 1: Baseline and follow-up surveys	56
16 Appendix 2: Detailed Time Credits Theory of Change – over 50s	71

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

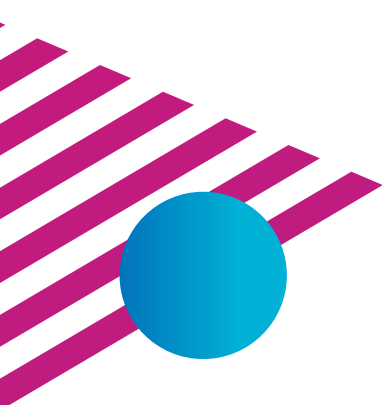
We would like to thank Tempo for their support in conducting this evaluation and in particular the many staff from across Tempo's programmes of work who gave up their time to shape the design of this evaluation, to support local community groups with the evaluation process, and to gather data directly from Time Credits members.

We would also like to thank the Time Credits members, community groups, and Tempo's spend partners who took part in this evaluation. In addition to the time you gave us, you have all provided valuable insights and evidence for this work, which we hope helps to encourage and support more and more people to give time to their communities in the future.



HEADLINES

- Time Credits members are two times more likely to be new to volunteering when compared with the national volunteer population.
- **71%** of Time Credits members earn less than the national living wage. Nearly half (49%) earn less than £10,000 per annum.
- **72%** of Time Credits members give their time to support others, either on a 1:1 basis (such as buddying or befriending), or on a group basis (such as running a peer support group).
- Feelings of happiness increased significantly among Time Credits members, by an average of 0.34 ($p=0.006$). This is notably higher than the shift of 0.04 in the general population between March 2018 and March 2019.
- **71%** of Time Credits members said that they felt less isolated and lonely since becoming involved in Time Credits. 43% of members said that Time Credits had helped them make new friends and acquaintances.
- **57%** of Time Credits members show high levels of trust in others compared with 35% across the UK population. These are among the highest levels of trust globally and suggest a propensity for greater social capital and resilience among Time Credits members and within their own communities.
- There was a **12%** increase in the average level of physical activity among Time Credits members, from 307 minutes per week to 346 minutes per week, along with an average increase of 2 hours per week among those who were already active.



PART 1: **CONTEXT AND SCOPE** **OF THIS EVALUATION**



1 About this report

This report presents the findings of an impact evaluation of Tempo Time Credits in England and Wales. It includes a particular focus on the impact of Time Credits on people over the age of 50, delivered in part through the Nesta / Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Second Half Fund. Previous evaluations have shown the positive impact Time Credits can have on people of all ages. However, with around 45% of members across all programmes aged 50 and older, understanding the impacts for this population, and the ways in which Time Credits work for older people, is an important priority for Tempo.¹

Impact measurement is well embedded within Tempo and there is a growing body of evidence about the positive impact Time Credits can have across society. Since the first impact evaluation report, which was published in 2014, Tempo has been refining and embedding its approach to impact measurement and has built an impressive repository of impact data from thousands of individual members through its annual member surveys (which typically reach around 2,000 members each year), as well as various pieces of thematic research covering topics such as economic justice, and health and care outcomes.

These reports are available at <https://www.wearetempo.org>

This current evaluation represents a new stage in Tempo's impact measurement and evaluation journey. Over the past two years we have been developing and testing new evaluation methods, with the aim of tracking a number of key outcomes for individual Time Credits members, and measuring the change observed in these key outcomes between two points in time (at the start of a member's Time Credits journey and at a defined point after). This means that we can be much more confident about whether or not the changes observed are the result of a person's involvement in Time Credits, and the size of that change.

These new methods also enable us to compare the impact of Time Credits as a tool for engaging more people in communities, improving health and well-being, and building stronger and more resilient communities, when compared to other approaches.

The report is presented in three parts:

- Part 1 sets out the context and scope of this evaluation, and our evaluation methods
- Part 2 presents the findings we observed
- Part 3 provides a discussion on what we feel these findings mean for Tempo, what we have learnt from this process, and how this might shape future measurement and impact evaluation.

2 About Time Credits

Tempo Time Credits is the largest time-based currency in the UK. Time Credits are a community currency that can be earned by volunteers, simply by giving their time. Time Credits help organisations to attract and retain volunteers, drive engagement in services and maximise community participation.

Time Credits act as a thank you for the contributions people give to their community or service. They can then 'spend' Time Credits to access events, training and leisure activities provided by public, community and private organisations, or to thank others in turn.

¹ This is a best estimate based on the data available as age is not a mandatory field as part of the Time Credits sign-up process.



Figure 1: The Time Credits model

Nesta, in partnership with DCMS, launched the Second Half Fund in 2016 to support innovations that mobilise the talents of people over the age of 50, with an emphasis on social action, financial sustainability and scale. Tempo was awarded funding to develop and extend its work with the over 50s and to evaluate the outcomes Time Credits have for this population, building on the evidence gathered to date about the positive impacts of Time Credits on wellbeing, quality of life, social networks, and self-esteem.

3 The Time Credits Theory of Change

The Time Credits model works simply: people earn Time Credits for time contributed to their community or service. These Time Credits can then be spent on accessing activities across a network of spend partners, such as local attractions, live shows, leisure activities, or gifted to others. Tempo's role is to facilitate the creation of a network of community groups that offer Time Credits for their volunteers, provide support to further develop and sustain that network, and to help network partners use Time Credits effectively as a tool for working with people in new, asset-based ways. These activities lead to a range of different outcomes for the partner organisations using Time Credits, their volunteers who earn and spend them, and collectively across whole communities.

For partners, Time Credits lead to increased engagement among volunteers and service users in the design and delivery of services, better use of existing resources and the creation of new capacity and capabilities, and the provision of better and more personalised support. These outcomes are based on an assumption that:

- Tempo's support is effective and timely for different groups
- Organisations (community groups) are open to involving new people and working in new ways, and
- Those groups actively engage with the local network, sharing ideas and exploring new opportunities together.

For individual volunteers, Time Credits lead to many possible outcomes, which have been evidenced in previous evaluations. These include being more active in their communities, engaging in new and different activities, meeting new people, feeling that they have made a positive contribution, and feeling valued. This in turn leads to increased social connectedness (and reduced social isolation), improved confidence and self-esteem, feeling more empowered, and improved health and personal wellbeing.

These outcomes for individual volunteers are based on the following key assumptions:

- The earn and spend opportunities available appeal to people, are accessible, and align with people’s strengths and interests
- People have enough time to earn Time Credits regularly, and to spend them regularly (or to gift them to family and friends), and
- Where necessary, individuals are actively supported to earn and spend Time Credits in ways that suit their own circumstances.

At the level of whole communities, the outcomes for community groups and their volunteers can lead to more effective use of resources across a community, stronger support networks, greater inclusion, and the potential to reduce inequality.

Ultimately this contributes to more connected and resilient communities, improved population health and wellbeing, and a better system of care and support.

4 Scope and objectives of this evaluation

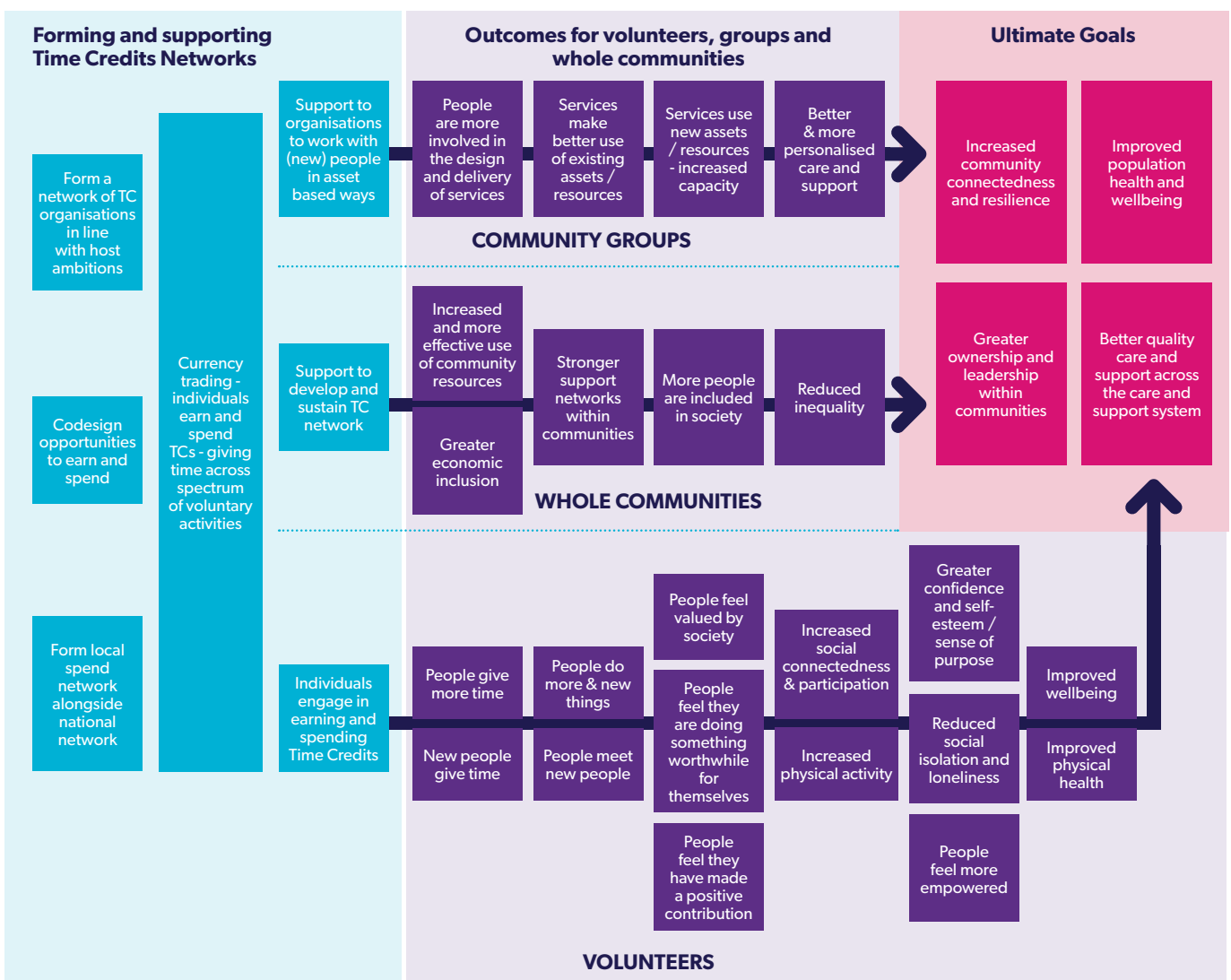


Figure 2: The Time Credits Theory of Change

The objectives of this evaluation were to:

- Deepen Tempo's understanding of impact across all its programmes of work, but with a particular focus on its work with the over 50s and in relation to those outcomes that are important for commissioners and funders
- Develop and test new evaluation methods that would enable Tempo to build a more statistically robust dataset of impact across its key outcome measures, by introducing a system to measure these outcomes when individuals join a Time Credits scheme and at defined points after this
- Carry-out analysis of data by region, programme and project, and by member demographic profiles, in order to understand which population segments Time Credits have the greatest or least impact on, and
- Begin to set out comparative analysis of the impact of Time Credits as a community engagement tool compared to other approaches.

The evaluation is intended to meet a standard of evidence that means we can demonstrate and measure the effect size on key outcomes for those people who engage in Time Credits, and to begin to attribute that change to their involvement. We have included qualitative research in this evaluation with members and partners in order to help understand possible causality, focusing on Tempo programmes with a mix of ages, and a mix of new and existing volunteers joining Time Credits.

We have also used a number of outcome measures that feature in large population datasets and which are consistent with other published research and government statistics. This means that we can begin to draw much more meaningful comparisons of the changes observed with the wider population and / or other community engagement programmes.

While this current evaluation represents a big step forward in Tempo's evaluation journey, it is still early days. We hope that the learning from the last two years will continue to help shape the way in which this data is gathered, analysed and used as part of Time Credits programmes in the future.

5 Overall approach and evaluation methods

5.1 Evaluation questions

This evaluation was designed to address five primary evaluation questions:

1. To what extent do Time Credits programmes lead to improved well-being and greater social interaction, and how does this vary for different groups or subsets of individuals across target populations?
2. To what extent can Time Credits programmes lead to reduced demand on public services?
3. To what extent do Time Credits programmes lead to increased and sustained engagement and participation within communities and how does this vary for different groups or subsets of individuals across target populations?
4. What are the mechanisms through which Time Credits programmes support the development of increased engagement and participation within communities and how does this compare with other volunteer engagement interventions?
5. To what extent do Time Credits programmes act as drivers for building capacity and capability across community and voluntary sector organisations, in particular for those supporting over 50s /older people?
6. In order to address these questions, we developed a high level outcome map that sets out the main impact areas of interest, the specific outcomes to be measured in each (drawn from

the Theory of Change), and the primary data sources. This is shown in Table 1 below.

5.2 Evaluation methods

This evaluation was undertaken between October 2017 and March 2020. This period includes evaluation design (including design of survey tools) and reporting. Data collection was undertaken between April 2018 and October 2019 (18 months). The following methods were used for the evaluation:

1. Baseline (pre-intervention) and follow-up (post-intervention) surveys of individual Time Credits members. A total of 2,525 baseline surveys were sent to new members over the data collection period, and 586 were received (23% response rate). 193 were subsequently matched to a completed follow-up survey (33% response rate). 66% of those who completed both a baseline and follow-up survey were aged 50+
2. Journey mapping with 27 Time Credits members in small groups across four network areas: Cheshire West and Chester, Cornwall, Haringey and Westminster,² and
3. Journey mapping with 13 partner organisations, run concurrently with the member group sessions in the same network areas.

We have also made use of data from the 2019 annual survey (published separately) and previous impact reports where necessary to further explain the findings and demonstrate the strength of the evidence.

²These areas were chosen because they were all relatively new projects and were recruiting increasing numbers of new members, and had staff capacity to work with groups and support the evaluation process. There was also likely to be a mix of existing and new volunteers.

Impact area or assumption	Outcomes (to measure in evaluation)	Data source (where relevant)
Whole communities / system (partly within Tempo control)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater economic inclusion • Increased and more effective use of community resources • More people are included in society 	<p>Baseline and follow-up survey</p> <p>Qualitative research with organisations</p> <p>Time Credits monitoring data</p>
Services and organisations (partly in Tempo control)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people involved in design and delivery of services • Services make better use of existing assets and resources • Services use new assets and resources – increased capacity • Services better meet need • Stronger support networks within communities • Reduced demand on services 	<p>Qualitative research with organisations</p> <p>[Contextualised with previous partner survey data and 'change in organisations' report]</p>
Individuals (least within Tempo control)**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People give more time • New people give time • More service users give time • People spend their time credits • People do new things • People meet new people • People feel valued by society • People feel they are doing something worthwhile for themselves • People feel they have made a positive contribution (for others) • Increased social connectedness and participation • Increased physical activity • Better use of strengths people have • Greater confidence and self-esteem • Reduced social isolation and loneliness • People feel more empowered / involved in care • Improved mental well-being and life satisfaction • Improved physical health 	<p>Baseline and follow-up survey (over 50s)</p> <p>Annual survey data to fill gaps</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumption – level / frequency of volunteering needed to achieve change 	<p>Cross tabs of baseline and follow-up survey data against ONS4 and WEMWBS scores</p>

Table 1: Summary of key outcomes being measured in this evaluation

Survey design and method

The survey was designed so that we could measure a number of key outcomes for people who earn and spend Time Credits. These were informed by the Theory of Change and outcome map. In broad terms these measures were:

- Personal subjective wellbeing, using the ONS4 measures (life satisfaction, happiness, feeling worthwhile, and anxiety)
- Mental wellbeing (using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale – SWEMWBS)
- Social networks and social trust, using questions from the national Community Life Survey
- Levels of physical activity, measured in line with the Sport England methodology, and
- Changes in use of statutory health and social care services.

The survey also collected basic demographic and socio-economic information, along with earn and spend activity. There are opportunities to streamline this in the future by linking the survey data with membership sign-up forms and monitoring data. This was out of the scope of the current evaluation.

The baseline survey was administered shortly after a person signed-up to become a Time Credits member (around 3.5 weeks on average) and the follow-up survey around six months later. It was available for people to complete either online (via an email link) or on a paper form. Around 50 baseline surveys were completed over the telephone in order to test this as an approach for increasing response rates.³ Around 15 of these were included in the final sample (matched with a completed follow-up survey). If needed, members could be supported by a carer, support worker, parent, Tempo Network Manager, or friend or family member in order to complete the survey.

Copies of both surveys are available in Appendix 1.

Qualitative research

In-depth qualitative research (through group workshop activities) was undertaken with 27 members and 13 community groups. This involved individuals and network partners mapping their Time Credits journey to date, and identifying how they felt at each key stage of that journey, and what changes they observed. Groups were included if they were able to attend a network-wide session arranged by the relevant Tempo network lead. Members were chosen by group leads on a convenience basis and invited to those same sessions.

We feel that the groups and members involved in the qualitative research represent a good mix of Time Credits programmes relevant to the evaluation questions, including those working with over 50s and with both new and existing volunteers.

³This was found to be highly resource intensive by Tempo and not likely to be a sustainable method in future evaluation.

Community group	Area / programme	Description
YMCA	Cornwall	Residential rehabilitation centre supporting individuals with addiction issues in their recovery journey.
Addaction Chy	Cornwall	Offers supported housing for young people aged 16-25 who are vulnerable, homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
St Mungos Haringey West	Haringey	Housing-related, recovery focused support for people with severe and enduring mental health diagnosis.
Breadline London	Haringey	Supporting families to raise themselves out of the cycle of poverty through budgeting, healthy eating, financial education and the creation of micro business.
Hoole Community Centre	Cheshire West & Chester	Community centre in Hoole, Chester providing 50+ and age-friendly social activities including knit and natter. Volunteers help out in the café and other services.
Ash-Worth Timebank	Cheshire West & Chester	A time-bank in Ashton Hayes with a primary objective of supporting older isolated people in a rural community. People volunteer their time to befriend older people and help them with day to day tasks like shopping and attending health appointments.
Deafness Support Network	Cheshire West & Chester	Deafness Support Network provide a wide range of support and services for people with sensory loss across Cheshire West.
Marylebone Project	Westminster	A female-only homeless project, providing a mix of medium and long stay beds and a day centre facility for rough sleepers.
Paddington Development Trust – Champions	Westminster	Health-based volunteering.
St John's Hospice	Westminster	Provide care and support to over 4,000 patients and their families each year, both in the hospice and in the community. Volunteers support a number of areas, including: day centre, inpatient unit, reception desk, administration, fundraising, engagement events, bereavement groups, therapies.
Team Westminster	Westminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassadors: volunteers support public events in Westminster • Social action: one-off events in Westminster • Active: volunteering in sport related
Drug & Alcohol Wellbeing Service - Turning Point	Westminster	Turning Point is a national social enterprise, offering specialist and integrated services across England and Wales, focusing on substance misuse, learning disability, mental health and employment.

Table 2: Community groups included in the qualitative research

Area / programme	Number of members who completed a journey map	Focus of programme
Cheshire West & Chester	3	Cheshire West and Chester Time Credits aims to positively impact local individuals, communities and services. This follows a successful pilot where Cheshire West and Chester Council and the innovation foundation, Nesta, worked in partnership on a national programme on the value of Time Credits for older people.
Cornwall	3	Cornwall Time Credits has been commissioned by Cornwall County Council and engages local Substance Use and homelessness services. The programme's focus is to support recovery, successful completion of treatment programmes and to enable services users to become more involved in community activity.
Haringey	12	Haringey Time Credits is delivered in partnership with Haringey Council and Haringey Mind and has two strands: Mental Health & Prevention, and Substance Use & Recovery. Both programmes are embedding Time Credits through local services and community organisations. Haringey Time Credits enables service users to increasingly co-produce services and become more involved in community activity, supporting improved mental health and substance use recovery.
Westminster	9	Westminster Time Credits is a programme that links Time Credits into housing, libraries, homelessness services, education services, mental health services, befriending, arts groups, Team Westminster and a wide range of other local community groups and organisations. Supported by Westminster City Council, the programme aims to increase participation and volunteering from all sections of the community and across all ages.

Table 3: Number of member journey maps completed by area / Time Credits programme

We feel that the groups and members involved in the qualitative research represent a good mix of Time Credits programmes relevant to the evaluation questions, including those working with over 50s and with both new and existing volunteers.

In addition to this evaluation report, a number of thematic reports⁴ have been published over the last two years, which draw on some of the data presented in this report as well as wider evidence. These are:

- A report on Time Credits and their contribution to better Health and Social Care Outcomes
- A report on Tempo's unique national 'spend network' and its fundamental role in achieving positive outcomes for individuals, groups, spend partners and communities
- A report demonstrating how Tempo's work is supporting economic justice through valuing everyone's time equally, and

⁴Available at: <https://www.wearetempo.org/our-impact>.

- A report describing how Tempo is supporting organisations to use Time Credits as a tool to attract new people into volunteering, reach more people, become more sustainable and improve services.

These reports are available at www.wearetempo.org

5.3 Profile of the data sample

This section now considers the profile of the responses to the survey. It looks not only at the profile of responses in order to help contextualise the findings, but also considers how this compares to the baseline membership profile to illustrate how representative the data is. The baseline survey was sent to all new members across the projects and therefore represents the whole population profile against which to compare the profile of responses. In the analysis presented in this section we consider only those who completed both the baseline and follow up survey as this is the sample population on which all our findings have been developed.

Our observations indicate that as a sample, the survey responses appear to be broadly representative and that none vary sufficiently to raise concerns that it may bias the findings.

5.3.1 Age profile

The chart below shows the age profile, at baseline, of the respondents who completed both surveys. Approximately a third of respondents were aged between 50 and 64, with a further 27% aged between 65 and 79 and 24% aged 35 – 49. Overall two thirds (66%) were aged 50 or older, with 50% of the whole sample aged between 55 and 74.

Age profile of respondents

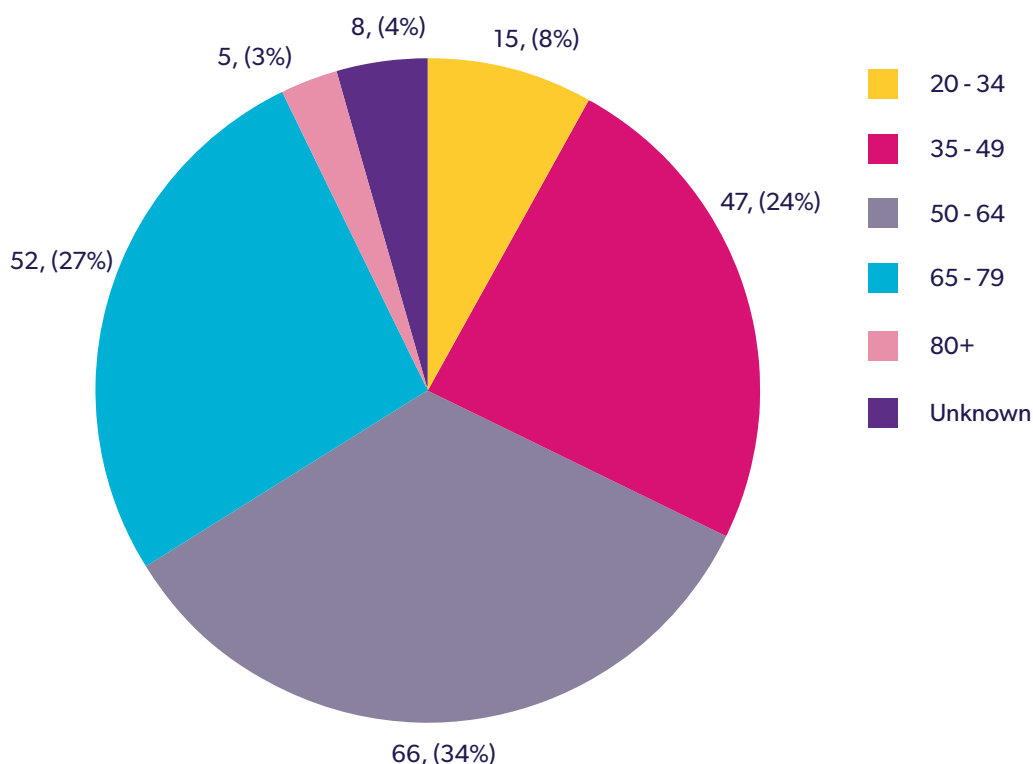


Figure 3: Age profile of survey respondents

5.3.2 Gender profile

The chart below shows the gender profile of the 185 respondents. As can be seen from the chart below, approximately two thirds of the respondents were female and a third were male. Data regarding the profile of who the survey was sent to has some gaps but where the gender is known, it seems to indicate that the response rate is fairly consistent with the overall Time Credits member population. Similarly, in the 2019 annual survey, the profile was similar with 69% female and 26% male.

Gender profile of respondents

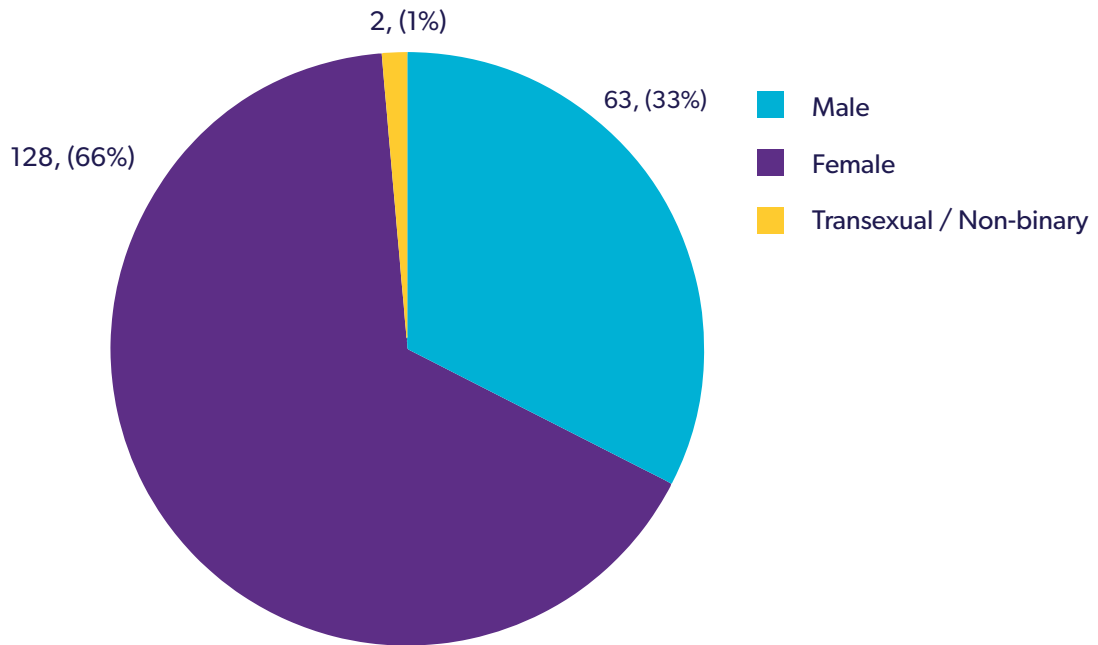


Figure 4: Gender profile of survey respondents

5.3.3 Household income

The chart below shows the average household income (at baseline) of the respondents who completed both surveys. Nearly a third of respondents chose not to provide their household income. However, of those where we have the data, a quarter have a household income of less than £10,000 and a further 17% have an income of £10,000 to £19,000. When considering these profiles against the profile of those who were sent a survey, it appears that these figures, whilst broadly representative, may slightly understate the proportion of households where the income is less than £10,000.

Household income profile of respondents

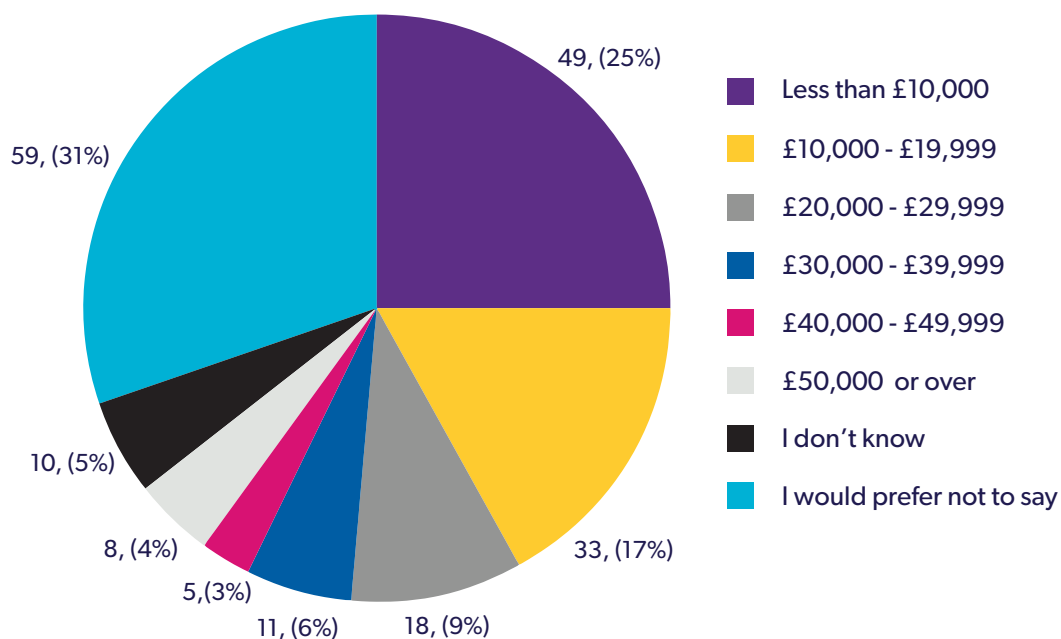


Figure 5: Household income profile of survey respondents

From the data above, the average income across this sample is roughly £19,000 – £20,000 based on the above figures. By comparison, the mean UK household income across all households is £33,834 and when breaking this down by retirement status, the household income average is £27,453 in retired households and £36,239 for non-retired households.⁵ As can be seen from the above chart, our sample is well below those averages. Research shows that volunteers tend to have higher than average incomes, suggesting that Time Credits may be effective at reaching people on lower incomes.⁶

5.3.4 Employment

Among those who completed both surveys, 41% of respondents were retired at the point at which they completed the baseline. There were 22% who were employed part time or full time and a further 7% who were self-employed, bringing the total employed to 29% of respondents. Whilst broadly consistent with the profile of all new volunteers who were sent the survey, a larger proportion of those who completed the survey were retired.

⁵The effects of taxes and benefits on household income - flash estimate: financial year ending 2018, Office for National Statistics. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/bulletins/theeffectsoftaxesandbenefitsonhouseholdincome/financialyearending2018>.

⁶<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5342233/> (Volunteering, income and health, 2017).

Employment status profile of respondents

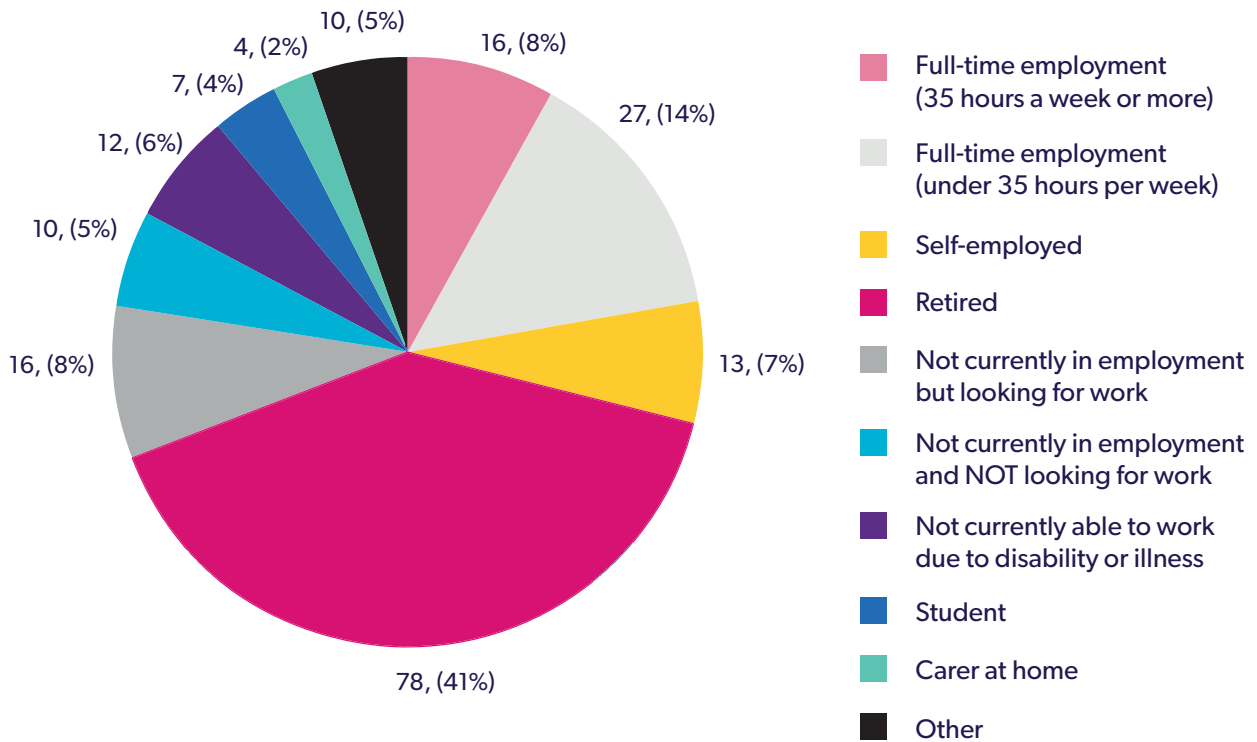


Figure 6: Employment status of survey respondents

5.3.5 Ethnicity

The data on ethnicity shows that 85% consider themselves English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British Irish. Of the remaining 15%, 8% gave their ethnicity as "Other".

5.3.6 Disability

Across the respondents who completed both surveys, 73% said that they did not have a disability. Of the 27% who said they did:

- 62% said that they had a long-term health condition
- 43% said they had a mental health condition
- 32% said they had a physical disability
- 13% said they had a learning disability and
- 11% had a sensory impairment.
- A final 19% said "Other"

This means that approximately 16% of those who completed the survey reported a long-term condition. Estimates from the Department of Health and Social Care are that 23% of the population have a long-term condition,⁷ however, we do not think that the survey data is complete enough to accurately compare these figures. Based on anecdotal evidence we believe that the survey understates the number of Time Credits members with a long term condition.

⁷Long Term Conditions Compendium of Information, UK Department of Health and Social Care.

The average (median) time between completion of the surveys was around six months, although some were considerably longer or shorter than this. Baseline surveys were completed on average (median) 3.5 weeks after joining Time Credits, although again there are some very high values in the data. Although there is baseline and follow up data for seven different Tempo projects, 68% of the sample is from three of these. These are: Cornwall, Cheshire West and Chester, and Westminster. This is not surprising as these three projects, and in particular Cornwall and Westminster, are larger projects, with the original baseline survey being sent to a larger number of new members.



PART 2: FINDINGS



This part of the report sets out the evidence we have gathered during this evaluation and follows the outcome areas defined in our outcome map and evaluation framework.

6 Levels of participation and retention of volunteers

In order to evaluate Time Credits as a tool for increasing levels of participation and volunteer retention we looked at four key areas:

- The proportion of members new to volunteering (this has also been reported in previous impact surveys)
- The regularity and frequency of volunteering (at least once a month)
- The intensity of volunteering (number of hours per month), and
- Recognition that all Time Credits members are undertaking formal volunteering.⁸

6.1 Key finding 1 – Time Credits as a tool for attracting new volunteers

Time Credits are likely to be a more effective tool for attracting people who are new to volunteering when compared with all volunteering nationally. This is especially true among younger volunteers.

Previous impact evaluations of Time Credits have shown that among those who sign up to earn and spend Time Credits, between 50% and 60% have never or only rarely volunteered before. We define this as new to volunteering (as opposed to people who were already regularly volunteering at the point when they signed up to Time Credits).

45% of those who completed a baseline survey in this evaluation said that they had never or only rarely volunteered before: 14% had never volunteered before, while 31% had only occasionally volunteered in the past or had not volunteered for some time.

Recent analysis of national volunteering data shows that there were around 1.1M new volunteers in 2019, among the 20.1M people who undertake formal volunteering in Great Britain every year.^{9,10} This is roughly 5.5%.

This means that Time Credits members are two times more likely to be new to volunteering.

We also know that the responses to the baseline survey were probably biased towards existing volunteers, based on our knowledge of those Time Credits programmes from which many of the responses came, and also the consistency of results seen in the past three Tempo annual member surveys.¹¹ This means that this figure could be even higher.

⁸ Formal volunteering refers to giving unpaid help through a club, community group or other organisation. This is distinct from informal volunteering which is typically unpaid help provided directly between people, such as helping a neighbour or friend. All Time Credits members give their time through a group or organisation and are therefore considered as carrying out formal volunteering.

⁹ Kickstarting a new volunteer revolution, Royal Voluntary Service, 2019. Available at: <https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/Uploads/Documents/Reports%20and%20Reviews/kickstarting-a-new-volunteer-revolution-report.pdf>.

¹⁰ Time Well Spent: A national survey on the volunteer experience, NCVO, January 2019. Available at: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy/research/time-well-spent>.

¹¹ Each year Tempo surveys around 2,000 members asking about their experiences of Time Credits and the impact of earning and spending on their lives.

Historical data confirms that rates of volunteering in the general population are fairly stable year on year.¹²

Volunteers under the age of 50 tend to be more likely to be new to volunteering, however, 40% of people 50+ still had either never or rarely volunteered before earning Time Credits.

New to volunteering by under or over 50



Figure 7: Proportion of Time Credits members new to volunteering: 2018-2019 baseline survey

6.2 Key finding 2 – Encouraging people from lower socio-economic groups to volunteer

Time Credits are an effective tool for encouraging people from lower socio-economic groups to volunteer, helping to increase the diversity of the population who volunteer on a regular basis.

Formal volunteering has for many years been associated with people from more wealthy backgrounds. There is also evidence to suggest that those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, or those with a disability are less likely to volunteer regularly.

‘Britain’s volunteer community is tilted towards people who are white, middle-class and middle-aged. We need active strategies to close these gaps.’ – Peter Kellner, Chair of NCVO¹³

However, the most significant differences between volunteers and non-volunteers relate to socio-economic status and education.¹⁴ 44% of those from higher socio-economic groups are more likely to have volunteered in the last 12 months compared with 30% from lower socio-economic groups.¹⁵

¹² See: <https://data.ncvo.org.uk/volunteering/>

¹³ See: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/charities-must-address-class-divide-in-volunteering-says-ncvo-study.html>.

¹⁴ Time Well Spent: A national survey on the volunteer experience, NCVO, January 2019. Available at: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy/research/time-well-spent>.

¹⁵ *Ib id.*

While the data collected from Time Credits members does not allow us to allocate people to the same social grade system used in the above research, we do know that 71% of those who responded to the baseline survey and who provided their income, have a household income of less than £20,000 per annum.¹⁶ Nearly half (49%) earn less than £10,000.

Putting this in context, the national living wage is currently the equivalent of around £19,000 per annum (UK wide) – or £22,000 in London – which means that Time Credits do appear to attract a high number of people from lower incomes, and potentially many more than is the case among all volunteers nationally. This has important implications for how Time Credits can be used as a tool for reaching those who can benefit the most from getting involved in their communities.

‘Volunteering can be truly transformative for people’s lives. It reduces isolation, improves confidence, provides new experiences, improves employment prospects, and fundamentally it’s deeply rewarding. But sadly, those who stand to benefit the most from volunteering are less likely to be involved. – Peter Kellner, Chair of NCVO¹⁷

We did not find any other notable results on potential indicators of diversity among Time Credits members when compared with the wider population of volunteers,¹⁸ including on ethnicity, disability, and employment.

6.3 Key finding 3 – Giving time regularly

Time Credits encourage regular giving – nearly all Time Credits members (97%) volunteer at least once a month while Time Credits members give on average at least as much time as the national average, around 8 and a half hours per month.

Nationally, around 60% of people who undertake formal volunteering give their time at least once a month.¹⁹ Our survey shows that 97% of Time Credits members (who are all considered formal volunteers) give their time at least once a month. This is notably higher than the national picture.

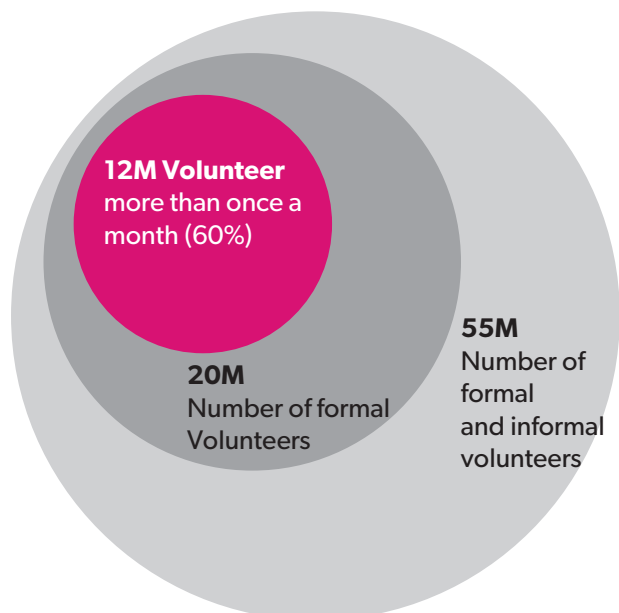


Figure 8: Proportion of volunteers in the UK who give their time at least once a month. Source: UK Civil Society Almanac, NCVO, 2019.

¹⁶ This figure excludes retired people and includes those in either part-time or full-time employment.

¹⁷ See: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/charities-must-address-class-divide-in-volunteering-says-ncvo-study.html>.

¹⁸ Comparing to data from the UK Community Life Survey.

¹⁹ UK Civil Society Almanac, NCVO, 2019. Available at: <https://data.ncvo.org.uk/volunteering/>

In addition to this, recent research²⁰ on the connection between volunteering and wellbeing has shown that:

- There is a positive association between volunteering and life satisfaction, roughly equal in size to one-sixth of the association with full-time employment and comparable to lifting an individual out of a deprived neighbourhood
- More frequent volunteering is associated with a higher wellbeing uplift. For volunteering at least once a week it is almost three times higher than for volunteering several times a year, and
- Formal volunteering (such as with Time Credits) is much more strongly associated with wellbeing than informal volunteering. The wellbeing association with formal volunteering at least once a month is comparable to moving from self-employment to paid employment or from cohabitation to marriage.

While we don't know from the data available what percentage of Time Credits members volunteer at least once a week, we do know that just over half (53%) earn six or more Time Credits per month. We also know from previous interviews we have undertaken with members that this is likely to be spread over 2 or 3 sessions a month. This would suggest, based on frequency of volunteering alone, that around half (if not more) Time Credits members will experience notable improvements in their wellbeing as a result of volunteering.

Nationally, the average (median) hours of volunteering undertaken per month is eight hours.²¹ Analysis of survey responses shows that Time Credits members were giving on average 8.5 hours per month at the point they completed the follow-up survey.²²

In general, of those who said they had earned Time Credits, 43% gave between 1 – 5 hours per month, and this was the most common frequency across those of all ages. There is most variation in the amount of time given in the 35 – 49 age band, with 38% indicating they give 1 – 5 hours per month, 23% giving 6 – 10 hours, 18% giving 11 – 15 hours and 13% giving 16 – 20 per month.

Hours given per month by age

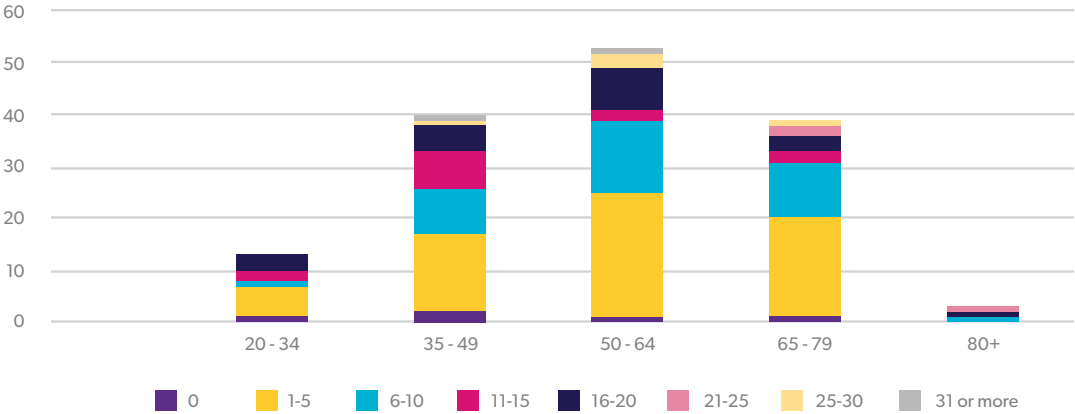


Figure 9: Hours given by Time Credits members per month by age

²⁰Happy Days, Does volunteering make us happier or is it that happier people volunteer, Jump, 2019.

²¹NCVO Time Well Spent report, A National Survey on the Volunteer Experience, January 2019.

²²We have used follow-up survey results here as many members had not started earning Time Credits at the time when they completed the baseline survey.

6.4 Key finding 4 – Supporting those with health and care needs

Time Credits members tend to be more likely to provide ‘support’ volunteering when compared with volunteers nationally, which has important implications for how Time Credits programmes can support the health and care system at a community level.

Volunteering plays a crucial role alongside statutory services to support the more formal, state-funded pathways of care and support. Many of the organisations that sign up to a Time Credits network have at their core a commitment to support the health and care needs of some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

The data from this evaluation has shown that the majority of Time Credits members most commonly give their time for what we define as ‘support’ volunteering. This is volunteering that typically involves an element of peer support for people experiencing particular circumstances (whether that be an illness or a particular social situation) provided by those with lived experience.

35% of members who responded to the survey said that they give their time for support volunteering on a 1:1 basis (such as buddying or befriending), 37% on a group basis (such as running a peer support group), and 35% provided ‘other’ volunteering, including: giving time as a café, retail or warehouse volunteer, museum tour guide, or distributing leaflets.²³ Nationally, the most common activities that regular volunteers give their time for are: helping to organise or run an event (45%), administrative help / tasks (36%), and getting others involved in the group or representing the group at meetings or events (32%).

While the way in which data is captured at a national level is different from our evaluation survey, we believe that these results are notable even after allowing for those differences. From the national data, the areas most in line with the definition of support volunteering used by Tempo typically show figures of 26% or less.

²³ Note that these figures add up to more than 100% as survey respondents could select more than one option.



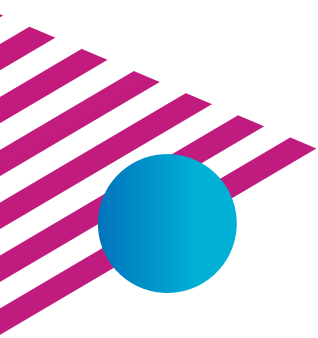
Type of volunteering activity	% of Time Credits	Type of volunteering activity	% of volunteers nationally ²⁴
Support volunteering (1:1)	35%	Gave advice/information/ counselling to people	26%
Support volunteering (group)	37%	Befriended or mentored people	20%
		Visited people (e.g. those in need)	12%

Table 4: Types of support volunteering among Time Credits members and volunteers nationally

This emphasis on support volunteering means that Time Credits programmes are well-placed to help build community capacity across health and care systems, especially when compared with more generic initiatives that promote volunteering.

This may be because Time Credits are especially attractive to those organisations that provide 1:1 or group support for vulnerable people. Or it may be because of the potential for Time Credits to shift the way groups engage with their service users, and to become more co-productive in the services they deliver. Further research would be needed in order to explore these findings further.

However, we do know that Tempo has built considerable expertise over the years in effectively engaging with these types of charitable groups and organisations, and working in close partnership with commissioners of statutory services, to make Time Credits work effectively in this context.



²⁴NCVO Time Well Spent report, A National Survey on the Volunteer Experience, January 2019, p.26.

IMPACT STORY - AD'S CUPPAS

Ad had an alcohol addiction when he suffered two strokes and a heart attack, and spent a year in hospital. During that time, his social worker helped him to think about getting involved in his community to aid his recovery and long-term wellbeing.

He set up a weekly coffee morning called Ad's Cuppas, also known as Brew-it. Brew-it is associated with Flintshire DO-IT, a grassroots community network that supports people to connect with their communities and put their skills to good use.

"It was a nice way for me to give back to the community," says Ad, "I set up this coffee morning to give people a place to go and help people who are stuck in the house. By coming here, we get out and have a chat - it stops us getting lonely."

Ad has been earning Time Credits for the sessions which are attended by up to 30 people a week, including 8 children from the school across the road. "The kids absolutely love coming here!" says Ad, "every week they come in screaming with joy – its lovely."



6.5 Key finding 5 – Effectively retaining volunteers

Time Credits effectively support volunteer retention by offering an additional reward for giving time to the community.

National data on volunteer retention shows that the vast majority of recent volunteers (80%) say that they are very or fairly likely to continue volunteering. This data has not been captured as part of Tempo evaluations in the past, nor was it part of the survey for this current evaluation.

However, we do know from the most recent annual survey of Time Credits members that around half of them had been earning Time Credits for more than three years. Nearly two thirds (63%) had been earning for more than two years. We also know from other research that volunteering journeys do vary along the life course and it is typical for people to come and go throughout their lives.²⁵

²⁵ See for example, NCVO Time Well Spent report, A National Survey on the Volunteer Experience, January 2019.

Length of time earning Time Credits	% of Time Credits members
Less than 6 months	12%
7 – 12 months	12%
13 – 18 months	6%
19 – 24 months	7%
2 – 3 years	13%
3 – 4 years	8%
More than 4 years	42%

Table 5: Length of time earning Time Credits – 2019 annual impact survey

There is also some evidence from the qualitative research that groups find Time Credits an effective way of retaining more volunteers, connected with the fact that Time Credits enable them to value and recognise the contributions their volunteers make in a way that is otherwise not possible.

The results of a previous evaluation survey (2016) showed that 58% of groups agree or strongly agree that Time Credits have helped them retain volunteers.²⁶ More recent surveys show that between 73% and 89% of groups believe that Time Credits have helped them with volunteer retention.²⁷

Members from the 2019 annual impact survey said of the value of Time Credits in encouraging them to continue volunteering:

'It's a really nice thank you for the voluntary work I do, and is hugely appreciated. It feels as if the community is saying thank you for your efforts. I'm looking forward to spending my time credits.'

'I love how I have become more involved with my community and have met and encouraged people to come on the walks. I know that by showing up every week I am earning a time credit and it means I can use them to spend days out with my family.'

²⁶ Internal evaluation survey with Time Credits network partners (2016) – not published.

²⁷ Based on 74 responses from partner organisations across five Time Credits areas: Westminster, Bexley, Harlow, City of London and Wales (older people's groups).

7 Personal wellbeing

7.1 Introduction

While there remains ongoing debate about the definition of wellbeing, its measurement, and the importance of wellbeing in a policy-making context, there have been significant advances in our understanding of wellbeing over recent years. Much of this has been driven by the Measuring National Wellbeing Programme at the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS).²⁸

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing uses the following definition of wellbeing: 'Wellbeing, put simply, is about 'how we are doing' as individuals, communities and as a nation and how sustainable this is for the future.'²⁹ Within this, the Centre defines wellbeing as having 10 dimensions, including personal wellbeing, which is defined as 'how satisfied we are with our lives, our sense that what we do in life is worthwhile, our day to day emotional experiences (happiness and anxiety) and our wider mental wellbeing.'³⁰

We also know that volunteering has been shown to improve wellbeing, and in particular overall life satisfaction and feeling worthwhile.³¹ Furthermore, formal volunteering as part of a group is considerably more significant in improving wellbeing, possibly because of the collective, purposeful endeavour involved in formal volunteering. The benefits of volunteering also seem to be magnified for some marginalised groups who are in most need of the wellbeing and societal benefits of volunteering. Volunteering is also good for society as a whole, 'as it underpins the provision and delivery of many of the other pastimes and experiences that also contribute to our quality of life – social care, preservation of the natural environment, heritage, sport, arts and culture.'³²

For this evaluation, we have used the four measures of personal wellbeing recommended by the ONS:³³

- Life satisfaction
- Feeling that life is worthwhile
- Happiness
- Anxiety

For each measure, respondents are asked to rate how they feel on a scale from 0 to 10. Higher scores indicate higher personal wellbeing, with the exception of anxiety (lower scores indicate higher wellbeing).

²⁸ See: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing>.

²⁹ See: <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/about/what-is-wellbeing/>

³⁰ *Ib id.*

³¹ Happy Days, Does volunteering make us happier or is it that happier people volunteer, Jump, 2019.

³² *Ib id.*

³³ See: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/april2018tomarch2019>.

7.2 Key finding 6 – Increasing happiness

Time Credits members show increased levels of happiness over a relatively short period of time, which is attributed at least in part to their involvement in Time Credits.

In addition to this, improvements in happiness were seen among both new and existing volunteers, suggesting that the Time Credits model (most likely through the added component of spend opportunities) may offer benefits to wellbeing over and above the impact of giving time (volunteering) alone.

Across all Time Credits members who completed both the baseline and follow-up survey, there was relatively little change in average life satisfaction, feeling that life is worthwhile, and anxiety. This is not unexpected, as changes in these measures typically occur over longer time periods. As ONS reports: 'in the year ending March 2019, there was little change in personal wellbeing measures in the UK apart from a slight improvement in average happiness ratings which increased from 7.52 to 7.56.'³⁴

However, feelings of happiness did increase significantly among Time Credits members in this evaluation, by an average of 0.34 ($p=0.006$). This is notably higher than the shift of 0.04 in the general population between March 2018 and March 2019.

We also observed a significant improvement in the level of anxiety. However, we think that responses to this question (which uses a reverse response scale on the survey form) were affected by a number of invalid responses.³⁵

Overall how satisfied are you with your life these days



Figure 10: Changes in life satisfaction between baseline and follow-up surveys

³⁴ See: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/april2018tomarch2019>.

³⁵ This assumption is due to some extreme shifts seen at the level of individual responses within the data.

Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?



Figure 11: Changes in feeling worthwhile between baseline and follow-up surveys

Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?

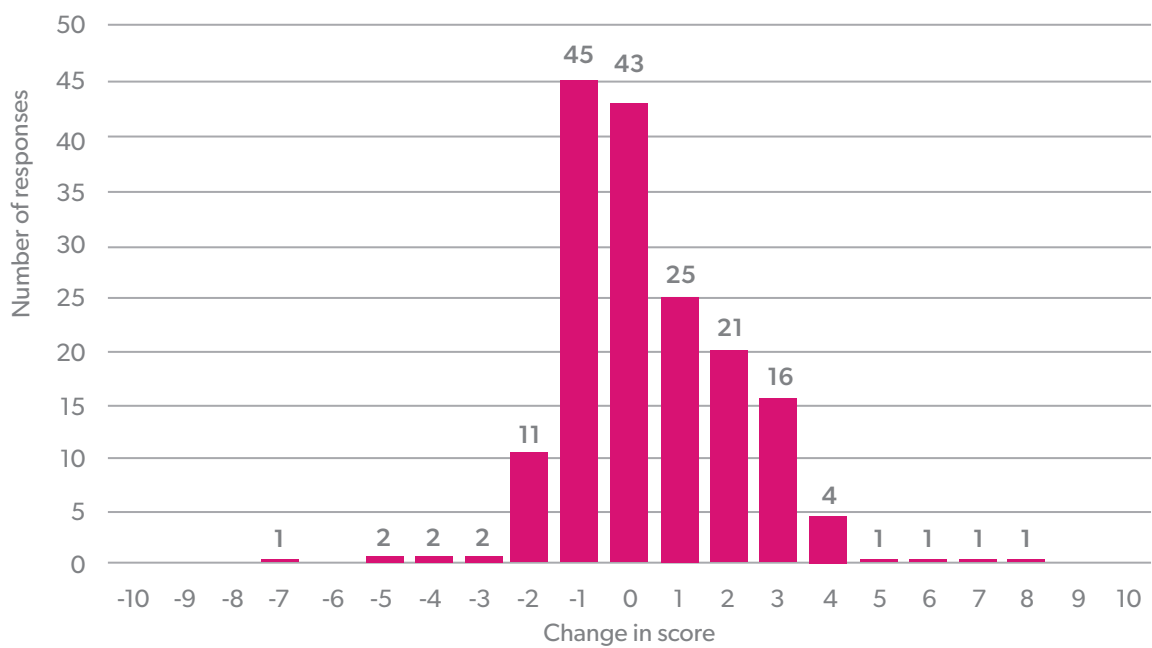


Figure 12: Changes in feeling happy between baseline and follow-up surveys

On a scale where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

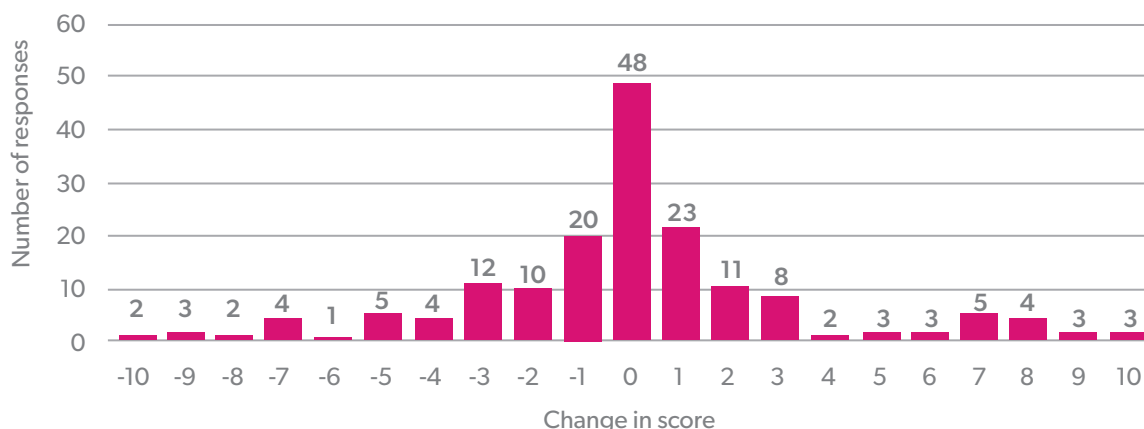


Figure 13: Changes in feeling anxious between baseline and follow-up surveys

Among those members who were involved in the qualitative research, happiness was one of the strongest feelings connected with members' Time Credits journeys, along with feeling recognised and valued. Happiness was also most commonly associated with spending more time with friends and family, developing new connections, and building confidence.

Increases in happiness were more likely to be seen among younger volunteers (0.42 increase from baseline average), however, there was still an increase of 0.18 among those aged 50 and over.

Change in wellbeing scores (Under 50 / 50+)

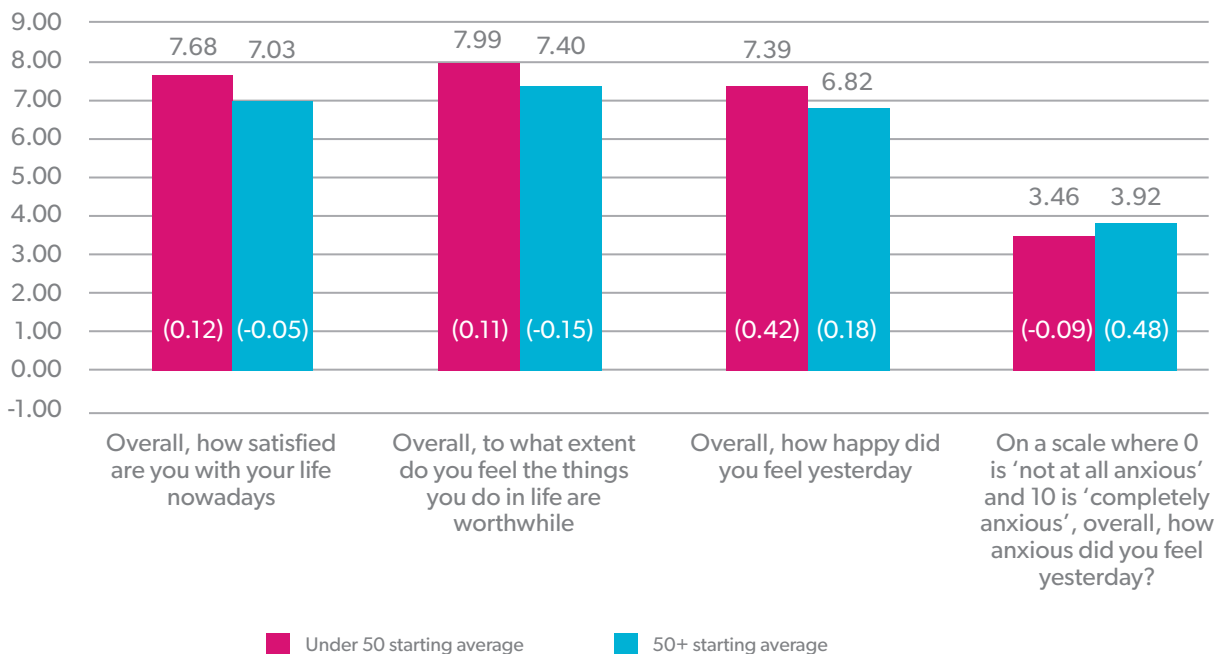


Figure 14: Changes in wellbeing scores (numbers in brackets) from baseline score by age group

Across the UK, ratings of life satisfaction and happiness are lowest among people aged 45 – 59, while those aged 65 to 79 tend to report the highest average levels of personal well-being.³⁶

The change in happiness scores for new volunteers was 0.33 and for existing volunteers 0.34. This is not significant in itself, however, given that we would expect existing volunteers to have already benefited to some extent from their volunteering, to see a similar change in both groups suggests that Time Credits can offer wellbeing benefits over and above volunteering alone.

It is difficult to be conclusive on this because of the relatively small sample, and in the absence of a control group, however, taking into account the changes observed at a whole population level, we believe there is some strength in these findings.

Change in wellbeing scores (New and existing volunteers)

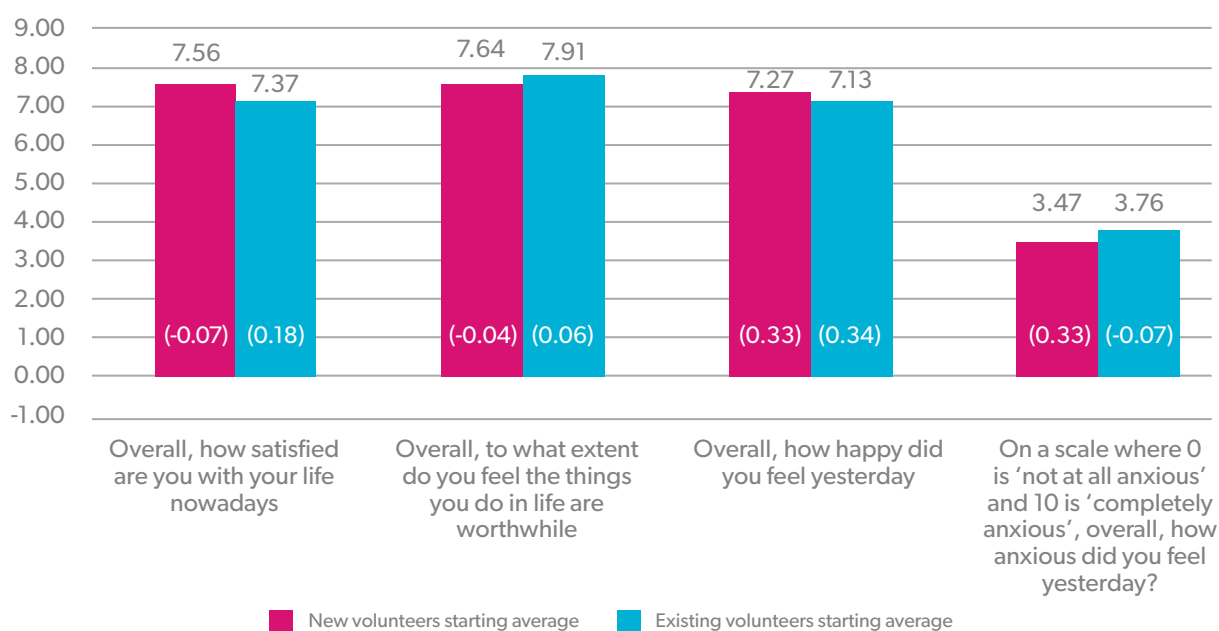


Figure 15: Changes in wellbeing scores between baseline and follow-up for new and existing volunteers (figures in brackets show the change from baseline to follow-up)

7.3 Key finding 7 – Those with lower wellbeing benefit the most from Time Credits

Time Credits members with low or very low wellbeing (including with high or very high levels of anxiety) are more likely to show the biggest improvements.

The average changes in scores across all domains (an increase in score for life satisfaction, feeling worthwhile, and happiness, and a decrease in score for anxiety) were noticeably higher for those with low and very low wellbeing, or high or very high anxiety at baseline.

For life satisfaction (n=11), feeling worthwhile (n=10) and happiness (n=19), average scores increased by between 1.6 and 1.89, while anxiety (n=56) fell by 2.48. These figures have important implications for the target population and suggest that the reach and impact of Time Credits is likely to be greatest for those who are experiencing lower levels of personal wellbeing.

³⁶ See: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/measuringnationalwellbeing/atwhatageispersonalwellbeingthehighest>.

However, it is also important to recognise the small numbers involved in this analysis which has limited our ability to carry out any statistical testing on the results.

Domain	Low and very low score at baseline	Medium score at baseline	High score at baseline
Life satisfaction	1.73	0.50	-0.21
Feeling worthwhile	1.60	0.87	-0.23
Happiness	1.89	0.95	-0.17
	Low anxiety at baseline	Medium anxiety at baseline	High anxiety at baseline
Anxiety (lower scores are better)	1.92	-0.47	-2.48

Table 10: Changes in life satisfaction between baseline and follow-up surveys

7.4 Key finding 8 – Feeling closer to other people

Time Credits members report feeling closer to other people after becoming involved in Time Credits, a key driver of improved mental wellbeing. This was slightly stronger for those aged 50+.

Mental wellbeing was measured in this evaluation using the short (7-item) version of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS). Respondents are asked to score 7 positively worded items about their lives on a 5 point scale (strongly agree through to strongly disagree). Each item is then given a score out of 5, with total possible scores therefore ranging from 7 to 35.

Among those who completed both a baseline and follow-up survey, the total SWEMWBS score increased by 0.12 (from 25.79 out of 35 to 25.90 out of 35). This was driven almost entirely by an increase of 0.11 for the statement ‘I’ve been feeling close to other people’, and was noticeably stronger among those aged 50+ (0.16 increase).

SWEMWBS statement	Average change in score between baseline and follow-up
I’ve been feeling optimistic about the future	0.01
I’ve been feeling useful	0.02
I’ve been feeling relaxed	0.02
I’ve been dealing with problems well	-0.05
I’ve been thinking clearly	0.05
I’ve been feeling close to other people	0.11
I’ve been able to make up my mind about things	0.00

Table 7: Average change in SWEMWBS scores – all respondents

Wellbeing Score

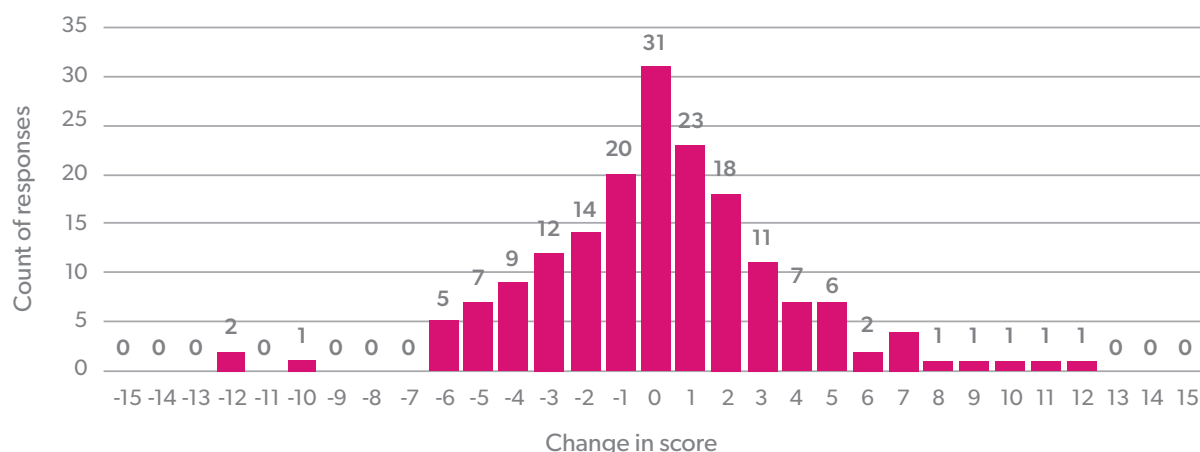


Figure 16: Change in SWEMWBS scores – number of respondents by change in score

While a shift of 1 or more in SWEMWBS scores is generally considered significant (with a sample size of at least 50), as with the ONS wellbeing measures, we would expect sustained changes to only be reflected in the data over a longer period of time.³⁷

Furthermore, mental wellbeing at a population level using the full 14-item WEMWBS has varied by only 0.1 to 0.2 points over six years³⁸ which suggests that the change observed in this domain (feeling close to other people) along with very little change in the other domains, is a notable finding in the time period of the evaluation survey. None of the other changes observed in these results are considered big enough to reflect real change in mental wellbeing (either positively or negatively).

This finding is consistent with the nature of Time Credits as an intervention, and with volunteering more generally (a mechanism for bringing people together and making new connections). We know, for example, that around a third (32%) of Time Credits members said that meeting other people was their primary motivation for getting involved in Time Credits. 43% said that they have developed new friends and acquaintances as a result of Time Credits.

Feeling more connected through new experiences, and through sharing those experiences with others, came through strongly in the qualitative research.

There was also a slight tendency for those new to volunteering to be more likely to show increased mental wellbeing when compared to existing volunteers who became involved in Time Credits.

Change	Percentage among new volunteers	Percentage among existing volunteers
SWEMWBS score improved	46%	40%
SWEMWBS score stayed the same	12%	22%
SWEMWBS score worsened	41%	38%

Table 8: Proportion of new and existing volunteers and change in SWEMWBS score

³⁷ See: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/howto/>

³⁸ <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-health-survey/>

8 Social connections and support networks

8.1 Key finding 9 – Extending social connections and support networks

Time Credits members (based on the findings from this evaluation) tend to have a similar strength of support networks when compared to the wider population, and these do not show notable change since becoming involved in Time Credits. We believe that it is likely that Time Credits extend networks, but deepening these networks takes longer than the time that elapsed between the two surveys.

The proportion of Time Credits members who agree that someone would be there for them if they needed help is broadly in line with the national position.³⁹ This is shown in Table 9 below. There was a slight decrease in the proportion who stated this at follow-up, however, this is unlikely to be statistically significant.

The proportion who agree that they can call on someone if they wanted company or to socialise is also broadly consistent with the national position and showed no change between the two surveys.

Measure of social connections / support networks	% at baseline	% at follow-up	National % (Community Life Survey)	Change in % for Time Credits members
Definitely or tend to agree that If I needed help there are people who would be there for me	93	91	95	-2
Definitely or tend to agree that If I wanted company or to socialise, there are people I can call on	87	87	92	0

Table 9: Change in scores on measures of social connections / support networks

The data on frequency of contact with friends and family shows a similar position. The only exception is face to face contact, where a higher proportion of Time Credits members meet up with friends and family at least once a week when compared to the national position.

Type of social contact – at least once a week	% at baseline	% at follow-up	National % (Community Life Survey)	Change in % for Time Credits members
Texting etc	84	86	82	2
Phone / video calls	91	82	80	-9 ⁴⁰
Meet up in person	85	85	73	0
Email or write	45	45	38	0

Table 10: Change in frequency of different types of social contact

³⁹ See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-2018-19>.

⁴⁰ Note this change is driven by 6 people, so unlikely to be significant.

Some of these results might be explained, at least in part, by the fact that many people who sign-up to Time Credits may have already attended an event, volunteered in some capacity, and / or already be involved in a community group. This means that by the time a baseline survey is completed, people may have already begun to expand their social networks simply because of the new activities they are involved in.

Furthermore, the questions about social connections shown in Table 9 above set a high threshold for social isolation, with only 5% of the national population reporting that they have no-one to call on. This means that Time Credits programmes would need to be specifically targeting very isolated and vulnerable people in order to see noticeably lower figures than across the general population at baseline.

8.2 Key finding 10 – Addressing loneliness and isolation

Despite this, there is some evidence that Time Credits do help people to make new friends and acquaintances, and to feel less isolated and lonely, which is consistent with previous evaluation findings.

Among those who responded to the evaluation survey and felt that loneliness or isolation was relevant to them, 71% said that they feel less isolated and lonely since becoming involved in Time Credits. As noted earlier, changes in SWEMWBS results were also strongest in relation to feeling closer to other people, which is likely to be important for developing stronger support networks.

Also, 43% of members who completed a follow-up survey said that Time Credits had helped them make new friends and acquaintances, which was by far the most common opportunity generated (although a third did say ‘none of these’). In previous evaluation surveys, 55% (2019) and 57% (2018) said they had made new friends and acquaintances as a result of earning and spending Time Credits.⁴¹

Opportunities created through Time Credits

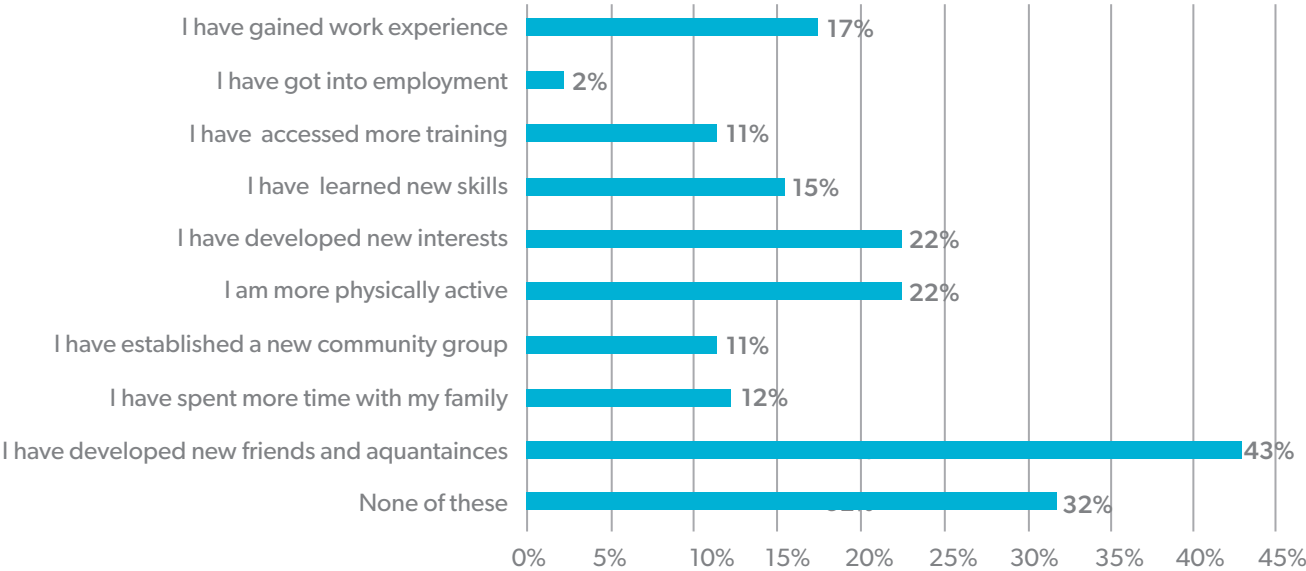


Figure 17: Opportunities created through Time Credits – proportion of survey respondents reporting each item

⁴¹ This difference is likely to be explained by the much smaller sample size in this evaluation survey (compared to Tempo’s annual impact survey) and also the lower proportion of people new to volunteering.

These results suggest that Time Credits do help people to extend their social connections, meet new people, and begin to develop new, supportive friendships in a relatively short period of time. However, it is likely that deeper relationships are likely to develop over a longer timeframe. There was evidence of this in the qualitative research, where new experiences were commonly associated with feelings of happiness and being more connected, but much less often with the development of new friendships.

However, the results also raise questions about whether those experiencing higher levels of isolation or loneliness might benefit more from being involved in Time Credits, and if so, whether Time Credits could be targeted more directly towards these groups. The use of a more direct measure of loneliness would be needed in order to address these questions.⁴²

9 Social capital and community resilience

9.1 Key finding 11 – Time Credits support greater community cohesion and stronger relationships

As a group, Time Credits members tend to show higher levels of trust in others compared to the general UK population, and towards the highest levels of trust globally. This is connected with greater community cohesion and stronger personal relationships.

As part of its work on social capital in the UK the ONS states that trust in others:

‘provides glue that holds society together; it enables relationships to flourish and people to feel safe in their neighbourhoods. Less trust within a community can mean less sense of community solidarity and cohesion.’⁴³

In 2015 the Behavioural Insights Team, a social purpose company that generates and applies behavioural insights to inform policy, improve public services and deliver results for citizens and society, stated that trust in others has ‘proven to be one of the most interesting and important indicators of the strength and quality of societies and communities across the world.’⁴⁴

They also note that ‘levels of social trust, averaged across a country, predict national economic growth as powerfully as financial and physical capital, and more powerfully than skill levels. It is also associated with many other non-economic outcomes, such as life satisfaction (positively) and suicide (negatively).’⁴⁵

In order to assess generalised trust, we asked Time Credits members the following question as part of both the baseline and follow-up surveys, which is also used in the European Social Survey and World Values Survey as a key measure of social trust:

‘Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?’

Respondents are then asked to score their ratings on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you can’t be too careful and 10 means that most people can be trusted. Scores of 7 and above are counted as ‘most people can be trusted’.

⁴² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/measuringlonelinessguidanceforuseofthenationalindicatorsonsurveys> .

⁴³ See: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/socialcapitalintheuk/may2017#trust-and-cooperative-norms>.

⁴⁴ See: <https://www.bi.team/blogs/social-trust-is-one-of-the-most-important-measures-that-most-people-have-never-heard-of-and-its-moving/>

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

In 2014, 35% of the UK population rated their general trust as high (most people can be trusted).⁴⁶ Worldwide, the figures vary considerably, from as little as 3.8% in Trinidad and Tobago, up to around 60% - 70% in The Netherlands, China and Sweden.⁴⁷ The results of the 2010 World Values Survey are shown in figure 18 below. Note that countries in grey were not included in the survey that year. Darker blue shading equals higher levels of trust.

General Trust by country - 2010 World Values Survey

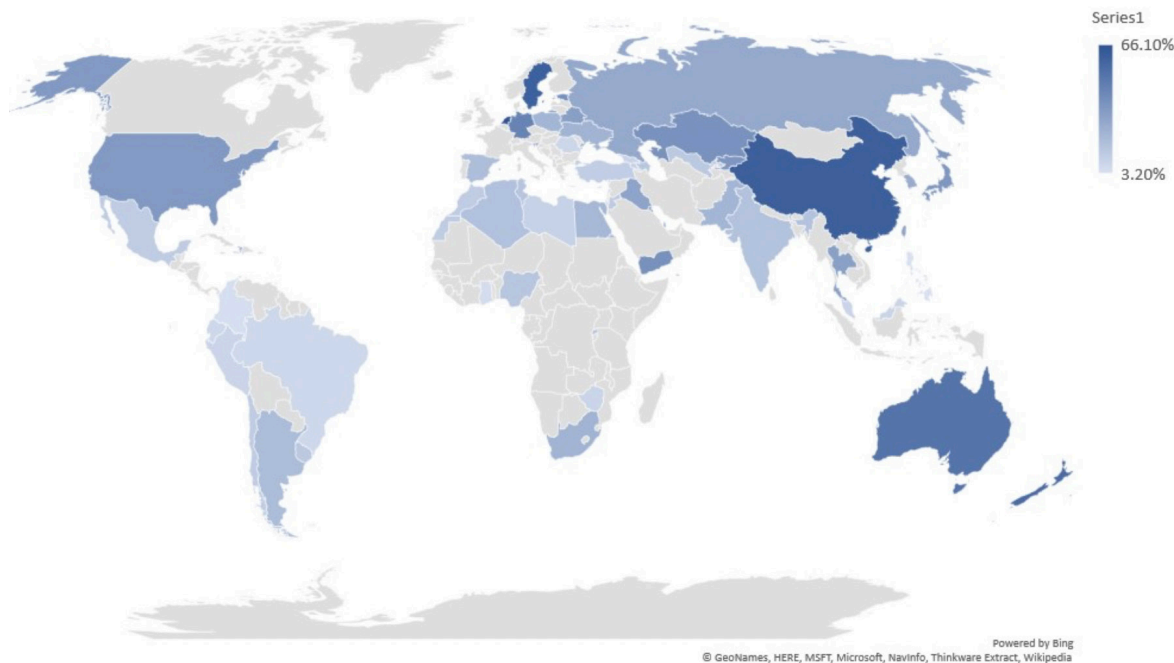


Figure 18: Levels of social trust globally – 2010 World Values Survey

On average, 50% of Time Credits members at baseline and 57% at follow-up (n=74) rated their general trust as high. These are higher levels of social trust compared to the UK population. The sample size is too small to draw any conclusions about the change observed between the two surveys and is unlikely in itself to be significant or attributable to one intervention.

However, respondents to the survey are generally more trusting than the overall UK population (57%), and towards the upper end globally, which would suggest a propensity for greater social capital and resilience among those individuals and within their own communities.

Further analysis of the survey data (n=74) shows that:

- People 50+ tended to have much higher levels of trust than those under 50, to a greater extent than is seen in the wider UK population.⁴⁸ This might suggest a particular benefit of Time Credits for older people
- Geographically, those in Cheshire West & Chester (mixed urban/rural population) had the highest levels of social trust while those in Westminster (high density urban population) tended to be the lowest
- Existing volunteers and new volunteers had similar levels of social trust, and at similar levels to the overall average, which is noticeably higher than the UK average.

⁴⁶ See: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/socialcapitalintheuk/may2017#trust-and-cooperative-norms>.

⁴⁷ <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>.

⁴⁸ See: https://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39278/bsa35_social_trust.pdf.

It is important to note that levels of social trust do vary (quite considerably in some cases) by a range of socio-economic and demographic factors, which might reflect who engages in Time Credits and who volunteers more generally. In their 2018 paper on social trust, the National Centre for Social Research notes that ‘trust is rooted in the stratified social order of society and is shaped by education and class.’⁴⁹

Social Trust can also vary considerably from survey to survey within a country (surveys are typically every 5 years). However, there are perceptions that social trust is on the decline whereas in fact social trust is increasing globally, and from the data gathered in this evaluation, quite strong levels of trust are seen among those who engage in Time Credits. This means that these people are more likely to experience greater cohesion within their communities, and stronger personal relationships, when compared with those people who have lower levels of trust. It highlights the opportunity and potential for Time Credits programmes to tap into these positive attitudes and resources within those communities that Tempo works with.

10 Health and physical activity

10.1 Introduction

Levels of physical activity were measured at baseline and follow-up using an approach similar to that adopted by Sport England as part of its Active Lives survey. This puts people into three different categories of level of physical activity (inactive, fairly active, active), depending on their estimated number of minutes per week of both moderate and vigorous activity. This is used to monitor changes in levels of physical activity across the whole population.

10.2 Key finding 12 – Helping people to be more active through spend opportunities

Time Credits open up opportunities for people to become more physically active (likely through spend opportunities), especially for those who are already active in some way, and among over 50s.

Overall, we saw a 12% increase in the average level of physical activity among those Time Credits members who responded to the survey, from 307 minutes per week to 346 minutes per week. This increase was driven largely by those aged 50 or older.

Under 50			50+		
Average mins per week at baseline	Average mins per week at follow-up	Change in level of activity (%)	Average mins per week at baseline	Average mins per week at follow-up	Change in level of activity (%)
293.0	311.7	6%	334.5	408.4	22%

Table 11: Change in average minutes per week of physical activity by age group

⁴⁹ *Ib id*, p. 3.

However, despite this overall increase, there were fewer people in the active category at follow-up (150+ minutes per week). Further analysis shows that the average increase is largely explained by an increase in the level of activity among those already in the active group. Those already doing 150 minutes or more per week at baseline showed an average increase of 2 hours per week in their level of physical activity (from 8.01 hours per week to 10.34 hours per week).

Average activity for 'Active'

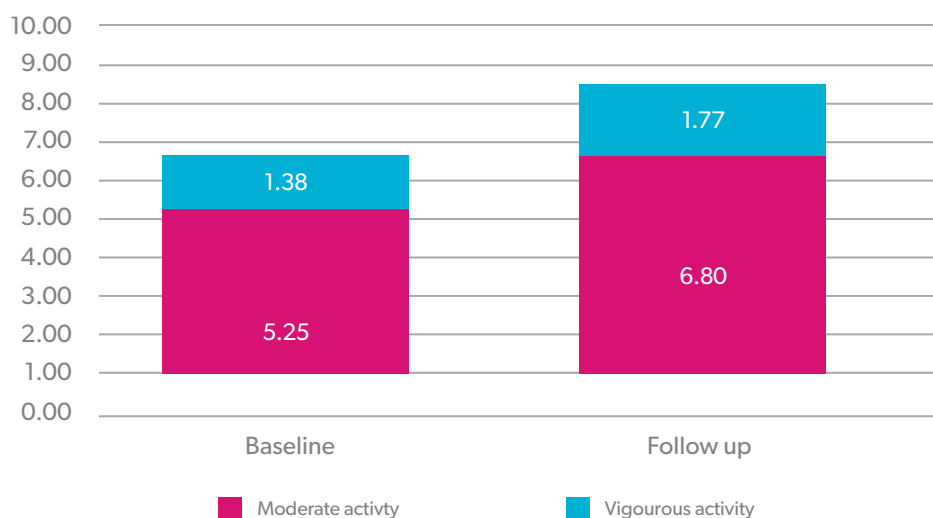


Figure 19: Average hours per week of activity among those who are already active at baseline and follow-up

There were also slight increases in both the number of people becoming fairly active and those becoming inactive. This is against the national trend which shows small increases in the number of people active and fewer people inactive.

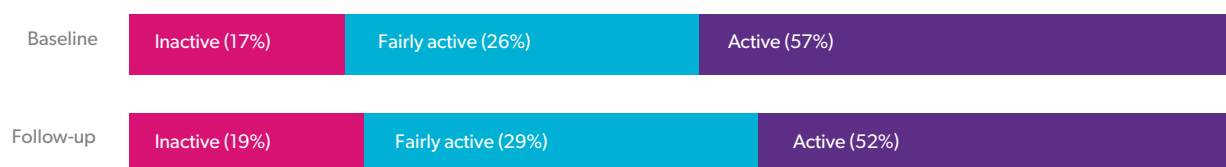


Figure 20: Change in levels of physical activity between baseline and follow-up (all respondents)

The Time Credits sample is also less inactive than the national population, but also less active (i.e. many more people are in the fairly active group).

Level of activity	Time Credits members at baseline	Time Credits members at follow-up	National population (Sport England 2018/19) ⁵⁰
Inactive	17%	19%	25%
Fairly Active	26%	29%	12%
Active	57%	52%	63%

Table 12: Levels of physical activity compared to the Sport England survey population

These results suggest that Time Credits, while possibly a motivator for becoming more active in a small number of people, are much more likely to impact those who are already active by providing new / more opportunities to exercise regularly. This is likely to be through spend activities (for example, spending Time Credits at a local leisure centre), however, we can't confirm this from the data available.

⁵⁰ Active lives adult survey, May 18/19 report, Published October 2019, Sport England.

Generally, however, these shifts in numbers are quite small (the number of people who are more inactive within the sample is only three). There were also people who showed quite substantial shifts both ways, which is to be expected given the way the data is collected.

Results from Tempo's annual member survey show a slightly different picture. In the 2019 survey:

- 34% of people said that they were more physically active as a result of being involved in Time Credits, and
- 49% of people said that their physical health had improved.

Previous evaluations suggest that these increases are likely to be the result of both spend activities (such as going to a leisure centre using Time Credits) and volunteering (earning) activities (such as taking part in litter picks or leading guided walks).

In terms of health, this wasn't measured specifically in this evaluation. However, we do know that physical activity and health are strongly linked, and that 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week (or 75 minutes of vigorous activity, or a mixture of both) can reduce the risk of many common health conditions by 30 – 40%.⁵¹

Nothing notable about changes in health as a result of Time Credits came up in the qualitative research.



⁵¹ See for example: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health>.

IMPACT STORY - THE PENTWYN PICKERS

The Pentwyn Pickers is a group of local people who have been taking action to reduce the rubbish and fly tipping issues the community suffer. Formed in 2016, a couple of the individual pickers were out walking around Pentwyn lake when they saw members of Keep Wales Tidy and Cardiff Rivers group clearing up the area. Inspired by what the group were doing and wanting to get involved, they all signed up to be able to give the time they had.

Forming their own litter picking group 'Pentwyn Pickers', which is mainly formed of retirees who love to walk and litter pick at the same time, they began recruiting people as they picked, talking to locals and encouraging them to take action. The group now consists of 17 people who go out as often as they can.

For the last two years, the Pentwyn Pickers have been a part of the Cardiff Time Credits network, as a way of thanking those who volunteer and encouraging new people to join them and get involved. As the group has developed and recruited new members, they have also formed local connections with other groups including schools and nurseries, taking some of the young children out to pick with them.

Collectively the group have spent their Time Credits on a range of activities; from the Botanical Gardens to multiple Cadw sites, the Royal Mint, Dyffryn Gardens and Ice Arena Wales.

Time Credits have added real value to the group and have enabled them to access experiences they weren't previously accessing, recognising the amazing work this group of people do for their community.

"I love it! Even going out in the rain and cleaning up a fly tipping issue, the benefit of seeing your patch clean and restored is satisfying"



11 Impacts on network partners

Time Credits operate through local community groups and charitable organisations that sign-up to be part of a local Time Credits network. These network partners agree to offer Time Credits for their volunteers. Depending on the activities they run, they may also accept Time Credits by offering spend opportunities.

Network partners receive training and support from Tempo staff, in particular:

- Training in co-production and active participation, through group training sessions or 1:1 support
- Training in asset-based working using Time Credits, through asset mapping workshops
- Support around marketing and communications across the network (including with members, potential members and community organisations). This may include: newsletters, information booklets, collaboration with other local organisations, attending network events / other forums, annual events, and local press / media coverage.

This network of partners sits alongside the Time Credits spend network that provides the mechanism for members to spend their Time Credits.

The Time Credits Theory of Change sets out a number of potential outcomes for network partners, including:

- People are more involved in the design and delivery of activities / support services
- Services make better use of the existing assets / resources available to them, including within their local communities, and
- Services begin to develop new assets / resources to increase capacity.

These outcomes in turn lead to:

- People feeling a stronger sense of ownership of activities / support services
- Services that better meet local need, and
- Stronger support networks within communities.

Underpinning this change process are a number of important assumptions about individual network partners and across the network as a whole:

- The training and support offered by Tempo is relevant, effective and timely
- Network partners actively engage with the network, are open to involving new people (volunteers), have (or can develop) the capability to embed co-production in their delivery, and are open to working in new ways
- Time Credits are effective at helping to recruit and retain more volunteers, and
- There are effective mechanisms in place to share learning and build partnerships across the Time Credits network.

This creates a network of organisations that actively collaborate to create opportunities, reach new and more people, connect and make better use of assets and resources, and share learning and experiences – where possible linking to and building on existing networks.

The scope of this current evaluation did not include collecting quantitative data from network partners about the impact of Time Credits on their organisation. This work has been undertaken previously and has shown some positive results, including:

- 83% of organisations surveyed said that Time Credits helped their volunteers to feel more valued
- 70% of organisations say that Time Credits allow them to promote what they do to more people
- 49% of organisations surveyed said that Time Credits helped them to recruit more volunteers.

This evidence and learning has been used to refine Tempo's approach and models of delivery at a network level, and to better understand the underlying theory of change. Further impact evaluation focusing on network partners is currently being developed and will form part of future evaluation work.

We did, however, ask a small number of network partners to map out their Time Credits journey, including the key stages of that journey, what differences they observed in their organisation at each stage, and how people felt. This was undertaken to better understand how groups / services engage with Time Credits, what benefits this engagement generates, and therefore what we can learn about how this translates to outcomes and impact for members.

13 groups participated in the research, representing a mix of groups and services from Time Credits programmes in England (Westminster, Haringey, Cornwall and Cheshire West & Chester).

Our analysis of the 13 journey maps showed a number of common themes and experiences, as well as quite varied experiences along their journeys. Feelings of excitement at the idea of Time Credits, and the potential it had to provide a new way for rewarding volunteers, was a strong theme. Many groups described limited means to reward volunteers in meaningful ways (examples included: running annual awards – such as volunteer of the year – and / or events, paying for incidental expenses, prize draws), and felt that Time Credits provided opportunities to go well beyond what they can currently do for their volunteers.

"It has given us the opportunity to reward our volunteers in a tangible way that wasn't possible before. It has helped raise the profile of volunteers in the organisation through briefings on the initiative at staff development days."

"Very effective way of rewarding volunteers - helps them feel valued. We have lots of volunteers from a variety of areas so they are doing things / visiting places they wouldn't have otherwise been to."

Groups also said that they had observed positive changes in their organisation or group as a result of being part of a Time Credits network, including being more able to recruit new volunteers and greater engagement from their volunteers in a range of community activities.

"More people tend to volunteer when they know we offer Time Credits. The volunteers feel really valued."

"Time Credits are a great incentive for people to get involved in activities that benefit the community."

"[The best thing about our Time Credits experience so far is] lots of opportunities that update frequently. The Time Credits team are always happy to help and support more spending. It has also helped us to develop more opportunities to earn and spend in our organisation itself."

The journey maps also showed that there is a typical journey of engagement with Time Credits which suggests that there is consistency in the way in which groups are engaged. A typical journey of engagement tended to involve:

1. An initial meeting with someone from Tempo to talk about Time Credits and the possibilities within their group / organisation
2. Identification of someone to lead on Time Credits in the group / organisation and agreement to sign up to the network

3. Meetings with staff and volunteers to get the message out and to explain how everything will work (earning, collecting Time Credits, spending, and record keeping)
4. Commencement of trading (offering Time Credits) and setting up reporting.

Groups also mentioned that they had attended training with Tempo, which typically led to feeling much more informed about Time Credits and how best to use them as a tool for volunteer engagement and coproduction within their organisation.

“Time Credits are really valued by the volunteers that use them. The activities really tie into the outcomes of our project – wellbeing and physical activity.”

Among the groups that had trouble understanding and clearly articulating the Time Credits offer for their volunteers, 1:1 support from Tempo was important to help identify the right earning opportunities. These groups also found their involvement in Time Credits easier once they started offering earning opportunities and had some real experience to learn from.

Ongoing and regular contact with Tempo was felt to be really important for the success of Time Credits, not only in the early days but at regular points in time after that. This included problem solving around earn and spend patterns, exploring ideas to introduce new earn (and spend) opportunities, how to make the most of Time Credits in their organisation, and sharing learning across the network.

Some groups also highlighted the importance of providing 1:1 support to Time Credits members in order to encourage spending. Spend is seen as a key part of the offer for volunteers (volunteer reward) and without regular spend and the availability of suitable spend opportunities locally, members can become disillusioned, or even disheartened, by Time Credits. We didn't find any evidence that this impacts negatively on volunteer earning patterns, but we do believe it will have a direct impact on the extent to which those members benefit from their involvement in Time Credits, and the ability of network partners to encourage new volunteers to join (word of mouth is considered a key way for 'spreading the word' and encouraging volunteer recruitment).

“Families need extra support to access some opps as they don't think that is something they should attend.”

“It is far easier to get people to earn Time Credits than it is to get them to spend them.”

“Good quality and local offers are essential. Website / email offers. The ability to pass credits on. To keep users engaged.”

“Volunteers are transient, focused elsewhere and don't want to spend. 'Save for a rainy day'. Need to encourage spending. Need some help with addressing this.”

“1:1 support is essential for encouraging service users to spend their Time Credits. Group trips are really successful. However, it can also lead to service users becoming reliant on staff to organise activities.”

“Volunteers need a lot of pushing and support in terms of using the vouchers, encourage them to look at the website. Enables people to gift experiences to others, who may otherwise not be able. Word of mouth is a very effective way of spreading enthusiasm about Time Credits.”

PART 3: **DISCUSSION AND LEARNING**



12 New insights about Time Credits from these findings

The findings from this evaluation build on the evidence that Tempo has been gathering for nearly 10 years about the impact of Time Credits on individuals who earn and spend Time Credits, organisations that sign-up to offer Time Credits to their volunteers, and wider communities. They provide us with a number of new insights that deepen our understanding of the impact of Time Credits, for different people in different contexts, and how that impact comes about.

This evaluation also starts to demonstrate the possible causal links between a person's involvement in Time Credits and some of the key outcomes, and how the impact of Time Credits as a tool for engagement and participation in communities compares with volunteering more generally. However, further work is needed in both of these areas in order to increase our level of confidence in the evidence presented in this report.

12.1 Happiness and social contact drive improved wellbeing among Time Credits members

We have known for some time that Time Credits members report improved wellbeing and quality of life as a result of earning and spending Time Credits. We now know that this is likely to be driven by feelings of happiness that increase over a relatively short timescale, and which are greater than the changes typically seen in the general population. We believe that some of this change can be attributed directly to Time Credits.

Furthermore, the opportunities offered through spending Time Credits mean that these improvements in personal wellbeing are greater than through volunteering alone, and are seen most strongly among younger volunteers, and among those with the lowest levels of wellbeing. This gives us confidence in the potential impact that Time Credits can have on wellbeing among those living in some of the most challenging and difficult social situations.

The added value of spend is also driven by feelings of empowerment, greater confidence, and being able to do more of what matters to individuals. For some, this might be achieved against a background of many years battling illness, bereavement, or increasing social isolation. Gifting Time Credits also generates strong feelings of happiness and satisfaction – knowing that you can do something for someone else, sometimes for the first time in decades.

There is also strong evidence that improvements in mental wellbeing are driven largely by the formation of new connections and feelings of being closer to other people. This was especially the case among older people who became involved in Time Credits, who also reported feeling less isolated and lonely as a result. We don't know from this evaluation whether those people with the highest levels of loneliness or social isolation are likely to benefit more or less than those with more regular or frequent social contact.

12.2 Time Credits are an effective tool for increasing diversity of volunteering and for building sustainable capacity within communities

This evaluation has shown that Time Credits are likely to be a more effective tool for attracting new people to volunteering when compared with volunteering more generally. This is especially true for younger volunteers (people under the age of 50).

We also now know that Time Credits encourage people from lower socio-economic groups into volunteering, a barrier that is well documented through other research. This helps to increase the diversity of those who give their time on a regular basis. The evidence from this evaluation suggests that this is likely to be the result of the spend component of the Time Credits model, which creates opportunities for those on lower incomes to access leisure activities that they would otherwise not be able to afford. This includes the appeal of being able to spend more time with family and friends, try new and fun activities, and learn new skills which in turn may improve employment prospects.

Gifting Time Credits is also widespread among Time Credits members, especially those who are retired and who have children and grandchildren who find it difficult to access new and exciting family activities, due to financial and / or time pressures.

Time Credits members also give their time more frequently than the average, with nearly all of those who responded to the survey in this evaluation giving time at least once a month. This is almost certainly due to strong feelings of being valued and rewarded that were reported by members, and which network partners describe as being difficult to replicate without Time Credits. Separate research has shown that this frequency of volunteering can generate significant wellbeing gains for individuals.

The data from this evaluation also sheds new light on the role Time Credits can play alongside the wider care and support system. Many more volunteers earning Time Credits undertake support volunteering compared to the population of formal volunteers as a whole. This reflects the appeal that Time Credits have for community groups that provide support services, strengthened by the potential for Time Credits to facilitate co-production of services, improve service user engagement, and make better use of assets and resources within communities. This will be of particular interest to health and local authority commissioners, especially in light of moves towards more integrated care across sectors.

12.3 Time Credits members have some of the highest levels of social trust globally

Social trust is an important indicator of community cohesion, economic prosperity and strong relationships between people. The data from this evaluation shows that Time Credits members have some of the highest levels of trust in others seen globally. This means that those who typically engage in Time Credits are more likely to be connected into stronger, more cohesive and resilient communities than the general population.

This finding might be because volunteers, or those interested in volunteering, tend to have higher levels of social trust. Or it might be the result of giving time to a community. At this stage we don't know. However, what is important is that for the first time we have a reliable indicator of the strength within those communities connected to Time Credits, and can begin to speculate about the value of Time Credits when scaled-up across whole communities.

12.4 Active people becoming more active

Previous evaluations have demonstrated the positive impact Time Credits can have on levels of physical activity and feeling healthy. We now know from this current evaluation that much of this increase is likely to come from those who are already active in some way, and who will typically use spend opportunities (such as sessions at the local leisure centre) to increase the amount of exercise they do on a regular basis. This impact was seen especially among over 50s. Based on the data from this current evaluation, it is much less likely that Time Credits alone provide a stimulus or motivator for inactive people to increase their levels of physical activity.

However, this is still an important finding. The links between physical activity and health (including mental health and wellbeing) are well evidenced and any increase in the amount of moderate activity people do can have both short and long term benefits.

12.5 The spend network is a key driver of impact

We have already highlighted the role spend opportunities play in some of the key outcomes and impacts connected with Time Credits. This is covered in more detail in Tempo's report *Time Well Spent: The Impact of Spending Time Credits*.

'Having time credits to spend has spurred me on to take up swimming again, in the hope of losing weight and helping my mobility issues. This is something I'd been thinking of for some time, but had never got round to it.'

'My first [Time Credits] experience was at the theatre where I haven't been for 25 years... I have already booked to watch another live theatre production.'

'Using Time Credits enabled me to go back into a learning environment without worrying about the cost. Without the credits I doubt I would have explored the idea of further education. I originally took two courses with Credits... I've since purchased further courses to continue my studies.'

Spend was also identified as a key driver of impact by many of the groups who took part in this evaluation, while at the same time not always reflecting local needs as well as they could, and information about spend opportunities (and how to access them) not always as accessible as it could be. Reflecting the importance of spend from the perspective of network partners, some suggestions for improving spend networks included:

- Continuing to expand very local spend opportunities, alongside the more regional and national spend networks
- Encourage more 'experiences' as spend opportunities, such as museums, cultural attractions, sporting events, live shows and concerts. This should include working with spend partners to improve access to spend opportunities for families who may only be able to use Time Credits on weekends or during school holidays (when tickets using Time Credits are currently less likely to be available)
- Arrange more day trips across a network, with sufficient notice to allow people to plan ahead
- Consider hard copy spend brochures (e.g. a local area mini-booklet), alongside improved search functionality (such as search radius) on the timecredits.com website
- Consider the introduction of an electronic system of administering Time Credits, removing the need for paper notes
- Produce simple information to explain the process of earning and spending Time Credits for members, in an easy and understandable way, using visuals that convey accessibility for all (i.e. Time Credits are for everyone).

12.6 The importance of network support

Supporting network partners to make the most from Time Credits came through as a strong and consistent theme among those who took part in this evaluation. This was especially important for those groups that took longer to understand how Time Credits could work in their organisation, how best to engage with their volunteers, and how to administer Time Credits within the context of their work and the resources available. Based on previous evaluation findings we do not think that this is unique to the four areas who took part in this current piece of work, but likely to be relevant across all of Tempo's programmes of work.

Supporting individual members to spend their Time Credits was also an important theme in the feedback from groups. We know that spend is a key driver of outcomes, however, what has become more obvious through this current evaluation is that there is likely to be an optimal window of spend, which will be different for different people. Not enough (because of a lack of local opportunities that fit with an individual's needs, interests and social patterns) quite quickly creates frustration and negative feelings. If this is sustained, people begin to lose faith in Time Credits. Too much spend, and the value and excitement connected with new experiences can be slowly eroded away. If Time Credits are to achieve the best results, then supporting individuals to find the right balance of earn and spend for them, and to actively manage these earn and spend patterns to achieve that balance, should be a key part of the Time Credits delivery model and an important responsibility for all group leads.

13 What we have learnt from doing this evaluation

An important objective of this evaluation was to test a new approach to data collection and impact measurement that could be embedded within Tempo's delivery models. This would involve collecting baseline data from all (or nearly all) new members around the time of signing up to Time Credits, and then again at defined points in time. If achieved, this would enable Tempo to build a large dataset (in the region of 8,000 new members per annum) on outcomes and impact that could be analysed in a number of different ways to shape future work.

We knew that this was an ambitious objective, especially given the way in which Tempo works with groups and the influence it can have on their day to day work. Network partners have little spare time to introduce and manage new data collection systems, and the skills and tools available to them for this purpose are often quite rudimentary, or even non-existent. This means that passing responsibility for collecting monitoring and outcome data from volunteers to people in these organisations (sometimes volunteers themselves) will always present challenges, and is a key learning from this evaluation (see section 13.1 below).

Within this context, there are a number of important learnings from this current evaluation which will help to shape Tempo's future plans for monitoring and evaluation, and in particular, how Tempo can make better use of digital technology for measuring impact across its programmes of work.

13.1 The time and resources needed

The baseline survey achieved a response rate of 23%, which means that 23% of those who signed up to Time Credits during the data collection period (roughly 12 months) completed a survey either online, on paper, or over the telephone. 33% of these went on to complete a follow-up survey. This was despite considerable efforts by Tempo staff (and network partners) to contact people directly, either by telephone or email, after signing up and between 4 – 9 months after people completed a baseline survey.

In a way, these response rates are not inconsistent with typical response rates for online and email surveys (around 30 – 50% depending on the type of survey). However, this falls well short of the initial ambition and the desire to remove as much potential bias in the data (for example, those who respond to the survey may be more engaged in their volunteering and therefore more likely to experience positive outcomes).

It was clear that considerable time and resources would be needed centrally in order to achieve higher response rates – time spent chasing and reminding people about the survey, sending emails, going through survey questions on the phone, and trying to 'sell' the value to people of giving up a few minutes of their time to send their response. For Tempo, this is not a sustainable solution, financially or operationally. While some groups were able to support this process, we learnt that their capacity and capability were, on the whole, far too limited and that this would need to be supplemented with considerable additional resource if we were to achieve close to 100% coverage.

13.2 Seeing Time Credits members as a key stakeholder for the evaluation process

The process for data collection in this evaluation was designed jointly with Tempo, its network partners, funders, commissioners and policy stakeholders. What the design process didn't do was give enough consideration to Time Credits members. The working assumption was that the surveys would simply become part of the sign-up process and part of periodic reviews by group leads, rather than a separate requirement.

What we learnt was that even for a relatively short, simple survey, the value for those who are being asked to complete it must be clear, well communicated, and repeated often. Members need to be seen as a key stakeholder in the evaluation process, which means giving them as much flexibility as possible in how their data is captured, providing feedback on what the data tells us, and giving

information about how Time Credits programmes will adapt and improve in response. This follows many of the principles of human-centred design, and is central to good quality research and evaluation in this context.

The evaluation team also made a number of assumptions about the points at which data could feasibly be collected, based on many years of working with Tempo and in partnership with the current team. However, we underestimated the challenges the proposed data collection might pose for some groups, and we did not fully understand the barriers they might face (and therefore what possible solutions are needed), including variability in the sign-up process across groups.

13.3 Effective communication and setting expectations

Notwithstanding the above, we believe that our working assumptions in relation to the data collection were, at the time, reasonably sound. However, those assumptions relied on proactive communication between group leads and new members, clear expectation setting ('this is just something we ask you to do as part of the sign-up process') and consistent messaging. All of this required greater co-ordination and leadership from Tempo than we anticipated, supporting groups to communicate a clear message, and in some cases providing direct support with data collection. A dedicated evaluation management role was created to help achieve this, along with the allocation of resources from Tempo's central support team. However, it is unlikely that this level of resourcing is sustainable within Tempo's delivery model, and therefore new ways of supporting groups with data collection will need to be explored.

13.4 The timing and impact of new data protection regulations

Data collection for this evaluation began just before the introduction of the new European data protection regulations (GDPR) in May 2018. This created some uncertainty about the processes needed for obtaining consent to process data within the context of the evaluation. We initially took a conservative approach, providing several layers of consent which meant that people could opt-out of the survey before understanding what was involved. After reviewing the data we observed a very high number of opt-outs, a level that was inconsistent with our experiences of undertaking Time Credits surveys in the past. As a result, we lost a number of potential survey responses.

The wording used in the survey introduction was revised and, while still ensuring compliance with the new regulations and providing an opt-out option, explained more about how the data would be used. This led to a higher level of engagement from new members, albeit still below what was hoped for.

13.5 Shifting to a new digital platform

Linking in with the points made earlier about the resources we feel are required to achieve higher response rates in the context of Tempo's work, there are opportunities for Tempo to make better use of technology in routine monitoring and evaluation, not simply for the purpose of sending and receiving surveys, but to move towards a much more sophisticated process of linking data that may be captured from members at different points in time, by different organisations, and for different purposes.

Tempo is currently developing and piloting a new digitally led Time Credits experience. In addition to improving member experiences, an important underlying motivation for this work was to improve data collection and analysis for Tempo, so as to better understand and demonstrate impact. This was directly informed by the learning from this evaluation, in terms of challenges in data collection and the reasons for this. In addition to the new data on individual activity that will be collected through a digital currency, the pilot also has a strong focus on improving the user experience and the relationship between volunteers and Tempo. Ongoing collection of more complete data on the activities individuals do over time should start to tell us about particular outcomes and impacts for individuals, and avoid the need for as much additional data to be collected for evaluation, while improved relationships should improve response rates where surveys will add value.

14 How Tempo plans to respond to this learning

Tempo is committed to building an effective and sustainable approach to monitoring and evaluation, and one which continues to build the standard of evidence about the impact of Time Credits. The development of a digitally led Time Credits experience, combined with new ways of linking data from a range of different sources, will be central to Tempo's future approach. The learning from this evaluation has already shaped Tempo's digital strategy and will continue to do so over the coming months and beyond, helping to inform new ideas and the testing of new approaches.

Within this developing programme of work, the learning from this evaluation has highlighted a number of key areas that will need to be addressed in order for Tempo to have greater confidence in how Time Credits impact different people, as well as the impact for those organisations that offer Time Credits for their volunteers and collectively, across whole communities:

- Tracking of earn and spend activity at the level of individual members, including the amount of time given, the type of volunteering activities undertaken, and individual spend patterns (number of Time Credits spent, what they have been spent on, and what people's experiences of those activities are). A spend diary is already being used on a small scale as part of work to understand how Time Credits open up access to arts and culture, and there is potential to build this into a future digital model that could be used at scale.
- Use of technology to improve volunteer outcome monitoring by those community groups that offer Time Credits, and to build better evidence of attribution. This is likely to require a move away from relying on the use of stand-alone outcome surveys, and building more regular feedback loops that are embedded within earn and spend activities.
- The introduction of more automated information flows around data collection, which would help to improve data completeness and enable Tempo to take action and provide more targeted support to those groups that need it.



APPENDICES



15 Appendix 1: Baseline and follow-up surveys

Baseline survey – core questions

How are you feeling?

1. We have four questions we would like to ask you about your feelings on aspects of your life. There are no right or wrong answers. For each of these questions please give an answer on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays											
Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?											
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?											
On a scale where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?											

2. Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please choose the answer that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks.

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future					
I've been feeling useful					
I've been feeling relaxed					
I've been dealing with problems well					
I've been thinking clearly					
I've been feeling close to other people					
I've been able to make up my mind about things					

3. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? Please give a score of 0 to 10, where 0 means you can't be too careful and 10 means that most people can be trusted.

0 (Can't be too careful)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (Most people can be trusted)
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------------------

4. In the last month, roughly how many times have you done the following. Please enter a number in each row.

	Number of times in the last month
Been to your GP?	
Attended accident and emergency (A&E)?	
Gone to a planned hospital appointment?	
Been in contact with a specialist community mental health service?	
Seen a social worker or support worker?	

Your friends and family

The next few questions are about how often you personally contact your family members and friends. Please do not include any people you live with.

5. On average, how often do you do the following?

	More than once a day	Once a day	2-3 times per week	About once a week	All of the time	About once a fortnight	About once a month	Less often than once a month
Meet up in person with family members or friends								
Speak on the phone or video or audio call via the internet with family members or friends								
Email or write to family members or friends								
Exchange text messages or instant messages with family members or friends								

6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Definitely agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Often	Definitely disagree
If I needed help, there are people who would be there for me					
If I wanted company or to socialise, there are people I can call on					

7. Is there anyone who you can really count on to listen to you when you need to talk?

- Yes, one person
- Yes, more than one person
- No one

Your physical activity

The next questions ask about how much physical activity you usually do. For each one, think about how often and for how long you did moderate or vigorous physical activity in the past 7 days.

8. In the last 7 days, on how many days did you do moderate physical activity? (This is an activity where you raise your heart rate and feel a little out of breath).

9. If you said above that you spent at least one day doing moderate activity, roughly how many minutes did you spend on this activity on one of those days?

10. In the last 7 days, on how many days did you do vigorous physical activity? (This is where you're breathing hard and fast and your heart rate has increased significantly (you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath)).

11. If you said above that you spent at least one day doing moderate activity, how many minutes did you spend on this activity on one of those days?

Earning and spending Time Credits

Giving us some more information about you helps us to provide better opportunities for you to earn and spend with Time Credits.

12. Have you earned any Time Credits yet?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

13. If you have earned some Time Credits already, on average, how many Time Credits do you earn a month?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 25-30
- 31 or more

14. Have you earned any Time Credits yet?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

15. If you have already spent Time Credits, what do you do with the Time Credits you earn?

- I spend them regularly
- I spend some regularly and save some up
- I usually save most of them

16. If you have earned some Time Credits already, on average, how many Time Credits do you earn a month?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0 | <input type="radio"/> 16-20 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 | <input type="radio"/> 21-25 |
| <input type="radio"/> 6-10 | <input type="radio"/> 25-30 |
| <input type="radio"/> 11-15 | <input type="radio"/> 31 or more |

17. If you said above that you are saving some, what are you saving your Time Credits for? Tick the one response which most closely applies.

- Saving them up for spending during holiday periods
- Saving them up to spend on a course
- Saving them up to give to someone else
- Saving them because I can't find anything to spend them on yet
- Other (please specify):

18. What type of activity do you usually do to earn your Time Credits? Please tick all that apply.

- Support volunteering - e.g. befriending, liaison officer, peer to peer support, digital champions
- Group support volunteering - e.g. therapy or focus group leader, meet and greet, skill based opportunities e.g. arts/crafts, IT, CV writing, lunch or social club volunteers
- School volunteering - e.g. classroom reader, mealtime assistant, support with trips, school office administration, after schools clubs, school maintenance or gardening
- Administration - e.g. Time Credits administration, general office duties, sorting of archived/stored museum items, information providing, volunteer coordinator
- Maintenance/general help - e.g. painting and decorating, gardening, cleaning, allotment, drivers, handyman, estate checks
- Supporting the design of services - e.g. participation in service design workshops, lay member of governance board, sharing experience with policy makers
- Other - including café, retail or warehouse volunteer, museum tour guide, leafletting

19. Prior to getting involved with Time Credits, had you previously been involved in giving your time?

- I had never given time before
- I had occasionally given my time
- I had given time regularly in the past but not recently
- I had given time regularly in the past and am now earning Time Credits too

20. Have you regularly volunteered in the past 12 months? (by regularly, we mean at least once a month)

- Yes No

21. What is your primary motivation for becoming a member of the Time Credits network? Please select the two options that most closely match your reasons for getting involved.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meet other people | <input type="checkbox"/> Feel better about myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make new friends | <input type="checkbox"/> To pay for activities I would not otherwise have been able to afford |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learn new skills | <input type="checkbox"/> To give something back to my community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help me to get a job | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be more active | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) | <input type="text"/> |

About you

This section contains information about you. We ask these questions to help us understand how different characteristics influence how people benefit from Time Credits and what can be done to help everyone get the best from them.

22. Please tell us your date of birth below. We use this to understand whether the age of members impacts on their experience of Time Credits. However, we understand that not everyone is comfortable revealing their age, so if you would rather not tell us, then please pick the 'Prefer not to say' box.

____/____/____
DD MM YY

- I prefer not to say

23. Please tell us your gender.

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

24. Please tell us your postcode.

25. Please enter your email address below, or tick the box to indicate if you do not have one.

I do not have an email address

26. Which of the following best describes your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- In a Civil Partnership
- Divorced
- Widowed

27. Please tell us roughly your household income. Note that Time Credits have no impact at all on your right to benefits or tax, and we do not share this information. However, if you would rather not tell us your income, please tick the 'I prefer not to say' option below.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than £10,000 | <input type="radio"/> £40,000 to £49,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> £10,000 to £19,999 | <input type="radio"/> £50,000 or over |
| <input type="radio"/> £20,000 to £29,999 | <input type="radio"/> I don't know |
| <input type="radio"/> £30,000 to £39,999 | <input type="radio"/> I would prefer not to say |

28. How often does a lack of money stop you from doing the things you want to do?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Not often
- Never

29. How often does a lack of money stop you from doing the things you want to do?

- Full-time employment (35 hours a week or more)
- Part-time employment (under 35 hours per week)
- Self-employed
- Retired
- Not currently in employment but looking for work
- Not currently in employment and NOT looking for work
- Student

30. What is your ethnicity?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish /British Irish | <input type="radio"/> Pakistani |
| <input type="radio"/> Gypsy or Irish Traveller | <input type="radio"/> Bangladeshi |
| <input type="radio"/> White and Black Caribbean | <input type="radio"/> Chinese |
| <input type="radio"/> White and Black African | <input type="radio"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British |
| <input type="radio"/> White and Asian | <input type="radio"/> African |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British | <input type="radio"/> Caribbean |
| <input type="radio"/> Indian | <input type="radio"/> Middle East/North Africa |
| <input type="radio"/> Pakistani | <input type="radio"/> Other |

31. Do you have any mental impairments, illnesses or disabilities? Please tick all that apply.

- No
- Mental health condition
- Physical disability
- Learning disability
- Sensory impairment
- Long term health condition
- Other

32. Would you like to receive your follow up survey by:

- Paper
- Email

Please confirm address:

Follow-up survey – core questions

How are you feeling?

1. We have four questions we would like to ask you about your feelings on aspects of your life. There are no right or wrong answers. For each of these questions please give an answer on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays											
Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?											
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?											
On a scale where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?											

2. Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please choose the answer that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks.

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future					
I've been feeling useful					
I've been feeling relaxed					
I've been dealing with problems well					
I've been thinking clearly					
I've been feeling close to other people					
I've been able to make up my mind about things					

3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Definitely agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Often	Definitely disagree
If I needed help, there are people who would be there for me					
If I wanted company or to socialise, there are people I can call on					

Your physical activity

The next questions ask about how much physical activity you usually do. For each one, think about how often and for how long you did moderate or vigorous physical activity in the past 7 days.

4. In the last 7 days, on how many days did you do moderate physical activity? (This is an activity where you raise your heart rate and feel a little out of breath).

5. If you said above that you spent at least one day doing moderate activity, roughly how many minutes did you spend on this activity on one of those days?

6. In the last 7 days, on how many days did you do vigorous physical activity? (This is where you're breathing hard and fast and your heart rate has increased significantly (you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath)).

7. If you said above that you spent at least one day doing moderate activity, how many minutes did you spend on this activity on one of those days?

Earning and spending Time Credits

Giving us some more information about you helps us to provide better opportunities for you to earn and spend with Time Credits.

8. Have you earned any Time Credits yet?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

9. If you have earned some Time Credits already, on average, how many Time Credits do you earn a month?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0 | <input type="radio"/> 16-20 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 | <input type="radio"/> 21-25 |
| <input type="radio"/> 6-10 | <input type="radio"/> 25-30 |
| <input type="radio"/> 11-15 | <input type="radio"/> 31 or more |

10. Have you spent any Time Credits yet?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

11. If you have already spent Time Credits, what do you do with the Time Credits you earn?

- I spend them regularly
- I spend some regularly and save some up
- I usually save most of them

12. If you have spent any Time Credits, on average, how many Time Credits do you spend for yourself or with friends or family a month?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0 | <input type="radio"/> 16-20 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 | <input type="radio"/> 21-25 |
| <input type="radio"/> 6-10 | <input type="radio"/> 25-30 |
| <input type="radio"/> 11-15 | <input type="radio"/> 31 or more |

13. If you said above that you are saving some, what are you saving your Time Credits for? Tick the one response which most closely applies.

- Saving them up for spending during holiday periods
- Saving them up to spend on a course
- Saving them up to give to someone else
- Saving them because I can't find anything to spend them on yet
- Other (please specify):

14. What type of activity do you usually do to earn your Time Credits? Please tick all that apply.

- Support volunteering - e.g. befriending, liaison officer, peer to peer support, digital champions
- Group support volunteering - e.g. therapy or focus group leader, meet and greet, skill based opportunities e.g. arts/crafts, IT, CV writing, lunch or social club volunteers
- School volunteering - e.g. classroom reader, mealtime assistant, support with trips, school office administration, after schools clubs, school maintenance or gardening
- Administration - e.g. Time Credits administration, general office duties, sorting of archived/stored museum items, information providing, volunteer coordinator
- Maintenance/general help - e.g. painting and decorating, gardening, cleaning, allotment, drivers, handyman, estate checks
- Supporting the design of services - e.g. participation in service design workshops, lay member of governance board, sharing experience with policy makers
- Other - including café, retail or warehouse volunteer, museum tour guide, leafletting

About you

This section contains information about you. We ask these questions to help us understand how different characteristics influence how people benefit from Time Credits and what can be done to help everyone get the best from them.

15. Please tell us roughly your household income. Note that Time Credits have no impact at all on your right to benefits or tax, and we do not share this information. However, if you would rather not tell us your income, please tick the 'I prefer not to say' option below.

- Less than £10,000
- £10,000 to £19,999
- £20,000 to £29,999
- £30,000 to £39,999
- £40,000 to £49,999
- £50,000 or over
- I don't know
- I would prefer not to say

16. How often does a lack of money stop you from doing the things you want to do?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Not often
- Never

16 Appendix 2: Detailed Time Credits Theory of Change – over 50s

Theory of change (over 50s) - Tempo Time Credits (actions and assumptions - based on high level logic chain)

