An Evaluation of Spice Time Credits

December 2014

- 16,000 people have earned Time Credits in the last three years.
- 62% give their time at least once a week.
- The average number of hours Time Credits members give per month is 9x9.
- 65% say their quality of life has improved.
- 81% are very likely to continue giving their time.
- 95 people have started a community group since being involved in Time Credits.
- 45% feel healthier.
- 76% feel able to contribute more.
- 19% people who say they need to go to the doctor less since earning and spending Time Credits.
- 62% organisations that report they are able to make better use of skills and resources in communities.
# Contents

1 Foreword ................................................................................................................. 6  
2 Acknowledgements ................................................................................................. 7  
3 Summary of findings ................................................................................................. 8  

## Introduction and context

4 Introduction .............................................................................................................. 12  
  4.1 About Spice ......................................................................................................... 12  
  4.2 Using Time Credits as a tool for co-production .................................................. 13  
  4.3 Time Credits in England and Wales ..................................................................... 15  
  4.4 Contexts where Spice operates .......................................................................... 16  
  4.5 Scope and purpose of this evaluation .................................................................. 17  

5 Context and theory relevant to Time Credits ........................................................... 19  
  5.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................... 19  
  5.2 Spice ‘Theory of Change’ ..................................................................................... 19  
  5.3 The national context relating to Time Credits .................................................. 20  
  5.4 Policy drivers in England and Wales ................................................................... 21  
  5.5 Time Credits, co-production, and social capital ................................................... 23  
  5.6 Selected theory and evidence relevant to the Time Credits model ................. 25  

## Findings

6 Data informing these findings .................................................................................... 28  
  6.1 Data sources ........................................................................................................ 28  
  6.2 Representativeness of the survey samples ............................................................ 28  
  6.3 Secondary data sources ....................................................................................... 30  

7 Levels of participation ............................................................................................... 31  
  7.1 Headline findings ............................................................................................... 31  
  7.2 What we are measuring ....................................................................................... 31  
  7.3 Who uses Time Credits ....................................................................................... 31  
  7.4 More regular and reliable giving ......................................................................... 33
## Impact on individuals and communities

8.1 Headline findings
8.2 What we are measuring
8.3 Supporting a process of change for individuals
8.4 Time Credits as a complementary currency
8.5 Impact on quality of life and well-being
8.6 Spending as a driver of impact

## Change in organisations

9.1 Headline findings
9.2 What we are measuring
9.3 Speed of change and impact on services
9.4 The importance of Time Credits to organisations
9.5 Towards co-production
9.6 Collaboration and networks
9.7 Complexity of delivering Time Credits programmes

### Responding to the evaluation

10 Spend opportunities
10.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice
10.2 Actions that Spice has already taken
10.3 Plans for the future

11 Impact on health and social care services
11.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice
11.2 Actions Spice intends to take

12 Lead in times
## Contents

12.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice ................................................. 68
12.2 Actions that Spice has already taken .......................................................... 68
12.3 Plans for the future ....................................................................................... 68

### 13 Towards greater co-production ................................................................. 69
13.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice .............................................. 69
13.2 Actions that Spice has already taken .......................................................... 69
13.3 Plans for the future ....................................................................................... 69

### 14 Further evaluation ...................................................................................... 70

## Research methods

### 15 Overall approach ....................................................................................... 72
15.1 Aims of the evaluation .................................................................................. 72
15.2 Stages of work .............................................................................................. 72
15.3 The research questions ................................................................................. 74

### 16 Evaluation design ....................................................................................... 75
16.1 Challenges with this kind of evaluation ....................................................... 75
16.2 Evaluation framework ................................................................................... 76
16.3 Measurement themes .................................................................................... 77

## Appendices

**Appendix 1 – Further references** ................................................................. 82
**Appendix 2 – Glossary of terms** ................................................................. 84
1. Foreword

At the heart of Spice's work there are hundreds of thousands of hours; time earned and spent by our extraordinary members across the UK. People taking small and large actions on a daily basis to make their communities a better place to live. These actions are supported by a new kind of partnership between individuals, public services, community organisations and the private sector. This report demonstrates that when we work together we can achieve meaningful change.

For Spice it was essential that our values were reflected in the way that we designed and developed our evaluation. The approach needed to give a voice to the individuals involved in the programmes and to support the ongoing learning process for Spice and its partners.

This evaluation involved over 1000 community members, and nearly 300 partner staff who contributed their opinions through three surveys, in-depth interviews and 33 participatory workshops.

In many ways the Spice Time Credit model is a simple concept; an hour contributed earns one time credit that be used to access an hour’s activity. What we have learnt over the last 6 years and what has been confirmed through this 2 year evaluation is that this simple model combined with our way of working with partners, creates a wide range of positive outcomes for individuals, services and communities.

Not only are Time Credits an effective way of engaging new people in their communities, they are a way of valuing and recognizing existing volunteers. For everyone it opens up access to spend activities, encouraging people to try something new. The benefits to health, well-being, social networks and individual self-worth speak for themselves throughout the report.

Measuring the change in partner organisations has also been key to this evaluation. Our partners are seeing tangible differences where Time Credits are used, enabling them to recruit and retain volunteers, respond better to community issues, support involvement in service settings and achieve better outcomes.

Over the last 2 years, we have been learning from and responding to the findings of the research. This ongoing learning has impacted the way we deliver our programmes and invest our resources.

The launch of this evaluation is an opportunity to celebrate the work to date. However, this is just the first phase of our ongoing evaluation. Next, we will be deepening our understanding of the change that takes place within organisations and their journey to becoming more co-productive. We will be looking in more detail at the impact for individuals as they engage with our programmes over time.

This evaluation, like our programmes, has only been possible because of a strong partnership. We are extremely grateful to Apteigen for their commitment to this work. They have balanced robust statistical analysis and creative participatory engagement. The Spice team and our partners have supported community groups and individuals to engage, they have tirelessly made sure that those involved were not just the usual suspects or those most confident in giving their opinions.

Finally we would like to say thank you to the 1393 people who gave time to be involved in this evaluation, we so value the time that you gave to partnering with us to learn more about the impact of the work we have done together.

Becky Booth
CEO Spice
This report has been prepared by Apteligen Limited and our associates Kerry McCarthy and Cassie Robinson, as part of an independent evaluation of Spice Time Credits. The evaluation began in July 2012 and since then over 1,000 people have contributed to our research. Our work has been wide-ranging and possible only because of the commitment and willingness of so many to engage in the work we have been doing.

In particular, the authors would like to thank the hundreds of Spice members from across England and Wales who gave up their time to complete our survey (some on more than one occasion!) and participate in workshops and events, some of which were arranged and facilitated by Spice staff themselves. The Spice Locality Facilitators, who helped us understand the complexities of Time Credits, how Time Credits operate in their local contexts, and what was important for them to identify with and benefit from in our research. Also Spice's many partners, who engaged with us from the very beginning, helping to design the evaluation and our research tools, filling in surveys, and participating in a range of workshops and events, taking time out from other responsibilities to be involved in this work and to support their own members and volunteers to take part.

Finally, we would like to thank Spice itself, for commissioning this work and taking such a keen interest in learning about the impact of Time Credits. And the organisations that fund Spice – for making a commitment to such an exciting and necessary programme of work in today’s society.
3. Summary of findings

**Levels of participation**

1. Time Credits are an effective way to engage people in giving their time to their communities, and community organisations, in a sustainable way. While this is true for many different groups, it is most notable for people who are new to giving their time, people under the age of 35, and when families are able to earn and spend Time Credits together.

2. Time Credits also motivate people who are already giving their time to continue. The amount of time people regularly give through Time Credits programmes is notably higher than the national average for volunteering. Nationally, only around two thirds of volunteers (66%) give their time at least once a month whereas 62% of Spice volunteers giving their time at least once a week.

**Impacts for individuals and communities**

3. Time Credits lead to sustainable improvements in quality of life. 65% of members reported that Time Credits have helped to improve their quality of life within the first year, and this figure rises to 75% for people who have been members for 18 months to three years.

4. Time Credits have opened up many opportunities for people to get involved in new activities. Over 40% of respondents reported that they now regularly do things they didn’t do before, and 49% feel more able to do things they weren’t able to do before. 95 Spice members also reported that they have been incentivised through Time Credits to start a new community group.

These results are despite the early stage of many Time Credits programmes at the time the data was collected, and reflects the way Time Credits work to support people along a process of change. The ‘newness’ of the currency, the activities available to people, and the widening of social networks, are all factors that incentivise people to get involved. The associated benefits help to sustain people’s desire to give their time.

5. In addition to their value for a wide demographic, Time Credits offer value as a complementary currency specifically for people and families with lower incomes. Among people in this group, Time Credits are seen as a means to do things they couldn’t otherwise afford to do, which leads to greater financial and social inclusion.

6. Time Credits improve quality of life in many different ways, most notably by helping people to build their sense of contribution, share skills with others, take part in more community activities, and make new friends and social connections. In a small number of individual cases, the benefits of Time Credits have included helping people into employment.
This means that Time Credits have benefits that can appeal to a wide ranging demographic, and are likely to influence a number of important factors that help to build more resilient people and communities.

7. Time Credits help people to adopt healthier lifestyles and to improve physical and mental well-being. They also help to tackle issues of loneliness and social isolation. For 58% of respondents, greater involvement in new and different activities has helped to build confidence, and for 71% this involvement has helped to expand their social connections. A total of 45% of respondents reported feeling healthier as a result.

19% of people already say that they now have less need to go to the doctor since earning and spending Time Credits. People with a disability were significantly more likely to report that they felt they wanted to do, were able to do, and were now doing new things, since they began earning and spending Time Credits.¹

These are known drivers of improved individual well-being, and factors that contribute towards building more resilient and active communities. Time Credits therefore have the potential to generate greater impact at scale, through more time and focus on realising benefits at a community level, as well as on an individual basis. By improving people's individual well-being Time Credits already support the work of many organisations and services. Across a community, Time Credits could be more closely linked with wider health promotion, and primary and secondary prevention initiatives, leading to positive impacts for health and social care services over the longer term.

8. Spice continues to focus on developing a currency with sustainable value, which has been difficult for other models to achieve. There are many examples of how valuable Time Credits are to people. The availability of appropriate spend opportunities, which appeal to Spice's target populations, was often highlighted as central to the Time Credits scheme working well.

This will be an area that requires ongoing attention as Spice continues to grow and work with different communities. Understanding how people want to spend their Time Credits, and how this desire might change over time, will remain central to a sustainable model. Also important is the support available to make use of spend opportunities, especially for people with higher level support needs. Both of these things – spend opportunities being available and accessible – are closely linked to increasing levels of participation and impact.

¹ Statistical results for this are as follows:
'I now want to do things I didn’t want to do': Chi-square = 25.2, df=6, p<0.001,
'I now feel more able to do things I couldn’t do before': Chi-square = 42.3, df=6, p<0.001,
'I regularly do things now that I didn’t do before': Chi-square = 26.5, df=6, p<0.001.
Change in organisations

9. Time Credits generate early benefits in organisations – 78% report already seeing clear benefits as a result of Time Credits. This includes making better use of skills and resources in communities (62%) and being able to deliver improved access to services with the same resources (48%), for example by freeing up staff time.

Spice has deliberately been working with a broad range of organisations, developing experience and insight in how to work effectively in different contexts. They are now focusing on how to more quickly translate these early benefits for organisations into longer term sustainable changes, which support the journey towards co-production. This includes helping organisations to rapidly focus in on the specific aims for Time Credits, and the speed with which Time Credits become embedded in organisations.

10. Time Credits have a positive impact on the range of options that organisations can offer, for example by providing access to new and different activities, and a higher quality or broader range of services without additional cost. However, there is still a journey for many organisations to make, from simply recognising people as assets and resources, to helping those people to become owners of their organisation’s assets and resources.

11. Organisations have reported that it is most important for Time Credits to deliver on making volunteers feel more valued (85%), strengthening their reputation in the community (79%), providing more opportunities to give time (74%) and promoting what they do to more people (74%). For more than half of the organisations that provided data for this evaluation, these benefits are already being achieved.

12. Time Credits create opportunities for organisations to collaborate and build stronger networks with each other. They do this by creating a new shared language and framework for co-operation. And while at this stage there are only very few examples of this co-operation leading to the creation of new services, these connections have led to more effective access to existing services with a clear aspiration for greater collaboration in the future.

2 We use the following broad definition of an organisation in this evaluation: ‘Any entity, whether constituted or not, that brings together a group of people to achieve a particular purpose (or a number of different purposes), and which is signed up to Time Credits.’ Within the context of Spice, this ranges from local authorities and large national charities, through to small volunteer-led community groups and organisations.
Introduction and context

4 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 12
   4.1 About Spice .................................................................................................................................. 12
   4.2 Using Time Credits as a tool for co-production ......................................................................... 13
   4.3 Time Credits in England and Wales ......................................................................................... 15
   4.4 Contexts where Spice operates ................................................................................................ 16
   4.5 Scope and purpose of this evaluation ...................................................................................... 17

5 Context and theory relevant to Time Credits ............................................................................... 19
   5.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 19
   5.2 Spice ‘Theory of Change’ ........................................................................................................... 19
   5.3 The national context relating to Time Credits .......................................................................... 20
   5.4 Policy drivers in England and Wales ........................................................................................... 21
   5.5 Time Credits, co-production, and social capital ...................................................................... 23
   5.6 Selected theory and evidence relevant to the Time Credits model ....................................... 25
4. Introduction

4.1 About Spice

Spice grew out of the Wales Institute for Community Currencies (WICC), a partnership project funded by the European Union (EU) to develop new social currencies for communities in ex-mining areas in South Wales.

When the EU programme ended in 2009, Spice was established to develop the work of WICC into a wider geographical remit, to develop programmes that included the voluntary, public and private sector, and to create a national network of local Time Currencies.

Spice strategy

Spice’s vision is to create nations of connected communities. Spice has three organisational objectives to achieve this vision:

1. Support organisations to deliver high quality, high impact Time Credits programmes
2. Support organisations to develop a more co-productive culture
3. Work with policy makers and funders to foster an environment that supports co-productive service delivery

In 2011, Spice developed an informal partnership with the Young Foundation to enable them to design and implement Time Credits systems with a broad range of partners in England. The Cabinet Office, City of London Corporation’s Charity; City Bridge Trust, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Lankelly Chase Foundation, Nesta and Tudor Trust have also supported the design and development of Spice’s work in England.

In the first stage of its English development, Spice developed two main demonstration programmes that formally launched in 2012:

**English Localities** — Developing and implementing Time Credits systems across six localities. The systems are hosted by local authority partners, who use staff time, local amenities and financial backing to support the programme for the wider community, and

**Health and Social Care** — This project saw a collaboration between Spice, The Department of Health and The Young Foundation to pilot the Spice Time Credits model with the health and social care sector. Programmes focused on supporting beneficiaries of health and social care services to become more actively involved in their service and the wider community.

Following the successful delivery of these programmes, Spice is now expanding its networks across England and Wales and focusing on increasing engagement within four thematic areas:

- Communities
- Health and Social Care
- Housing
- Schools

Spice is a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status, governed by a board of experienced trustees from a broad range of organisations, businesses and public services. The organisation has grown from its two co-founders to a staff team of 27 people based across the UK.
Objectives of Time Credits
Spice has developed Time Credits as a tool for building stronger communities and co-produced services where people are active and equal participants. Spice believes in the power of people to create positive change. Time Credits act as a means to encourage more people to get more involved in their local community by giving their time. Through this, Spice's projects work towards improved outcomes for individuals, organisations and communities.

Individuals — By encouraging people to engage with local community organisations, Time Credits create opportunities for individuals to learn new skills, gain confidence and raise their aspirations. Following increased participation, individuals have better access to peer and community support networks, and feel they have something positive to contribute. By spending Time Credits, individuals can try new activities and improve their health and well-being. Many participants have commented that through the Time Credit network they have been able to try activities they could not previously afford.

Organisations — Time Credits can be used by organisations to engage with new groups or to encourage more active involvement from service users in the design and delivery of services. Involving service users in this way can bring new skills and insight, and shape services so that they better respond to need. Organisations and providers are connected through the Time Credit network and are able to make better use of community assets. Organisations participating in Spice programmes include local authorities, housing providers, schools, health and social care providers and a wide range of community organisations.

Communities — Time Credits connect groups and services across a community and create opportunities to share assets and skills, and to collaborate. Communities are better able to support each other, with more people giving more time in the local community, and with individuals and groups outside of their usual social network.

4.2 Using Time Credits as a tool for co-production
Community decline and civic disengagement is a worrying national trend and public services are more stretched than ever. Spice Time Credits can be used to engage people in the design and delivery of their public and community services and to support people to take a more active role in their communities. Time Credits support services and neighbourhoods to become more effective agents of change. Whether this is with pupils in schools, tenants in housing associations or local people working with their community anchor organisation, using Time Credits as a tool increases active engagement, reduces dependency and builds community and individual esteem. Through Time Credits, people are encouraged to get involved in their community, to make decisions about how services are run, and to help create and actively deliver services alongside professionals.

Using Time Credits to support a move towards co-production helps services and activities to become more effective, as service users and their communities increasingly help to design and deliver outcomes. This encourages buy-in and ownership of services by the community, resulting in sustainable projects that offer better value for money. People grow in confidence, they build new relationships, and the sense of community increases, leading to increased well-being for participants, professionals and communities.
How Spice operates

The Time Credits model

People earn Time Credits by giving their time to local service and groups. One Time Credit is earned for each hour of time given and acts as a thank you for the contribution of time to their community or service. People 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.

Earning Time Credits — Services and local community groups identify existing and new opportunities for people to give their time. New opportunities are based on the interests, skills and availability of local people.

Spending Time Credits — Public, community and private organisations identify ways in which people can spend Time Credits with their services or at events, and at existing or new activities. This can be ‘spare capacity’ at theatres or swimming pools for example, or for community services as a way of recognising and thanking people for the contributions they have made. Spice spending brochures include a wide range of community organisations as well as higher profile opportunities such as The Barbican and Tower of London.

Spice Programmes

Spice is commissioned by organisations who want to integrate a Time Credit system into their work. These organisations include local authorities, housing associations, service providers, community development organisations, and schools.

Spice supports the commissioning organisation to use Time Credits as a means to involve their communities and service users more in their services, to improve service delivery and to achieve better outcomes. The host organisation will be supported to sign up local groups and organisations to create a Time Credit Network in their locality.

Spice approaches potential spend partners in the area that the host organisation works, and develops partnerships with them to help directly support active community participation and often to reach new audiences. Time Credit Networks encompass a diverse range of private, statutory and third sector organisations.
4.3 Time Credits in England and Wales

Nine Time Credits programmes are within the scope of this evaluation. A number of new programmes are now also being developed, focusing on Spice’s four themes of work: Communities, Health and Social Care, Housing and Schools.

Chorley / Lancashire Time Credits
Chorley / Lancashire Time Credits is a locality based programme delivered in partnership with Chorley District Council and Lancashire County Council. The programme initially focused on improving outcomes for older people, people with long-term illness and people who are socially isolated. Further funding agreed part way through this evaluation has led to a broader emphasis on wider community and civic engagement.

Wiltshire
Wiltshire Time Credits is a locality based programme delivered in partnership with Wiltshire Council. Delivery initially centred on the market town of Chippenham but has grown to cover the Bemerton Heath Estate in Salisbury and the town of Calne, near Chippenham. The project’s focus includes increasing broad community participation as well as building social networks and reducing social isolation. The health and social care strand also has an emphasis on increasing participation in services to improve service delivery.

West Norfolk
West Norfolk Time Credits is a locality based programme with a community and health and social care focus. The programme has been delivered in collaboration with the West Norfolk Partnership and initially aimed to engage with families across the local community to raise aspirations and tackle worklessness. The health and social care strand of the programme introduced a focus on increasing community participation for older people, people with long-term illnesses and the socially isolated.

London Borough of Lewisham
Lewisham Time Credits is a locality based programme delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Lewisham. The programme has a community, and health and social care focus. The health and social care strand of the project runs across Lewisham and involves working with commissioned and community services to increase service user involvement in service design and delivery. The community strand focuses on increasing community participation and building social networks in the wards of Lee Green and Telegraph Hill.
City of London
The City of London Time Credits programme focused initially on developing Time Credits in the Portsoken Ward in the City of London. It has now expanded to include all City of London Corporation Housing Estates. Spice has been supporting the commissioning team to involve users in commissioning, designing and delivering services and working with local providers and community groups to integrate Time Credits into their services.

London: Westminster
The Queen's Park Time Credits Programme has been delivered in partnership with the Paddington Development Trust. The programme has focused on increasing community participation in an area of high disadvantage and inequality.

Look Ahead
Look Ahead Time Credits is a provider-based programme that aims to develop Time Credits across multiple services delivered by a single provider (Look Ahead) through a training and support model. Training has been delivered to service leads who then develop Time Credits within their service, supported by Spice and Look Ahead central staff. The programme has focused on engaging people with complex needs in participating within the service, with a development focus on co-producing services.

Cardiff West (Time Place)
Time Place is a locality based programme delivered in partnership with ACE (Action in Caerau & Ely) in a disadvantaged area of Cardiff. The programme has focused on increasing community action and participation, building community support networks and social connections, and reducing social isolation. The network has now grown to cover both Ely and the neighbouring Fairwater area.

Carmarthenshire
Spice has been working with Carmarthenshire County Council to develop the Carmarthenshire Time Credits Programme. The programme has focused on building community support networks, reducing social isolation and integrating Time Credits into housing services to increase tenant participation, and improve service delivery.

4.4 Contexts where Spice operates
Spice has four themes across which the programmes of work are delivered:

- Communities
- Health and Social Care
- Housing
- Schools
Spice works with organisations on multiple levels, seeking strategic buy-in at commissioner and senior management level, support at middle manager level and buy-in and enthusiasm from front line staff to drive new activities and opportunities.

Spice programmes are often located in areas or services where people are disadvantaged, whether by poverty and unemployment or disability or health conditions. One clear impact of the Time Credits methodology is the opportunity it creates for a wider pool of people to give their time.

4.5 Scope and purpose of this evaluation

This report sets out the findings from our evaluation of Spice Time Credits. In undertaking this evaluation, our primary objective has been to provide Spice and its partners with robust evidence about the impact of Time Credits, and in particular how this impact varies in different contexts. In the words of Spice:

“Since Spice’s launch in 2009 we have been innovating and developing our model to adapt to different contexts. We have expanded the themes of programmes, the size and scale of the projects, and the geographical area that Spice is covering. We now require an evaluation that captures the impact of our programmes in order to:

• Make changes to the existing Spice programmes to increase impact
• Demonstrate success of the programmes to our members, partners and funders
• Enable Spice to be able to design and develop successful future programmes
• Compare the success of different Spice programmes to enable us to make future organisational programme decisions.”

This year is an important time in the development of Spice. The organisation is now into its sixth year and has been operating in a tough financial climate since it began in 2009. Spice is currently developing a new regional model for growth, focussing on five English regions and two South Wales regions.

In July 2012, Spice commissioned Apteligen to undertake an impact evaluation of its different programmes of work in England and Wales. Our aims at that stage were to understand the extent to which Time Credits:

• Lead to more active participation and giving of time in services and communities
• Strengthen communities
• Improve health and well-being
• Facilitate and embed co-production of public and community services
• Help to establish and strengthen networks between people, communities and organisations

and

• Provide a sustainable and high value tool for improving the way services are delivered to better meet people’s needs.
In order to meet these aims, we wanted to design an approach that brought simplicity from what is a complex set of stakeholder relationships and perspectives. We also wanted to ensure that our approach was pragmatic, was based on the needs of Spice and other stakeholders, was underpinned by sound theory and proven evaluation methods, and had sufficient flexibility to adapt and evolve as the work progressed.

Our approach has also been designed to reflect the values of Spice: people are change-makers, together we work, and change that is meaningful. This means that we have used methods that are rigorous, participatory and creative. We have spent time ensuring that we understand the different audiences for the work we are doing, that the research tools we use engage people from diverse backgrounds, and that we ultimately measure the extent to which Time Credits create positive and sustainable change in communities.

Over the past 18 months we have been collecting data and information about the impact of Time Credits. This data and information has come from many sources: the users of Time Credits themselves, staff from many of Spice’s partner organisations, and existing research and evidence in this study field and related areas. Prior to this we spent around six months designing our evaluation approach, our methods, and our data collection tools jointly with Spice. This report is the result of our analysis and synthesis of all of the information we have gathered so far, and sets out a clear and compelling story of the impacts Time Credits have made.

It is important to note that this work has taken a national perspective, drawing on the experiences of each individual locality programme. We have not attempted to evaluate each programme of work separately, nor have we compared the relative impact of each. This is because the variation in the way Time Credits are implemented locally, and the many different target populations to which they are attached, would result in a statistical comparison that would have limited value. However, we have attempted to isolate contextual features that drive differential impacts.

The following pages describe what we can and cannot say about Time Credits – about the impacts they have on those who earn and spend Time Credits, on the organisations who partner with Spice to deliver Time Credits programmes locally, and on the communities that Spice wants to support. We hope that this report will inform and support Spice with its strategic decision-making, and the longer term success of Time Credits as a tool for creating meaningful change.

This report is presented in five parts:

- **Part 1** — This introduction and aspects of the existing literature and evidence relevant to Time Credits
- **Part 2** — The findings, arranged according to the main themes revealed in the data
- **Part 3** — An outline of how Spice has responded to the findings from the evaluation, and how it intends to respond in the future
- **Part 4** — Our research methods
- **Part 5** — A glossary of terms used in this report, and additional references and data sources

An **executive summary** is also available as a separate report.
5. Context and theory relevant to Time Credits

5.1 Introduction

In this section we describe some of the main policy drivers and contextual features relevant to the work of Spice and its partners. The section also includes an overview of the evidence that supports the logic – or theory of change – that explains how Time Credits intend to create change. This information is presented to help the reader frame the analysis and findings, and the implications that these findings have for the way Spice operates in the future.

We start with outlining how Time Credits are thought to work to achieve positive change for organisations, individuals and communities, and the way these elements interact with each other. A brief overview of some of the dominant themes in the national context is provided, and followed by examples of existing evidence that links these themes to the way Time Credits work. This is not intended to be an exhaustive review of literature and evidence, rather to highlight that Spice and Time Credits do not operate in isolation. Spice is an organisation that spans the boundaries of more traditional public sector delivery and innovation in the social sector. We end by reflecting on some examples of current innovation and possible drivers for future innovation, and how they might influence the future of Spice and Time Credits.

5.2 Spice ‘Theory of Change’

A theory of change is a tool used widely in social research. It usually consists of a number of key components which together describe what an organisation or programme wants to achieve (results/outcomes), for whom (the target population), how (inputs, processes and outputs) and why (long-term impact). It often forms the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of programmes of work or interventions (to what extent were the outcomes or impact achieved) and communicating this to stakeholders. A theory of change sets out what we might expect to happen (the intended change) and is usually underpinned, at least to some extent, by existing research and evidence.

5.2.1 The intended changes from Time Credits

Time Credits are expected to make a difference through three distinct but highly interconnected series of changes that take place within the lives of the individuals involved, the organisations using the Time Credits system and the wider community.

The entry point is through organisations where Spice supports providers and community groups to introduce Time Credits into their existing services. Two initial processes take place, new and more diverse people give their time to the organisation and existing volunteers feel more valued for the time that they have given. There is a strong emphasis on providers to support the beneficiaries of the services to become more actively involved in delivery and designing the services. As a result of this change, services become more responsive and reflective of the needs and assets of service users. This enables individuals to take more ownership of services. As organisations begin to make use of the skills and assets of their members, and the services become more responsive and reflective, they are able to make better use of existing resources. This leads to a number of overall changes, including higher quality services and better use of existing resources.

In parallel, a number of changes take place for individuals. As new people give time to their community, they become more connected to both the service and other members in the community. This connection leads to deeper involvement. In turn this involvement leads to a higher level of confidence, developing new skills and building wider and stronger networks. Over time this change leads to involvement becoming the norm for both the individual and their wider network of family and friends. The overarching outcome is increased well-being and quality of life for people.
As the above processes take place we begin to see changes in the wider community. As more people give their time, and services are being co-produced, we start to see new initiatives being developed by individuals. This may be an additional service within an organisation or a new community group that forms around self-identified needs or interests. As more groups form, the system begins to support joint initiatives and exchanges between organisations. This new energy in the community leads to stronger networks between individuals, between organisations and between organisations and individuals. This leads to a more connected and resilient community with higher quality services.

5.2.2 Evaluating the impact of Time Credits

With the above theory of change in mind, we developed a framework for this evaluation that reflects the intended changes from Time Credits and which defines the measures we have used to assess impact. This is set out in more detail in Part 4 of this report.

5.3 The national context relating to Time Credits

The UK public sector has faced considerable reductions in the funding available for public and statutory services over recent years, with subsequent impacts on the community and voluntary sector. This financial situation is combined with increasing demands from a growing and ageing population, and with increasing public expectations about the quality of what the state provides, particularly in relation to care and support services. Services are severely stretched in terms of their ability to meet current and future demand, and to provide high quality services tailored to individual needs.

Broad directions in response to these challenges include: a focus on better integration and flow between services (for example through the Better Care Fund), alongside increasing recognition of the role individuals can play in preventing and managing demands on services (for example through volunteering, peer support for people with long-term conditions and initiatives to better support carers). National policy also recognises the need to support communities to become more resilient and able to start and run their own initiatives that build infrastructure to tackle social isolation, encourage healthier lives and prevent escalation of need. These themes are reflected in the way Time Credits work, particularly through the central component of co-production.

Diversification of service providers, to encompass private, voluntary and community organisations, has been on the national agenda for some time, the argument being that to address complex social challenges requires a mix of different skills and working in partnership. This has led to changes, particularly in the role of local government, with a much greater emphasis on commissioning these different skills and partnerships rather than Councils being the sole or main provider of community services. As a result, there is also a growing community of social innovators, developing new and disruptive approaches to the design and delivery of services.

Spice is an organisation that spans these different worlds, working in partnership with the mainstream, voluntary and community sectors, while bringing new and innovative approaches to address complex health and social issues. Keeping ideas from the social innovation community in sight may continue to help Spice build on the strength of this position as the organisation shapes its strategy for the future.

A strong theme across business and social sectors, and our day to day personal lives, is ‘big data’. How to go about collecting and analysing data is driven by how the data will be used,
often to answer questions such as: where do we have most impact? What do our customers want? What needs to change in our operating model? One example from healthcare is the growing interest in the role data can play in processes to improve flow through individual services, and between health and social care. Similarly for Spice, there are choices to be made about how to collect and use data dynamically, to inform how it targets its service offering and improves its operating models. Spice will also have the potential to develop an increasingly rich dataset, from diverse activities with a wide range of communities. There will be privacy and transparency considerations, and decisions about investment in technology. Data analytics should again be driven by strategic choices about the role data will play in the ongoing development of Time Credits.

Finally, Time Credits form a currency, operating in complex systems that continue to evolve in response to the currency being used. This resonates with another theme from the social innovation space, the ideas of ‘commons’:

“The idea of the commons suggests a smaller but more active state. This is particularly true when it comes to the economy: councils should shape their economic strategies to ensure that business growth actively supports social outcomes...The final plank of a commons-based agenda is the creation of new peer-to-peer public services, which use technology to bring citizens together to help one another. Councils should examine ways to turbo-charge the time-banking movement, support the development of easy apps that help people organise action days to maintain local parks, and offer small amounts of seed money to social enterprises which can animate parks and open spaces with fitness and cultural activities.”

This idea of actively developing the way an economy works to include all elements in shared positive growth may resonate with the challenges Spice faces, not only in getting Time Credits used by individuals and organisations, but in creating a Time Credits economy.

5.4 Policy drivers in England and Wales

There are a number of important policy drivers across all major political parties that reinforce the vital role Time Credits can play in building a better society. For example, the current Government has prioritised the devolution of power to communities through the Localism Act, and the principles of greater involvement of people and communities in public service delivery underpin many of the changes being introduced across health and social care, education, and housing.

The Localism Act, introduced in November 2011, gives local authorities greater powers to make decisions and take actions that benefit individuals and communities. In particular, allowing Councils to develop new and innovative business models that were previously not allowed within the legislative arrangements for local government. Since that time, these powers have led to a wide range of initiatives, including the creation of new cross-sector partnerships, supported by new commissioning models, and aimed at tackling some of society’s biggest inter-generational problems. Examples include: tackling educational attainment in primary schools, moving towards sustainable energy production and regeneration, improving the quality and effectiveness of youth services, and building more valuable community assets. Alongside this, the Act also gives local people and communities more opportunities to influence how services are organised and provided, and to be more involved in local planning for housing, development and regeneration.

However, with more power also comes more responsibility. The Government’s ‘Big Society’ framework, which was set out in 2010, embraced this idea and aimed to ‘give citizens, communities and local government the power and information they need to come together,
solve the problems they face and build the Britain they want’. It could be argued that this policy has led to a wide-ranging programme of work across all tiers of government, to give communities more powers (such as those described in the Localism Act), to encourage people to take a more active role in their communities, to support new and different forms of organisation that can best meet the needs of local people (such as social enterprises, co-operatives and mutual societies), and to make data and information more available to help with local decision making.

The Care Act 2014, which received Royal Assent in May 2014, also places new health and care responsibilities on local authorities, along with their partners in the NHS. Among other things, the Act aims to modernise the law relating to care and support and to implement the changes put forward by the Dilnot Commission on the funding arrangements for care and support services. In particular, the Act promotes two core principles: promoting independence and well-being to prevent, postpone or minimise people’s need for formal care and support, and giving people greater control of the care and support they receive. Within this is a much greater emphasis on tackling issues of loneliness and isolation, increasing the role of communities in the care and support system itself to prevent escalation of need, providing better housing options and being more responsive to the needs of carers.

The Department of Health’s Change 4 Life campaign (running in both England and Wales) highlights the health and well-being benefits that come from being more active and taking part in physical activity, and this provides a strong evidence base for many of the potential benefits of Time Credits for individuals and the wider public sector.

The Labour Party also sets out its commitment to empower local people and communities in its report ‘People-powered public services’ published by the Local Government Innovation Taskforce. The report recognises that the context within which public services currently operate has changed fundamentally in recent years, and that people need to be given more power to shape services: ‘People need to be involved not as passive consumers of provision, but as active citizens, shaping and influencing public services to meet their needs’.

In Wales, there are a number of additional policy drivers that highlight the context within which Time Credits might operate. These include the Welsh Government’s programme on tackling poverty, within which are specific commitments to reduce worklessness and raise household income, improve the skills of young people and families, and improve health and educational outcomes. In addition to this are the wide-ranging reforms to public sector governance and delivery set out in the Williams Commission report, which are designed to respond to the growing pressures on public sector services and to address the inherent problems in systems, processes and culture across the public sector.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a new emphasis on improving the well-being outcomes of individuals who need care and support (and their carers), and to promote independence and control. This has been further strengthened in the Well-being of Future Generations Bill, which sets out ambitious goals for prosperity, resilience, health and equality in Wales. The Bill is built on sustainable development principles to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the nation.

Finally, ‘Together for Health’, the Welsh Government’s five year vision for the NHS in Wales and the more recent drive to deliver ‘prudent healthcare’ provide opportunities for greater community roles in prevention and health promotion, along with a commitment to work with local people to improve the quality of service provision, provide better access to care and to improve the patient experience. Prudent healthcare, in particular, is built around a number of principles that redefine the relationship between users and providers, based on the principles of co-production.
Taken as a whole, this policy context across both England and Wales is particularly relevant and important for Spice. Time Credits should not be seen simply as another volunteering initiative, aimed at increasing the number of people who volunteer and give their time, and building capacity across the community and voluntary sector. More importantly, Time Credits represent an opportunity to support the delivery of a wide range of Government priorities, at all levels, and to bring people, communities and organisations together to deliver sustainable and long-term change in society.

5.5 Time Credits, co-production, and social capital

Time Credits operate in systems of complex relationships and interactions, and they have the potential to impact on individuals, organisations and communities in a variety of different ways. A central component of the Spice theory of change is that Time Credits can lead to greater co-production by facilitating more meaningful engagement and participation.

There is considerable variation among academics and practitioners in conveying the meaning of co-production, and what it helps to achieve. Almost four decades ago, the concept of co-production emerged in the social sciences to explain why centralised delivery of public services was less effective than initially anticipated (Ostrom et al. 1978; Parks et al. 1981). More recently, however, co-production has received renewed attention within the realm of New Public Governance (NPG), which sees complexity and fragmentation as the main problems facing the delivery of public services; problems that require collaboration and interaction across organisational and institutional boundaries to be solved (Torfing, 2012, p. 303).

While there are many different classifications and typologies presented in the literature that attempt to help us define and understand what co-production actually is, one of the more recent and widely accepted definitions, and the one which underpins the Spice theory of change, is that provided by Boyle & Harris (2009). The authors define co-production as:

“…delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours. Where activities are co-produced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change” (p. 11).

Importantly, this definition points to ‘change’, jointly by individuals, services and communities as the primary aim of co-production. In a recent systematic review of the literature, Voorberg et al. (2013) note that more than half of the articles on co-production do not specify a specific aim of co-production other than co-production itself. This could be attributed to the different logics that operate in different sectors and its value being considered largely transformative (where transformation is an end in itself). Regardless of this, however, the review demonstrates that co-production can have many different aims, and that the most common outcome is improved service effectiveness.
Also of note are the variables identified in the literature that can facilitate or impede co-production. Voorberg et al. (2013) summarise them below in two groups of either organisational variables or user variables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational Variables</th>
<th>User Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of public organisations</td>
<td>User characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open attitude towards citizen participation</td>
<td>User awareness / feeling of ownership / being part of something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk averse administrative culture</td>
<td>Presence of social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear incentives for co-production</td>
<td>Risk aversion by citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding the needs of the user and the purpose of the co-production initiative are considered to be the most important drivers of success.

In spite of the significant attention that the concept has received over the past decade, co-production can be considered a ‘magic concept’ within public administration. A magic concept is a very broad concept that is normatively charged and which lays claim to universal or near universal-application (Pollitt & Hupe, 2011, p. 643). Co-production is described as almost an imperative in the literature although there is still some ambiguity as to the definition and how it looks in practice. It is furthermore often taken as an imperative for near universal application in all areas of public sector (e.g. Pollitt et al. 2006). There is nevertheless a growing body of evidence on the merits of co-production.

Social capital can also play an important role in co-production and underpins many elements in the Spice theory of change. Ostrom (1996) mentions that in order to involve citizens sustainably in infrastructure projects in Brazil, not only is activation of the citizens required, but also social capital needs to be energised to fulfil the promises of collective action (see also Flederus et al. 2014). Putnam (1993, p. 167) defines social capital as ‘features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions’. The World Bank echoes this view, in 1999 they referred to social capital as the ‘glue’ that holds the institutions that underpin a society together. As Gilchrist & Taylor (2011) describe:

“As a resource high levels of social capital have been linked to greater productivity, effective democracy, better and safer communities, higher educational achievement and a host of other positive effects”.
However, social capital is a contested term and some commentators have argued that networks and trust are not necessarily evenly distributed or accountable, and indeed social ties can be oppressive and resistant to change. This has led to a further defining of the term and a distinction between different forms of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking (Woolcock, 1998, Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011):

- Bonding social capital describes local strong relations between people in similar situations such as close friends and family
- Bridging social capital describes slightly weaker bonds that span wider connections between different people, different ethnic groups or geographic communities
- Linking social capital describes the connections between people and institutions, these links cut across different levels of power and status, for example service users and providers or government officers and community members.

Gilchrist & Taylor (2011) describe how social change cannot be achieved by working at just a community level, social ties within a disadvantaged community may be strong enough to ‘get by’ but they are often poorly connected outside the immediate community. Bridging and linking social capital are needed to harness resources and influence beyond the community, and to connect with other communities or those with power.

Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of citizen participation identifies eight levels of citizen power. The levels range from non-participation at one end, characterised by manipulation (by power holders) and a desire to educate citizens rather than to involve them, through to true citizen power, characterised by partnership, delegated power and true citizen control. These characteristics are underpinned by the development of joint planning and decision making structures that support the development of equal and reciprocal relationships between professionals and citizens.

Increased participation and volunteering incentivised by Time Credits, and the process of spending Time Credits, can be understood as part of the journey to developing co-productive relationships; bridging, bonding and linking social capital; and the wider benefits to organisations and communities that will follow. But there is also the potential for immediate positive change that occurs for individuals and organisations, as result of giving.

5.6 Selected theory and evidence relevant to the Time Credits model

Evidence on the benefits of volunteering is well documented and includes: improved self-rated health, improved mental well-being, greater self-esteem, and stronger social support and interactions. The evidence also suggests that improved well-being could have a positive impact on healthy life expectancy and reduce the demand for and reliance on health and social care services.

A literature review conducted in 2011 to inform the Department of Health’s strategic vision for volunteering in health and social care, explored the impact of volunteering on four key areas: health, social care, public health and the broader health and well-being impact. The review revealed how volunteering not only increases the capacity of the health and social care workforce, but also the quality of the services provided. Research also demonstrates how volunteering has multiple health and well-being benefits for volunteers themselves as well as communities. The author concludes that this provides a compelling argument for embracing and investing in volunteering.
Time Credits are a way to encourage more regular and sustainable volunteering, so these benefits can be realised for more people and their communities. Existing patterns of giving suggest there is much room for improvement, with around 44% of adults in the UK volunteering formally at least once a year, and approximately two thirds (66%) of these giving their time at least once a month. Among older people (over 65 years old), 58% take part in civic engagement or volunteering and 41% of people over retirement age volunteer on a regular basis.

Previous research has also shown that the people more likely to give time regularly and to favour long-term volunteering are generally those who are looking to improve their employability, and those who have retired from paid work. The evidence concerning those who are most likely to volunteer at different ages, however, is mixed. Some studies suggest that people over 50 are the least likely to volunteer, but older volunteers are more likely to volunteer more often, and to derive greater benefit. A recent study in Scotland showed that the 35-44 age group had the highest number of people who participate in volunteering. This suggests there is interest and potential benefit from volunteering for a wide range of age groups, which supports Spice’s inclusive model.

The impact of volunteering on communities has also been well documented for different groups within the population, including younger people and those later in life. This evidence suggests that volunteering can play an important role in periods of transition (such as from paid work to employment), provide a means to stay physically and mentally active, and support greater social inclusion among young people. Another recent study showed that people who volunteer feel healthier.

“What this research affirms is that there is a lot more: volunteering makes folks feel better. Volunteers are more active and engaged in their communities and in their health. The health and wellness benefits that volunteers reap are real and important.”

References
16, 17 See page 25.
18 The value of giving a little time: Understanding the potential of micro-volunteering, Institute for Volunteering Research, 2013
22 Volunteering and Health: What Impact Does It Really Have?, July 2008
24 United Health Group, 2013. DOING GOOD IS GOOD FOR YOU: 2013 Health and Volunteering Study. Available at: www.unitedhealthgroup.com/~/media/UGH/PDF/2013/UNH-Health-Volunteering-Study.ashx
Findings

6 Data informing these findings
6.1 Data sources
6.2 Representativeness of the survey samples
6.3 Secondary data sources

7 Levels of participation
7.1 Headline findings
7.2 What we are measuring
7.3 Who uses Time Credits
7.4 More regular and reliable giving

8 Impact on individuals and communities
8.1 Headline findings
8.2 What we are measuring
8.3 Supporting a process of change for individuals
8.4 Time Credits as a complementary currency
8.5 Impact on quality of life and well-being
8.6 Spending as a driver of impact

9 Change in organisations
9.1 Headline findings
9.2 What we are measuring
9.3 Speed of change and impact on services
9.4 The importance of Time Credits to organisations
9.5 Towards co-production
9.6 Collaboration and networks
9.7 Complexity of delivering Time Credits programmes
6.1 Data Sources

We have collected data for this evaluation from a number of sources:


- **A survey of representatives from partner organisations**. This was carried out in two waves, with wave 1 undertaken in July/August 2013 which received 120 responses, and wave 2 in June 2014 receiving 119. This generated 291 unique responses.

- A total of 20 in-depth interviews with a sample of Spice partner organisations, including host partners and community groups.

- **A collection of 33 interactive workshops** exploring the impact of Time Credits for members and partners with respect to the development of assets, resources and relationships. Some of these sessions also mapped the journey that people and partners had taken since becoming involved in Time Credits. The sessions were attended by a cross-section of Spice members and partners (including key workers, volunteers and other front-line staff), with at least two sessions being carried out in each locality over a period of approximately nine months. Each session was facilitated by either a member of the evaluation team, or a Spice staff member.

6.2 Representativeness of the survey samples

6.2.1 Member survey

The member survey was conducted both online and in paper format. While members were encouraged to complete the survey online and this facilitated completeness checks as the respondent progressed through the survey, paper surveys were also provided as an option. This proved a useful mechanism for not only boosting the sample size, but also for ensuring those that might have had trouble completing the survey online were not excluded.

When completing the member survey, respondents were asked to create a unique code. This made it possible to track changes in responses from individuals over time, and also to filter surveys so that the most recent survey for each individual could be used. This gave a total of 1102 unique respondents.

The locality profile of the responses is shown below\(^{25}\). Although there were more responses in West Norfolk, each of the remaining localities largely comprise 10%–15% of the responses.

---

**Figure 3: Profile of member survey responses by locality**

\(^{25}\) Note that in the first wave of surveys the projects in London and Wales were not split out separately by locality. In Waves 2 and 3 these projects were separated out. For this reason the bars for London and Wales (on the figures below) include a category where the programme locality was unknown.
Locality workers were provided with the profile of the respondents and asked to see how this compared with their members, based on their local knowledge and member profile data. This allowed them to specifically target some members in subsequent survey waves in order to balance the sample across factors such as age and gender. A profile of all respondents, measured against different characteristics, is shown in the remainder of this section.

A larger proportion of the respondents were female, with 71% female, and the highest proportion of respondents were in the 35 – 44 age band. A full profile of the age of the respondents can be seen in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65–74</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55–64</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–54</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–44</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–34</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16–24</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-16</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forty percent of respondents were in employment, while 18% were retired and 21% were not employed. The remainder were largely students or were unable to work. A full breakdown of employment status is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time employed (35+ hrs/week)</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time employed (-35 hrs/week)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not currently employed, looking for work</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not currently employed, not looking for work</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to work due to disability / long-term illness</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Profile of member survey responses by age grouping

Figure 5: Profile of member survey responses by employment status
Forty two percent of the respondents were married with a further 12.4% living with a partner. Fifteen percent were separated, divorced or widowed, with the remainder (26%) being single.

Eighty percent of respondents were white British, 5% were other white European and 2% were Black or Black British Caribbean. The remainder were split relatively equally among other ethnic origins.

6.2.2 Partner survey

The latest partner survey was completed by 119 people. Of these, nearly a quarter of respondents were in senior management roles. The full profile of respondents’ roles can be seen below.

Most localities were well represented in the partner survey, although there were slightly fewer from London owing to the smaller networks associated with these projects.

6.3 Secondary data sources

In addition to the primary research described above, we have reviewed a number of secondary data sources and existing evidence covering the fields of volunteering, health and well-being, co-production and community development. These are described in Part 2 (section 6) of this report.
7. Levels of Participation

7.1 Headline findings

- 45% of respondents had not regularly given their time before earning Time Credits
- 81% said they are likely to carry on giving their time
- Survey responses indicate that 62% of members are giving their time at least once a week, and on average, regularly give nearly nine hours per month

7.2 What we are measuring

Time Credits aim to increase the number of people who give their time, how often people give time, and to increase the likelihood of this continuing. This includes people who would have been unlikely to give their time before, and those for whom giving can offer specific benefits and opportunities – such as improving health and well-being, learning new skills, meeting new people, and forming stronger and more resilient relationships.

By becoming more involved in local organisations and communities, people become more active, develop new skills, feel better about themselves and connect more with others. Once this starts to become the norm for people we can expect there to be consequent improvements in quality of life and well-being, and to see a positive shift in the way people contribute to their communities.

Within this area we are particularly interested in looking at the number of people who are new to giving as a result of Time Credits, how frequently they give their time, and in what way. We are also interested in understanding the likelihood that this will continue and whether there are particular groups (or profiles) of people who are more or less likely to give their time.

7.3 Who uses Time Credits

There is little doubt from the data and evidence we have gathered throughout this evaluation that Time Credits are an effective tool for increasing levels of participation and giving across a wide-ranging demographic.

Over 16,000 people have earned Time Credits to give time to their local community since 2011. Around one fifth (22%) of those who responded to our survey said that they are new to giving, with a further 23% being only occasional volunteers before signing up to Time Credits. We would expect the proportion of those new to giving to increase as Spice continues to learn from the work it is doing in each locality, and by finding find ways to target those who would otherwise be reluctant, or unable, to engage in giving.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I had never given time before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>I had occasionally given my time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I had given time regularly in the past but not recently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>I had given time regularly in the past and now earning Time Credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8: Proportion of people giving time before getting involved in Time Credits
Time Credits are also an effective tool for all age groups, however, they are particularly noticeable as a way of attracting younger people who are new to giving.

We found:

- 48% of those under 16 years old had never given time before
- Around half of those aged between 16 and 44 had either never given time before, or had given time only occasionally
- The proportion is similar for those over 75, although it should be noted that the sample for this question only includes four people in this age group.

“Time Credits are a real enabler for intergenerational change by getting families involved more, not just individual people. This helps to change behaviour and to model more positive ways of life.”
Case example – A volunteer-led community group

A gardening group described how volunteers bring along their children and grandchildren to help out in the garden and they earn their own Time Credits to spend in the local leisure centres, play centres and libraries.

“It’s great for the children, they learn that you don’t get anything for nothing in life, it gets them out in the fresh air, it encourages a sense of responsibility and instils a strong work ethic which all bodes well for the future of [our area].”

The same group also described how “Time Credits has supported us in achieving critical mass [of volunteers]. People join and it is vibrant, fun and friendly, they stay. Before they came and went...Time credits helped the group become what it has.”

The data, however, indicates that the value of Time Credits is less for people who would have given time anyway. This is what we would expect to see given the different strategies for using Time Credits in each locality. With the entry point through existing community groups and organisations, and given the relatively short length of time that Time Credits have been running, Time Credits will quite naturally attract existing volunteers in the first instance.

7.4 More regular and reliable giving

Overall, we estimate that Spice members give an average of nine hours per month, and this is fairly consistent across all age groups with only an hour and a half range between most of them. Figure 10 shows the exceptions as being under 16s, who give less time, and people aged 65–74, who give more. Figure 11 presents the data by occupation and shows, perhaps unsurprisingly, that people retired or not in employment tend to give slightly more time. However, it is notable that even those in full time employment, are still managing to give nearly seven hours per month which is well above the national average.

![Figure 10: Average number of hours given per month by Spice members – by age grouping](#)
There is also evidence that Time Credits help to generate a more regular and reliable volunteer base. The significant majority of Spice members surveyed (81%) report that they are very likely to continue giving their time.

This is a particularly positive result, and is supported by what we have heard from many community groups and organisations involved in Time Credits, including for example comments such as:

“Volunteers feel more valued and stay longer with the organisation.”
Among our respondents, 62% of people give their time at least once a week, and 89% give an hour or more on each occasion. In addition to this, two thirds of people expect to use Time Credits to give more time in the future, or to expand the range of activities they try when volunteering.

This compares favourably with national data. In 2012–2013, only around two thirds of volunteers (66%) gave their time at least once a month (by comparison with 62% of Spice volunteers giving their time at least once a week). The national picture also shows a trend towards more episodic rather than regular volunteering.26

The evidence from this evaluation shows that Time Credits can help to shift people towards more regular and more sustainable giving. One volunteer described how he continued to work with a small group of volunteers with little recognition. He'd had thoughts about giving up when, in the autumn of 2012, the group he volunteered for signed up to Time Credits. He says:

“Time Credits have made a world of difference to me and [the organisation]. Volunteers are now given a tangible reward for their efforts, we feel valued and it spurs us on.”

References
26 See for example www.ivr.org.uk/ivr-volunteering-stats
8. Impact of individuals and communities

8.1 Headline findings

- 65% of Spice members feel that Time Credits have improved their quality of life — this increases as people stay involved for longer
- Nearly 50% of respondents now feel able to do things they weren’t able to do before
- 46% want to do things they didn’t want to do before
- 43% are regularly doing things they didn’t do before
- 45% of people say they feel healthier since earning and spending Time Credits and 19% of people say they have less need to go to the doctor, demonstrating the potential for Time Credits to positively influence longer term health and well-being

8.2 What we are measuring

In order to evaluate the extent to which Time Credits are starting to make a difference for individuals through participation and giving time, we have looked at the impact of Time Credits on access to new opportunities, the development of new skills, and the connections Time Credits help to facilitate between people, organisations and communities. We are also particularly interested in understanding how Time Credits impact on quality of life. The factors that drive quality of life and well-being have been the subject of extensive research. For the purposes of this study, we define these terms as follows:

**Quality of life** — “an individual’s perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns — a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person’s physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment.” (World Health Organisation)

**Well-being** — “The concept of well-being comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well. Feelings of happiness, contentment, enjoyment, curiosity and engagement are characteristic of someone who has a positive experience of their life. Equally important for well-being is our functioning in the world. Experiencing positive relationships, having some control over one’s life and having a sense of purpose are all important attributes of well-being.”

It is also important to note the differences between health and well-being. While the World Health Organisation’s definition of health includes reference to well-being, for many, the definition of health tends to refer to the absence of negative factors such as pain, discomfort, some sort of physical limitation, or disease. Well-being on the other hand, refers to a more positive set of feelings such as happiness, satisfaction, enjoyment and achievement.

References

29 “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” [www.who.int/about/definition/en/print.html](www.who.int/about/definition/en/print.html)
It is possible to measure well-being in one of two ways.

1. **Subjective well-being** — A measure of how people think and feel about their own well-being. This is done using recognised survey instruments such as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale\(^{30}\).

2. **Objective well-being** — A set of assumptions about what is most likely to improve a person’s well-being, for example meeting basic human needs and rights. For the purposes of this evaluation, we are using the ‘five ways to well-being’ published by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) as key indicators of improved well-being. The five ways were published in 2008, and were the result of extensive research\(^{31}\).

According to the NEF research, the five most important drivers of mental and physical well-being are:

- Connect with others
- Be active
- Take notice
- Keep learning
- Give

In order to measure the impact of Time Credits on improved quality of life and well-being, we are looking for evidence of Time Credits encouraging people to give more time to their community, and for this to enable people to connect with others and to form new relationships and more frequent social interactions. We are also looking for evidence of Time Credits helping people to learn new skills, including ‘soft’ skills that have been shown to be linked to well-being such as confidence and self-esteem, raised aspirations and enhanced social skills and networks. Importantly, we are interested in understanding through this evaluation the extent to which Time Credits can contribute to sustainable improvements in well-being over the longer term, whether or not someone continues to earn and spend Time Credits.

### 8.3 Supporting a process of change for individuals

Supporting change in individuals is a complex process and will naturally vary from person to person. However, we know from previous research that a typical change process involves generating desire (‘want’), facilitating access (‘ability’), and providing opportunities to participate (‘do’). We expect Time Credits to facilitate this pathway. Nearly half of the member survey respondents said that they now want to, or are able to, do things they didn’t do before.

![Figure 14: Proportion of Spice members reporting impact on desire and ability to do more](image-url)
This has resulted in a stronger sense of contribution, and a direct impact on taking part in more activities for the vast majority of people.
We are also seeing a positive direction of travel towards greater impact. Figure 16 shows the responses against a series of statements for those members who completed more than one survey during the period of the evaluation\(^{32}\). A total of 22% of members who were questioned more than once developed new interests within that period, and a further 21% of members who were approached more than once say that Time Credits helped them to build their social network.

**Case example – Building individual assets through earning and spending Time Credits**

The following illustration shows the positive impact for an individual involved in earning and spending Time Credits. The red, green and blue dots represent ‘assets’ that have come about as a direct result of this person’s involvement in Time Credits, and include activities relating to health and fitness, making use of social spaces, learning new skills, and visiting new places of interest.
8.4 Time Credits as a complementary currency

We found consistent evidence of people, and in particular those from lower socio-economic groups, using Time Credits to try out activities that they wouldn’t otherwise be able to afford to do, especially with other family members. This is an important factor in building social capital – strengthening family connections and creating positive role models, and gives us confidence that Time Credits can be an effective tool for supporting longer term inter-generational change.

Time Credits users say:

“The things I’ve spent on are things I wouldn’t do otherwise. I used Time Credits and went to the Museum of London, it was amazing. I treated relatives who were visiting from Swansea.”

“[Time Credits] have a genuine value, not financial directly but they save people money and support financial inclusion. Having a haircut when you haven’t in a year, a holiday when you never have, large families being able to go on trips”.

Even where people are participating anyway and are not really spending their Time Credits themselves, there are some examples of how they are passed on. At one organisation, volunteers put their earned Time Credits back into a ‘community pot’, so service users can spend them. They describe how the relationship with their service users is enhanced because of the community pot – “it enables families to do things they couldn’t afford to do otherwise”.

“I donate my time credits to the pot as we’ve always got some to hire a venue for our network sessions. We agreed as a group to pool our time credits so that four people could go on the London trip – next time other people will get to go.”

Another group were interested in developing a mechanism whereby their Time Credits could be given to a nominated charity rather than spending them themselves (they currently give them to family and friends), which could be something for Spice to consider in the future.
8.5 Impact on quality of life and well-being

8.5.1 Connecting, communities and new opportunities

Around half of the Spice members we surveyed said that giving something back to their community was one of the things they liked most about Time Credits. Even more of the respondents (61%) said that helping others, or making a difference for others, was also important. This was also a strong and consistent theme from the discussions we had directly with Spice members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am giving something back to the community</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am helping others or making a difference for others</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy the actual activity I do when giving my time</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I meet new and / or different people</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am learning new skills as I give my time</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel valued</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s something I can do with my friends or family</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more involved in the community</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17: Proportion of Spice members reporting the value they get from being involved in Time Credits

Around two thirds (66%) say they now know more people, they spend more time with others, and they know the people in their community better.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know more people in my community</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I spend more time with others in my local community</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the people in my local community better</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know more about what services and support are available to me</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am more able to influence what my local community is like</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have more trust in the people in my local community</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I have a problem, I am more able to talk about it with members of my community</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am more likely to get important needs of mine met because I’m a part of my local community</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18: Proportion of Spice members reporting community impact since becoming involved in Time Credits
Where Time Credits are increasing the number of people new to participating, the evidence tells us that there also tends to be a stronger sense of community developing. This is a process of change for people and communities that is illustrated by the following comments:

“The benefit of Time Credits is that people peer out of windows at events, where they may not have before just to see what it is all about. [This is a] first step in interacting and engaging.”

“People from the local community come and visit us on Saturday. They say hello and ask us for gardening advice. It’s great – we think we’re experts!”

This initial interest and involvement deepens, as people also develop new friendships, which exist beyond the time spent together on Time Credits related activity. These relationships are developed both through the process of earning Time Credits, and when Time Credits are pooled to arrange group social events and trips.

“Previously relationships that were independent of my family were non-existent. Now it is different, I have good friends who I can be really open with.”

“Social groups never got going despite efforts. The spend menu has encouraged this and encouraged activities [service users] wouldn’t previously have done, due to increased confidence gained through the peer support group. They now meet outside of the group.”

People then begin to take on more responsibility and to set up and run activities, which leads to stronger networks and collaborations. In fact, among our respondents, 50% of people say that they are now more able to influence what their community is like, and importantly, 95 people told us that they have been incentivised through Time Credits to start a new community group.
Case example – Community development partner organisation

Action in Caerau and Ely (ACE) has been running for seven years, and for a long time they had the ‘usual suspects’, of about 10–12 people involved in running groups and services. As an organisation, they had lots of opportunities for developing services, but little support to do it, although they did manage to set up about 20 community groups, each with 4–6 members.

Time Credits have provided a structure to expand this, and to bring in more informal groups. Now they have 84 community groups, many of which have more than the usual 4–6 members. Time Credits are described as providing structure, a way of sustaining groups, new energy to generate ideas, and as a framework for building capacity in local community.

“People in the community are raising challenges and bringing people together, leadership roles are addressing local issues...not needing facilitation to get things going.”
Case examples – Building relationships through earning and spending Time Credits

The following illustrations show the positive impact for two typical individuals involved in earning and spending Time Credits. Each circle represents an important relationship that individual has with people and places. The closer to the centre, the more important the relationship is to that person’s life. We can see from these two examples that Time Credits have helped each person to develop a number of new and important relationships.

Person 1
Before using Time Credits

Person 1
After using Time Credits

Volunteering
litter-picking
woodland clearance
carol singing

Support & Advice
church groups
I volunteer with them

Find Local Knowledge
Google a friend (whom I met though tc’s)
knows a lot of local knowledge

Discover Workshops
crochet toys and pyrography

Discover Workshop
full-time carer for my son, his wife & daughter

Feel Healthy
gym with son & daughter-in-law
swimming, walking

To Feel Safe
home with daughter

To Feel Safe
home with daughter

Feel Healthy
gym with son & daughter-in-law
swimming, walking

Get Advice
church members

Get Advice
church members

To Relax
crochet toys and pyrography

To Relax
crochet toys and pyrography

Have Fun With
family and kids friends, college

Have Fun With
family and kids friends, college

To Learn
learned sign language with tc’s and arts fishing. I am now at college.

To Learn
learned sign language with tc’s and arts fishing. I am now at college.

Time Credits Spent On
botanical gardens
bowling alley
(and have taken the family with me)

Time Credits Spent On
botanical gardens
bowling alley
(and have taken the family with me)
“Previously relationships that were independent of my family were non-existent. Now it is different, I have good friends who I can be really open with.”
8.5.2 Learning

Along with making new friends (53%), the figure below shows that learning new skills (43%) and developing new interests (37%) were the areas that members reported Time Credits as having the greatest impact.

Examples of people developing new skills through Time Credits are evident most consistently in West Norfolk, where Time Credits are specifically tied to a strategy designed for getting people into training and employment. This indicates that some of the impacts we have seen come about specifically from how Time Credits are used and targeted in each local area. And while this evaluation has shown that Time Credits are broad and flexible tools, there are important opportunities here for learning how they are going to be set up in new localities in the future. Spice has already begun to develop new and more targeted programmes in a number of areas, however, these were outside the scope of this evaluation.
Case example – Building organisational assets through partnering with Spice to use Time Credits

The following illustration shows the assets within a number of schools in West Norfolk. It highlights how those schools are using Time Credits to increase the number of ways in which parents are volunteering and developing their skills, in addition to the richer environment that has been created in the schools from starting new activities (parent involvement and new activities are shown by the red and blue dots).

Other examples include a volunteer using her Time Credits to qualify in sugar craft and now teaching this skill to community groups, and:

“I spent my Time Credits on a course and am now doing the next level at college. From this I want to go and work in Africa in a school for six months, through Youth international.”

“I have new skills in food hygiene and horticulture.”

“Volunteers going on training is a catalyst for going onto other things, like training that isn’t related to Time Credits. Once people get involved they don’t tend to just stay in little projects. They start to do more generally.”
8.5.3 Quality of life and feeling healthier

There is a positive effect for many people on a number of drivers of well-being. Members (along with many of the organisations signed up to the Time Credits scheme) described feeling recognised, valued and rewarded for things that they do. This was consistently related to greater confidence among members.

The majority (65%) of Spice members who participated in this evaluation said that Time Credits had improved their overall quality of life.

This is most often due to people doing new things in their day to day life as a result of Time Credits, and is facilitated by both earning and spending Time Credits. There is also strong evidence, consistent across all the areas within which Time Credits operate, that people feel better as a result of their involvement in Time Credits, and the different opportunities that have been created through that involvement.

These quality of life gains are also sustainable. A greater proportion of people who have been earning Time Credits for between 18 months and 3 years report improved quality of life (75%).

Typical responses about quality of life include:

“When I earn Time Credits I feel special.”

“When volunteering increased my confidence at work.”

At one homeless hostel people are earning Time Credits for leading running and walking groups for other residents. The qualitative data across a range of organisations and localities shows that people are accessing more activities connected to physical and mental well-being as a result of Time Credits spend opportunities, including the gym, spa, swimming and walking groups.
The following illustration shows the assets that a volunteer identified in their day to day life. The red, green and blue dots indicate those things that have been created as a result of Time Credits. This includes new leisure activities, visiting new and different places, learning new skills and making better use of local services and other resources.

Many of the things this next person spends their time doing are focused on relaxation and mental well-being. He really likes the fact that he feels valued by giving his time to a service of which he is also a client.

“Doing this [completing an asset map of what he is doing in his community since becoming involved in Time Credits] has made me think of not just the main things I do in the community – also the things I do less often, like bowling. These things I do less often are still good for my wellbeing. Doing this makes me think I am taking a real interest in the world around me.”

The evidence from this evaluation points to a clear public health message connected with Time Credits. There is strong evidence that Time Credits help to increase activity and promote healthier lifestyles, including people with long-term conditions and disabilities.

A total of 45% of survey respondents said that they feel healthier since becoming involved in Time Credits, and 49% feel less isolated. Existing research suggests a strong link between loneliness and isolation, and poor health outcomes, which indicates that Time Credits can help to tackle this growing problem in society. One Spice member told us:

“I am healthier now. 18 months ago my GP relationship was really important – less so now – I don’t go as much.”

References
33 See for example: www.local.gov.uk/health/-/journalcontent/56/10180/3510094/ARTICLE (the Marmot Review report) and www.independent.co.uk/news/science/extreme-loneliness-worse-for-health-than-obesity-9132031.html
Case example – Integrating Time Credits into population-wide prevention

In one area GPs were being signed up to offer health checks to their patients, but with a low take up, of both GPs wanting to participate and patients having checks where they were offered. The process involved GPs sending out a single letter offering the check to patients. The local authority commissioned a new service, to be embedded within GP surgeries to signpost people to advice and encourage them to have a health check. Volunteers have been involved in delivering this service, earning Time Credits for their time. It has been running since April 2014, with immediate success. More GP surgeries have signed up to offering health checks, they no longer have to co-ordinate signing people up, and more patients have been taking up the offer of health checks.

There is also a positive correlation between people feeling healthier and doing more. When comparing responses to questions relating to whether survey respondents felt healthier and whether they wanted to do more:

- 66% of those who said they felt healthier also said they **wanted** to do more
- 71% of those who said they felt healthier also said they **felt able** to do more
- 68% of those who said they felt healthier also said they **were regularly** doing more.

8.6 Spending as a driver of impact

Spice members, and the community organisations they give their time to, consistently told us that spending opportunities increase the potential value of Time Credits to them. These spend opportunities need to be appropriate for the target group. There also needs to be sufficient support to spend for those with higher level needs. This may include ensuring appropriate transport is available, increasing the awareness among members of the spend opportunities available to them, or support and encouragement from within the spend organisation.

Transport is often cited as a particular issue, however, it is important to recognise that in some cases this is more about people's perceptions of transport and the need to change existing (and often long standing) behaviours and beliefs, rather than what is available in their local area. Within this, is the need to help build people's confidence in relation to doing something new or different, and helping them to become prepared or feel able to leave the geographical areas where they feel comfortable.

Some comments we received:

“Spending Time Credits may entail needing support, which may have a cost for the service user.”

“IT is important to understand your target group for spend opportunities, for some Time Credits are a way to afford luxuries that would not otherwise be possible, for others, those who are better off, they might appreciate receiving them and think it is a good idea without necessarily even spending them.”
“Transport is a barrier to people using Time Credits.”

“The way the scheme was rolled out meant I was earning Time Credits in one place, but couldn’t spend them where I live.”

“We like going to the theatre – the whole centre went...but a lot of theatres are on in the evenings we need to go during the day.”

This issue, however, was not necessarily reflected in the survey results, where the main reasons for not spending credits were the time or opportunity to spend (33%) and is likely to represent a bias in the quoted evaluation data towards members who have slightly more complex needs.

Figure 21: Proportion of Spice members – reasons why they have not spent Time Credits

Interestingly, just over one third of the people we surveyed had not spent any Time Credits yet, although some of these people are quite new to Time Credits. This is not inconsistent with other credit schemes (such as shopping vouchers and loyalty schemes) where redemption rates tend to be very low. And it does reinforce the potential impact of Time Credits if spend rates can be increased.

Figure 22: Proportion of Spice members reporting whether they have spent any Time Credits
9. Change in organisations

9.1 Headline findings

• 75% of organisations have seen the benefits of Time Credits within the first 12 months of being involved

• 62% report that they are able to make better use of skills and resources in communities, and 48% are able to deliver improved services

• 95 people have been incentivised through Time Credits to start a community group

9.2 What we are measuring

Time Credits aim to facilitate greater community engagement and better use of local resources, leading to co-production in service delivery. How this happens will vary according to the type and size of the organisation, its objectives, the existing mechanisms for engaging with users and the wider context within which the organisation operates.

The following are strong indicators that the necessary conditions are being created for organisations to move towards greater co-production:

• Stronger connections between service users, local communities and organisations

• Greater collaboration between organisations to design and deliver services

• Changes in the types of services provided, and

• Better use of local resources, skills and assets.

In order to evaluate the extent to which Time Credits are starting to make a difference for organisations, we have looked at the different types of benefits that staff report from a wide cross-section of Spice partners, the speed with which these benefits are generated, and the ability of Time Credits to facilitate greater involvement by service users. This includes looking at how sustainable these changes are likely to be as a marker for moving towards co-production and better quality service delivery.

9.3 Speed of change and impact on services

In our survey of partner organisations, 78% of respondents said they had already started to see the benefits of Time Credits. The chart below shows the time period during which they expect to see these benefits, split by the length of time their organisation has been involved. Of those organisations that have been involved for less than six months, 47% have already started to see the benefits, whereas for organisations which have been involved for seven to 12 months, 75% report that there have already been some benefits. It should be noted that there were only four respondents who said their organisation had been involved for three years or more.
The main areas of impact are in connection with making better use of skills and resources in communities (62%) and delivering improved services (48%).

While there are a number of differences observed during the course of the evaluation, there is a positive trend towards delivering improved services, better understanding needs and allocating resources accordingly. This suggests that over time, organisations are translating the use of resources in their communities to a better service offer.
Some feedback we received included:

“There are a number of groups that are now able to run more independently, allowing paid staff to do more planning, design and management, rather than running the groups themselves. One service user, who was running a regular group, encouraged another service user to take over running that group so the more experienced person now has time to focus more on planning how the group is run to meet local need, and get involved in other services.”

“It’s great when a resident wants to get involved, it frees up staff time, residents are overseen, but it is led by them. Cooking groups happen more often, they are weekly now.”

“The volunteers at the gardening club have completely taken it off my hands, so I don’t need to worry about it.”

“Time Credits have encouraged involvement in the allotment and sandwich making social enterprise. The buddy scheme started specifically as a result of Time Credits.”

“People who have been engaged though Time Credits are now coming to events and offering ideas; their increased confidence means they will have an opinion; previously they didn’t have a voice.”

“We always ran a daily lunch club for service users. Historically people would attend for lunch and leave afterwards. Now, since Time Credits, service users stay longer, engage more, ask for opportunities to earn or for more activities.”

Case example – Making better use of organisational assets through partnering with Spice

The following illustration shows the assets that a community organisation makes use of. The assets with the red, green and blue dots have been created or made better use of since the organisation became involved in Time Credits.
9.4 The importance of Time Credits to organisations

The organisations that participated in this evaluation overwhelmingly told us that they want Time Credits to help make volunteers feel valued (85%). This was followed by enhancing the organisation’s reputation in the local community (79%), providing more volunteering opportunities (74%) and promoting what they do to community members (74%).

![Figure 25: Proportion of partner respondents reporting the importance of Time Credits for different objectives](image)

In all of these cases, and among those who rated the aim as important, a high proportion of organisations said that they were already achieving these aims as a result of Time Credits.
9.5 Towards co-production

Spice recognises that for many organisations the process of earning and spending Time Credits will not, in itself, lead to successful co-production that is central to the way an organisation operates. Some organisations need additional training and support and in some cases a will to enable this to happen. And some organisations also recognise this.

“Longer term Time Credits are a way of actively engaging service users. But this requires a culture shift internally, by service providers and some council officers and elected members.”

“Helping more people volunteer is on its own only a ‘nice to do’, and vulnerable in the context of budget cuts...Time Credits have to be integral to the priority areas for the council.”

---

Figure 26: Proportion of partner respondents reporting that different objectives have been achieved since being involved in Time Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know or NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making our volunteers feel more valued</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting what we do to more people</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making our reputation in the local community stronger</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More service users giving time</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing more opportunities for people to give time</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to recruit more volunteers</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching more people who need our services</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving more people in designing our services</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing a wider range of services</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to tailor services better to specific needs of those we work with</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing in more new business</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making people less reliant on our services</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“[We were] attracted to the idea of bringing cultural change to our organisation...acceptance of a move towards a commissioning based service and a greater role for service users and residents in the way the services are run. [Spice] do this by going out and doing it and showing people how to do it, so people who manage and commission services can see that involving the community can be done.”

“Co-design and co-ownership of services is not being seen yet, participation comes first.”

(Look Ahead)

“Time Credits are an easy way of increasing the number of people involved in consultation.”

---

**Case example – Young people owning and developing local services**

In one locality, extra adult volunteers have been involved in youth projects, as a result of their children's involvement and Time Credits. Approximately 8 to 10 new people are volunteering on a regular (weekly) basis at one youth group. This youth group also developed and constituted a sub-group to fund youth activities, an example of service users taking ownership and actively developing services. The increased ownership of local projects has come about because of the relationship between volunteers and staff. Volunteers are more confident to speak to the staff they have relationships with and ideas being developed.

---

**Case example – Making better use of community assets and resources through Time Credits**

A community group responsible for managing a community centre for the last few years described how Time Credits has re-invigorated this asset, changing the focus from being a ‘letting out’ of the community centre space to engaging the community in the centre, with smaller groups using the centre and Time Credits being used to increase awareness and reward people for getting involved.
9.6 Collaboration and networks

We have seen an improvement in the level of reported collaboration between organisations during the period of the evaluation. This is particularly notable in relation to the creation of new partnerships, engaging with similar organisations to share learning, and connecting with local community groups. The evidence indicates that Spice creates opportunities for organisations to network with each other, and being involved in Time Credits provides a common language for building awareness and opportunities to connect people with local groups and services.

The chart below shows responses to each of the surveys we ran with partner organisations and shows the improvements in the perceptions of the level of collaboration between organisations over the year between the two surveys.34

Some comments we received from partners:

“Time Credits provide a central point of understanding and common language between people.”

“Time Credits can support common ground between different organisations.”

“More projects have made connections with each other through their involvement in Time Credits (e.g. through events run by Spice). As a result of this it is possible to more easily signpost people between projects and services.”

“No new joint working yet, but hoping for partnership working with more London boroughs, we met one at a Spice summer event and we are hoping to develop more of a London network, to raise the profile of Time Credits with commissioners etc and to open up more spend opportunities.”

“[We are] engaging more through time credits and linking to other groups.”

“[We] linked with the local radio station as a result of the Time Credits network meeting and got to see how others use Time Credits, which was a real eye opener...[Our] group leaders are using partner organisations from the spend menu for activities, even when they are not able to spend with Time Credits, because Time Credits means a lot to them...People learn more about other groups...As Time Credits expands we will be able to use organisation to organisation relationships referencing Time Credits...Going forward this will help us a great deal both in terms of encouraging earn and spend in our groups.”

---

34 Wave 1 was carried out in July and wave 2 in June 2014.
Another organisation described how Time Credits will help in the future, so they can create new services with organisations with which they currently only have loose alliances. They were surprised at a recent event by how many other local organisations were using Time Credits and identified lots of opportunities. Identifying and capitalising on opportunities is something the organisation needs to keep doing, by regular networking across the Time Credits partners. This is already starting to happen with a different organisation, which runs some of its services from the same building. Time Credits has enabled closer working between key volunteers from the two organisations and as a result they are able to reach out to more families and spend more time with them, providing a better quality service and tailoring group sessions more to the individual needs of the people in the room.

9.7 Complexity of delivering Time Credits programmes

Through the work we have done so far, we have gained some indications of the challenges organisations face when implementing Time Credits programmes, and the factors that contribute to success. These indications are based on qualitative data from ‘host’ organisations and they provide strong and consistent messages on how to develop a supportive context for Time Credits to be introduced and to flourish.

9.7.1 Discretion and belief

Many individuals leading the Time Credits schemes within their organisations spoke about having a level of discretion or freedom that helped them to get the work going and keep it going; this included some control to flex budgets and staff time, and permission and space to act. This was often coupled with a genuine personal belief in the potential of Time Credits.

People said:

“Our formalised partnership structure, with good working relationships across public sector organisations, means they can get buy in from partner agencies & can more easily get funding to do things because of this pre-existing structure.”

“I have a free reign and no major financial constraints and a reasonable amount of discretionary budget to allow it to carry on. It is resource intensive and I am able to manage this by being able to flex the time of generic project officers.”

“To get going start with the more willing and able and then showcase what they have done.”
9.7.2 Alignment

Being able to align Time Credits clearly with existing agendas and initiatives was seen as important in helping Time Credits to be successfully introduced within an organisation or area.

Our respondents said:

“Having the local infrastructure around skills in place, to implement Time Credits on the back of, has made them more successful. Time Credits have been aligned with two other major programmes and all of these things are about helping people make positive change. Without existing structures to help embed Time Credits it would be very tough to do.”

“[We have] tied it closely to the priority of economic growth, the focus of elected members is economic growth.”

“Linking to a wider vision around co-production was also important. You need this pre-existing infrastructure. It's really hard to shoe horn it in.”

“...the pressure of less resources and wanting to maintain standards in services and communities [Time Credits] is one of the only ways to shift focus from paid employees to volunteers; we are building a volunteer and community organisation base and the idea is that paid employees won’t be there to do so much over time.”

9.7.3 Time

Host organisations recognised that working with Time Credits takes time, with the first stage of outcomes being about successfully embedding the work within the organisation so they can survive longer term, and drawing on the support of Spice to do this. The expectation being that widespread impacts on individuals, communities and organisations will be seen in the longer term.

Host organisations said:

“The last six months has been a latching process, a consolidating process, more about embedding than spreading, this was due to capacity and didn’t want to alienate key corporate partners by not giving them enough time...[We are taking] a long term view.”

“Time is what is important for establishing a higher profile across the organisation.”

“In moving forward, I feel like we are halfway there, eventually Time Credits will become self sustaining.”

9.7.4 Focused embedding

The longer term sustainability of Time Credits requires focused work to embed the programme as a core part of an organisation’s strategy and delivery processes. For many organisations this included identifying the role for Time Credits within their main strategic objectives and including them in commissioning processes. The importance of committed, enthusiastic individuals was also raised.

For example, one local authority has been thinking about what the focus should be after June 2014, when the current round of funding runs out. This has been focused on how Time Credits can be used to make a difference to priority areas. It is tactically important, to secure further funding, that Time Credits are not seen as a ‘nice to do’ project, but as integral to the priority areas for the council. They are trying to embed Time Credits as part of the council’s commissioning process – to ‘follow the money’, so they have core funding.
9.7.5 Culture

Finally, several host organisations described the importance of leaders and organisations that are prepared to try new things, look at all possibilities – including their own ways of working – and be able to work in partnership with organisations different to their own. Working with Spice and Time Credits then leads to positive culture change.

Typical comments included:

“The Chief Exec likes new ideas and innovative thinking, as long as there is a clear case is he happy to try and not get hung up if it doesn’t quite work.”

“Time Credits are becoming higher profile within the Local Authority, people spot more opportunities and ask whether an event or activity can be Time Credited, for example could people earn them for volunteering to help organise the towns 10k race.”

“Time Credits are a true collaboration, not an exercise in procuring or commissioning a service.”

The journey maps of three local authority host organisations are included here to provide complete overviews of what happened; how people within the organisation, including service users, responded to the changes; and the differences that were seen. A timeline charting these changes is provided at the bottom of each map. The impact of Time Credits on organisations is due to be explored in more depth during the next phase of the evaluation. For the purposes of this report we simply want to note a few things from the journey maps.

First, how each of the organisations followed quite different pathways, with variations in the steps and time taken to set up and embed Time Credits. Some variation is inevitable in working with different organisations having differing structures and ambitions. This also reflects how Spice was itself undergoing a process of development, by trying different approaches to see what worked well. As noted in the summary findings, there are gains to be made from streamlining this process, identifying the optimal activities and speed of delivery. This is an area where Spice has started to make changes since the data was collected (see Part 3 of this report).

Second, the process of setting up and embedding Time Credits is not always a smooth one, with people reacting with resistance, lack of understanding and being unsure of the scheme’s fit with what they do, all being highlighted on the journey towards the positive and successful changes that were ultimately reported. This supports the need for diligent champions who know the context they are working in and are able to take the necessary time to bring about change.

Finally, the timelines re-iterate what was heard in the evaluation interviews and survey data – that the initial process of embedding within organisations takes time, up to two years, and requires regular information for new people and reviews of how things are going.
Host organisation 1
Journey map of involvement in Time Credits

This organisation’s journey shows a clear alignment with strategic priorities and decision-making early in the process, followed by early benefits within the first few months. Sustainable behaviour change and embedding of Time Credits started to happen after about six months.

**Journey**
What happened and in what order?

**Behaviour**
How did people react/respond?

**Differences**
What was a good or different outcome?

---

**High level strategic discussion**
- Presentation from Spice to cbc – lcc
- Identified strategic priorities

**Policy and performance reviewed**
- Partnership with county and district
- More people taking part

---

**Host organisation 2**
Journey map of involvement in Time Credits

This organisation devoted considerable attention to introducing Time Credits during the first 12 months, and this resulted in a number of behaviour changes and early benefits. Two years since they began their journey, they are confident that a number of other benefits are now likely to come in the future.

---

**Spring / Summer**
- February 2013
- 2014

**FUTURE**

---

62
Host organisation 2
Journey map of involvement in Time Credits

This organisation devoted considerable attention to introducing Time Credits during the first 12 months, and this resulted in a number of behaviour changes and early benefits. Two years since they began their journey, they are confident that a number of other benefits are now likely to come in the future.

Journey
What happened and in what order?

2012
Spring/Summer

- The Board are aware of Time Credits
- We went to an introductory meeting
- I met the Locality Worker
- SLA
- Identified strategic priorities

2013

- Identified first earn & spend activities
- Linked up with other orgs to run activities
- Received spend menus
- Held a launch activity
- New ways of working
- Enthusiasm
- More collaboration
- Able to offer new opportunities

February

- I organised an activity or trip
- All staff & volunteers are aware of Time Credits
- Community/service users spending T/C’s
- Re-run workshops for new staff
- Time Credits is always considered & represented

2014

- Service users are coming to me with ideas
- I read the materials from Spice
- I meet / email the Locality Worker
- Staff become facilitators rather than deliverers
- Policy and performance reviewed
- Service users taking the lead
- Time Credits in funding bids

Differences
What was a good or different outcome?

- Service users / community started earning T/C
- Co-design more meaningful opps
- New relationships with users both positive & negative

Behaviour
How did people react/respond?

Behaviour
How did people react/respond?

- T/C’s commissioned in spec contract
- Mapped assets and resources
- More creativity from staff
- Some resistance from staff
- Staff more engaged
- Discovered new resources

Future

- More people taking part
- More activities taking place
- Time Credits in staff appraisal
This organisation has undertaken a sustained development programme to ensure the success of Time Credits, and this is reflected in their journey. In particular, they worked hard to overcome early resistance and barriers to change, which has helped to generate a steady process of positive behaviour change and impact.
Responding to the evaluation

This evaluation has identified a number of important opportunities for Spice, and how it works with members and local partners to drive change and impact. These opportunities are focused on four areas:

1. Ensuring the availability of appropriate, accessible and sufficient spend opportunities
2. Maximising the potential impact of Time Credits on health and social care services
3. Providing greater support to partner organisations on their journey towards co-production
4. Reducing lead-in times for organisations that sign-up to use Time Credits.

During the last 18 months of the evaluation Spice has been evolving its model and its processes. Learning from the evaluation has already translated into action and is continuing to inform the future plans for the organisation.
10. Spend opportunities

10.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice

The importance of spend opportunities as a driver of impact has already been recognised by Spice and has been a focus of effort over the past 12 months. The findings from this evaluation not only confirm the strong relationship between spend and impact, but also provide the evidence base for how Spice needs to resource and staff the work it does on building partnerships in the future. They also highlight the need for further work in this area, despite the considerable focus on how to develop more spend opportunities that has been undertaken to date.

10.2 Actions that Spice has already taken

Spice has already taken a number of actions in this area, including allocating additional resources within the core team to support locality partners to develop more relevant and accessible spend opportunities for Spice members. The Partnerships Team has also developed strategies for ‘encouraging spend’ and supporting individuals to try new activities. A new suite of marketing materials now supports greater engagement by members in spend activities, and network events bring together corporate and community partners to build connections and identify opportunities for collaboration. Streamlining administrative procedures for partners and the development of a bespoke training video have further supported the spending of Time Credits.

10.3 Plans for the future

A number of other actions have also been identified, including:

• Developing a more robust monitoring framework for spend and outcomes, including consideration of further evaluation specific to this area

• Changing the sign-up process to be more outcome focussed, thereby strengthening the focus given to spend opportunities during implementation

• Building on the success of a community ‘spend fund’ in Ely and expanding this to new areas. In this model, community groups are given the opportunity to bid into a small funding pot to run community spend activities

• Further work to ensure corporate partners fully understand their role in Time Credits, and how they can support communities

• Working to tackle specific barriers to spend, such as transport

• Raising the profile of community spend and changing attitudes within organisations.
11. Impact on health and social care services

11.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice

There is a strong case that Time Credits can help people to be more active, lead healthier lives, and remain independent for longer. This generates the potential for Time Credits to impact on future demand for health and social care services on a much greater scale than we have seen so far. Connecting people with communities also helps to build social capital and tackle issues of poor health that we know are associated with isolation and loneliness. These benefits, along with the co-production potential of Time Credits, create opportunities to transform the way services are delivered, and to improve the quality of provision resulting in improved health outcomes over the longer term.

11.2 Actions Spice intends to take

In order for Spice to further support the health and social care organisations that sign up to Time Credits and help them get the most from what Time Credits can offer, a number of actions are being undertaken. These include:

• Carrying-out a baseline assessment of service use, support requirements and health status at the start of new programmes, and putting in place arrangements to track changes in these over time

• Looking in more depth at the data collected through this evaluation, which shows a positive impact of Time Credits on reducing demand for services, to understand what works and how this could be applied on a larger scale. This would include looking at the differences associated with age, type of condition, disability, and organisation, and identifying ‘cohorts’ of users to monitor outcomes

• Continuing with the implementation of Spice’s health and social care strategy, which reflects a shift from the broad programme focus to date, towards more specialist and targeted interventions and support in the future.

Some of these actions will require further research and new data collection, and this will be incorporated into Spice’s future monitoring and evaluation plan.
12. Lead-in times

12.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice

While the evaluation has shown very clearly the benefits of Time Credits for community-based organisations, and the fact that many of these are generated quite quickly and within the first year of trading, some of the evidence we have points to an opportunity to reduce the ‘lead-in’ time for some organisations. In particular, the time it takes from an organisation expressing an interest in Time Credits to the commencement of trading. This is by no means a challenge that is unique to Time Credits, and will require a deeper understanding than we have been able to gather during this evaluation of the factors that influence change in organisations. It will also be important for Spice to consider what can be done within the context of existing programmes, and the learning that can be applied to new programmes as they are established. Part of the learning in this phase has related to the importance of clear set up and expectations for organisations, establishing the importance of earning and spending being clear from the beginning, and developing expertise in supporting different types of organisations in different ways.

12.2 Actions that Spice has already taken

Spice has already taken a number of actions in this area including ensuring infrastructure is in place (Time Credit notes, initial spend opportunities) at the earliest possible opportunity to enable trading to start as quickly as possible within new programmes. Networking events have been introduced as an integral part of a new network, creating a peer learning and support structure for local organisations. The introduction of an ‘Expression of Interest’ form has provided further clarity for organisations looking to sign up to the programme and Spice is refining its approach to training to ensure a flexible training offer that can support organisations to embed Time Credits effectively and quickly.

12.3 Plans for the future

A number of other actions have also been identified, including:

- Developing clear process maps around set up and implementation for different types of organisations, reflecting their different characteristics and challenges
- Continuing to recognise the value of networks and building on the knowledge gained so far about how they can work most effectively in this context.
13. Towards greater co-production

13.1 What the evaluation findings mean for Spice

Supporting organisations on a journey towards greater co-production of services is central to the objectives of Time Credits. It also reflects the values and ethos of Spice:

“A co-production approach helps services and activities become more effective as service users and their communities are helping design and deliver outcomes. This encourages buy-in and even ownership of services by the community, resulting in sustainable projects that offer better value for money. People grow in confidence, they build new relationships, and sense of community increases, also leading to increased well-being for participants, professionals and communities”.35

“When citizens participate and have greater ownership, public and community services become more in tune with their communities and achieve better results.”36

The findings from this evaluation highlight a positive direction of travel towards co-production. However, they also demonstrate that some organisations need more help and support and Time Credits alone won’t always deliver the cultural and organisational change necessary.

This help and support includes: managing expectations around Spice’s core message, deciding when it is the right time to talk about co-production, recognising that successful co-production is made up of many elements (values, culture, tools, communications, relationships, and power and ownership), being part of a wider change process with strong leadership and energy, and being clear about how systematic co-production is reflected in practice.

13.2 Actions that Spice has already taken

Spice has already taken the initiative in this area, including work to develop a clear Spice definition of co-production and a set of indicators demonstrating different levels of co-production within organisations. These measures will further support Spice’s work to assess organisations at the time of signing up a group or organisation and secure a commitment towards increasing co-production. Spice is also broadening and expanding the scope of networking days to increase the emphasis on the co-production journey and incorporating co-production resources into training activities.

13.3 Plans for the future

A number of other actions have also been identified, including:

• Developing a ‘leadership for co-production’ package and reviewing the co-production elements within the existing training package in light of the learning from this evaluation

• Developing case studies (within and outside of Spice) that showcase co-production in different contexts, and how it can be made to happen within different organisations and services

• Reviewing the current levels of locality support, and the capacity needed to support and generate change

• Mapping existing groups and services against the baseline assessment tool and key indicators, in order to target future support and resources accordingly

• Developing alliances to ensure the principles of co-production are reflected in the national and local policy and regulatory contexts.

References

35 An Introduction to Time Credits, Spice
36 www.justaddspice.org/about-us/introduction.html
14. Further evaluation

Over the coming months, Spice will be developing its longer term monitoring and evaluation plan in light of the findings from the work so far, and in order to support the delivery of its five year strategy. This is likely to include further work specifically on measuring health and well-being impacts for different groups, and gaining a much deeper understanding of the factors that drive positive change in organisations. The work will involve further data collection and primary research, and complement the natural shift that Spice will now begin to make to consolidate its work, by focusing on more defined and targeted groups within the broader context in the future.
Research methods

15 Overall approach ........................................................................................................ 72
  15.1 Aims of the evaluation .......................................................................................... 72
  15.2 Stages of work .................................................................................................... 72
  15.3 The research questions ....................................................................................... 74

16 Evaluation design .................................................................................................... 75
  16.1 Challenges with this kind of evaluation .............................................................. 75
  16.2 Evaluation framework ......................................................................................... 76
  16.3 Measurement themes ......................................................................................... 77
15. Overall approach

15.1 Aims of the evaluation

In this section we describe our approach to the evaluation, the specific challenges and how we have attempted to address them through our approach, and the data used for producing this report and its limitations. The aim of this evaluation was to help the following stakeholder groups to understand the impact of Time Credits:

- The organisations that partner with Spice to implement Time Credits
- Individuals and communities who are engaged in and can benefit from Time Credits
- Spice
- People and organisations who currently invest in Time Credits and/or might do so in the future.

In order to align our approach with the values and aims of the Time Credits system we recognised the need for rigorous data collection, with all stakeholders participating in practical and meaningful ways. This data collection focused on understanding local issues as well as the broader strategic view, and taking account of how each Time Credits programme might evolve over the next few years. This required creativity in designing the approach, not an 'off the shelf' evaluation framework. We could only achieve this by working in partnership with Spice.

With this in mind, we embarked on five key stages of work.

15.2 Stages of work

Figure 28 sets out the five stages of work we undertook for this evaluation.

[Figure 28: Evaluation phases and methods]
15.2.1 Phase 1: Scoping and design
This stage involved a two-hour co-design workshop with each locality (involving Spice and local partners) to identify and prioritise possible outcomes and to begin to describe (a) how those outcomes relate to each other, and (b) to whom they might be important. From this and subsequent discussions we developed our evaluation framework and agreed a number of measurement themes that would inform our data collection throughout the evaluation.

15.2.2 Phase 2: Baseline
For our initial round of data collection we designed and distributed an online and paper-based survey to Spice members, and an online survey to a sample of staff from partner organisations. We also carried out 12 in-depth telephone interviews with partner representatives.

15.2.3 Phase 3: Evaluation
The evaluation (which forms the basis of this report, along with the baseline data) involved two further surveys to members – each six months apart from the previous one – a second survey to staff in partner organisations, and the development of six evaluation tools, designed to capture more in-depth data about the experiences of members and partners involved in Time Credits. These tools gather information about how people feel at different stages of involvement, which resources and assets Time Credits have had impacts on, and how relationships form and develop as a result of Time Credits. With the assistance of Spice staff, we ran a total of 33 sessions with Spice members and partners using a combination of these evaluation tools. A further 20 in-depth interviews were undertaken with key personnel from a selection of Spice's host partner organisations.

15.2.4 Phase 4: Analysis
We undertook quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data, identifying trends and themes across all sources, and drawing on the theory of change behind Time Credits to develop the findings presented in this report. The quantitative analysis consisted largely of the use of descriptive statistics (involving both univariate and bivariate analyses), although where possible, we carried out correlation analysis to test the strength of the observed relationships between different variables.

15.2.5 Phase 5: Final outputs
This report, along with an executive summary, form the main outputs from the evaluation and have been developed jointly with Spice.
15.3 The research questions

This work was designed to help us answer a number of research questions, and these have been used to frame the findings presented in Part 2 of the report. The questions are set out below.

To what extent do Time Credits lead to:

1. Increased active participation and giving time in services and communities?

2. Stronger communities, for example by citizens knowing more people in their community, people feeling part of a community, better informal support networks and more community activity?

3. Improved health and well-being?

4. Co-production of public and community services where people who receive services are partners in the design and delivery of those services?

5. Development of infrastructure and embedding of new ways of working to support active participation and co-production of services? This might include changing workplace cultures, moving towards asset-based approaches in public service delivery and developing a stronger focus on outcomes

6. Better local networks across different sectors that provide services to people? Including, for example, new collaborations and ways of working that make better use of existing resources

7. Development of services that better meet local needs?

8. Sustainable change and value generation?
16. Evaluation design

16.1 Challenges with this kind of evaluation

This evaluation is attempting to measure the interactions and relationships within a complex system. It also started after Time Credits had been operation for some time (although for much less time in some localities). In addition to this, we have the usual research constraints of time, budget and access to data. These factors influenced what kind of evaluation we needed to undertake, the trade-offs we needed to make and the data collection that was possible.

Time Credits is an evolving model, exploring and building potential in a range of different geographical, socio-economic and health contexts. This means that outcomes are likely to be very connected to the context in which they happen and change is unlikely to be linear. We had to find a way of making sense of this complexity without over simplifying it just so it could be measured.

The first stage of the evaluation involved co-design workshops with each of the localities and the Spice team, to really understand the complexity of how Time Credits are intended to work. From this understanding of the Time Credits system we were able to develop a clearer understanding of the behaviours the evaluation should measure, and the indicators by which to measure them. Using the evaluation framework we developed a number of measurement themes which are described below.
16.2 Evaluation framework

Figure 29 below presents our evaluation framework, which reflects the Spice Theory of Change described in section 6.2.1.
### 16.3 Measurement themes

#### 16.3.1 Individuals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>This is about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giving time and getting involved</strong></td>
<td>The number of people who give time, how much they give, what they do, and whether they do it again. Includes whether they have given time before (i.e. getting people involved in activities who traditionally don’t, and others trying out new things) and how representative people who give time are of the wider community (or the target population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to new and different opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Time Credits as a way of opening up opportunities for individuals (to do more, to learn, to feel better, to be more active) and how it can address inequality / inequity of access (including for example to health and care services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills and experience</strong></td>
<td>Learning new skills, refreshing old ones, experiencing new and different things, and providing a stronger basis for people to do better in education and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment and qualifications</strong></td>
<td>People getting closer to the job market and gaining new / higher qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-perceptions</strong></td>
<td>How people see themselves, their confidence and what they aspire to become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isolation</strong></td>
<td>People being / feeling isolated and changing this so they are more connected with others / their community (focus on those who are chronically excluded) – and in what way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independence of living and prevention</strong></td>
<td>The ability of people to live as independently as possible and to have a stronger sense of purpose and capability, and the impact this has on preventing illness and disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Networks and relationships</strong></td>
<td>The connections people have with those around them, how strong those connections are, and what it enables them to aspire to do / achieve, and how it makes them feel (to achieve other things and what those things are)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sense of community</strong></td>
<td>How much people feel part of their community (however that is defined), their ability to contribute and what they get in return – do we have a specific definition of ‘community’ that we want to test, or do we want this to emerge?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections with public services [c/f collaboration and co-production]</strong></td>
<td>How people are engaged in the design of services, and in shaping their delivery. How people’s perceptions are changed about how they could be involved. This is also about the breadth (different types) of services available as a result of better engagement with users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical health</strong></td>
<td>Being more physically active through earning (leaving the house to volunteer, doing more where you live) or spending activity (gym, swimming, walking) Time Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management of long-term health conditions</strong></td>
<td>Better self-management and support services to manage the impact of certain long-term health conditions (mental health, stroke etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The gift economy [applies to organisations and communities as well]</strong></td>
<td>People helping one another (and acquiring the aspirations / confidence / motivations / skills to help others) instead of relying on public / statutory services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 16.3.2 Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>This is about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How organisational resources are used</strong></td>
<td>Targeting resources at those most in need and delivering services in ways that encourage self-management / self-help / communities working together. Reducing public spending by supporting communities to help themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration and co-production [c/f connections with public services]</strong></td>
<td>How organisations work to actively engage users (and others) in the design and delivery of local services. It also encompasses the engagement within organisations, between organisations, with citizens and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reputation</strong></td>
<td>How organisations build and maintain their reputation in the local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Making use of local talent and community assets</strong></td>
<td>Organisations identifying and making best use of local talent and community resources to help them deliver better, more effective and more value for money services enhancing current peer support, supporting new peer/expert groups. Supporting people to make use of community assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The types / breadth of services offered</strong></td>
<td>The range of services available so that they are more accessible and personalised to individuals, and new groups emerge – this might differ by type of organisation: statutory services, community groups, charitable organisations/social enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliance of people on public services</strong></td>
<td>Reducing people’s reliance on services and promoting self-management, support networks and other ways of help and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supply of Time Credit spending opportunities</strong></td>
<td>The number, type and range of opportunities (and their uptake) being offered, how appropriate these are for local people, and how embedded these are becoming / have become in organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes to Time Credits</strong></td>
<td>Embedding in organisational values and cultures so that it becomes part of the ‘toolkit’ and a sustainable element of what they do, or as a lever for change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 16.3.3 Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>This is about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pride, confidence and cohesion</td>
<td>How people see themselves in their communities and how (collectively) this creates a sense of pride among citizens, confidence, safety, progression and being 'in it' together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How community resources are used and new resources</td>
<td>Communities being better at helping themselves and others, communities working together, stronger peer support networks, people being better connected and people's skills / assets / time being used to help achieve this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapped into and developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and stronger community groups or networks</td>
<td>The number, type, size (etc.) of local groups, their activities and influence locally, how sustainable they are, and what they achieve for local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with agencies</td>
<td>How local groups engage with and participate in the design and delivery of local services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>The extent to which communities feel able to take action and take ownership of what is going on within / outside their community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating opportunities</td>
<td>The processes in place for communities to generate sustainable and longer term opportunities for people to be involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The demand for earning and spending</td>
<td>The number, type, scale (etc.) of opportunities for people to be / become involved in activities for the benefit of the community (and themselves)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The economy of giving</td>
<td>How giving becomes embedded in the community – building and making better use of assets / capabilities, instead of public / statutory services. Also how this helps with prevention, reducing health inequalities and improves self-management [mesh of social capital]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16.3.4 Design implications

These themes are complex and wide-ranging. In order to capture good quality data across as many of these as possible, we designed the following data collection tools:

- A survey of Spice members, which was distributed in online, in paper form, and as an ‘easy read’ formats
- An online survey of partner organisations
- Semi-structured interview questions for in-depth interviews with staff from partner organisations
- An evaluation toolkit consisting of six interactive tools to be completed in face to face sessions with partner organisations, members and service users. The tools consisted of a journey map, an asset map and a relationship map, each one designed to be used either with individuals who use Time Credits, or with organisations who partner with Spice to implement Time Credits.

As with many evaluations, what is being studied has been operational for some time. This means that we needed to collect data retrospectively, accommodate different stages of development across the localities using Time Credits, and plan for future data collection according to the overall deadline for the evaluation and the local operational timeframes in localities.

The fact that Time Credits were already in operation also made it impossible to design a randomised control trial, where some people are randomly assigned to use Time Credits and other people are not. The stage of development would also have made it impossible to secure large enough sample sizes for a randomised methodology.

Neither was it possible to access the data sets required to develop a counterfactual by using secondary data to match pairs of individuals who did and did not use Time Credits. The evaluation therefore focuses on a before and after design, triangulating data from different quantitative and qualitative sources to strengthen the inferences that can be drawn from the data set. Where possible the evaluation also considered the outcomes that are likely to occur outside the timeframe of the evaluation.

The evaluation also needed to reflect the participatory ethos of Spice. This meant engaging a wide range of stakeholders throughout the process, and making sure they were informed about the purpose and focus of the evaluation, so as to manage expectations and anxieties. We did this through workshops and presentations, including the initial co-design sessions and presentations at various Spice events, Board meetings and conferences. It was also important to design tools and materials in accessible, non-technical formats, and to use a range of interactive and participatory exercises.

In designing the approach we were also conscious of the need to provide Spice with maximum value for their investment in the evaluation. Our approach is therefore grounded in participation and skills transfer.
Appendix 1 – Further References

Reports & Articles with Useful Case Studies for Future Reference:

Boyle, D., & Harris, D. M. (2009)
The challenge of co-production: How equal partnerships between professionals and the public are crucial to improving public services. NESTA.


OECD. (2011)

References:

Arnstein, R. (1969)


Bovaird, T., & Löffler, E. (2012)


Boyle, D., & Harris, D. M. (2009)
The challenge of co-production: How equal partnerships between professionals and the public are crucial to improving public services. NESTA.

Brandsen, T., & Hout, E. van. (2006)

Brandsen, T., & Pestoff, V. (2006)

Fledderus, J., Brandsen, T., & Honingh, M. (2014)

Glynos, J., & Speed, E. (2012)


Putnam, R. (2001)


Strokosch, K. (2013)
Co-production and innovation in public services: can co-production drive innovation?.

Teicher, J., Alam, Q., & Gramberg, B. V. (2006)

Torfing, J. (2013)

Verschuere, B., Brandsen, T., & Pestoff, V. (2012)

Voorberg, W., Bekkers, V., & Tummers, L. (2013)

Appendix 2 – Glossary of terms

(Partner) Organisation:
Any entity, whether constituted or not, that brings together a group of people to achieve a particular purpose (or a number of different purposes) and which is signed up to Time Credits.

Types of organisation:
[See also commissioned service and community group]
A partner organisation is either a ‘host’ or a ‘branch’ organisation.

Host – an organisation that employs a Spice Time Credits facilitator. It is likely to be one of the following:
• Local authority
• Strategic / policy partnership
• Community development trust
• Housing association
• Commissioned service
• School

The host organisation may or may not offer earning and spending opportunities for members.
Branch – an organisation that offers opportunities for members to earn and spend Time Credits. It is likely to be one of the following:

- Commissioned service
- Community group
- Charity
- Social enterprise
- In-house service
- Private business
- Faith group
- Event organiser
- User-led service, group or committee
- A site, or service, or team within a host organisation
- Primary and/or secondary school
- Housing service or site (may or may not be linked to a host)
- Tenants or residents group (may or may not be linked to a host)
- Parents group or parent teacher association

Member
A person who earns and spends Time Credits. They may or may not be a service user.

Community
A group of people with a common interest. For this evaluation we see community in the Time Credits context as EITHER:

- A group of people belonging to a geographical area (for example a housing scheme, a local authority area/ward, or a residents association) OR

- A group of people who receive services from, or participate in, a particular organisation – usually a commissioned service or community group

Service
Any statutory, public or community service provided by an organisation. A community service includes, for example, retail services (provision of goods) as well as activities (lunch clubs, litter picking, etc.).

Strong evidence
Where findings are supported by evidence from survey data and most qualitative sources (interviews and toolkit workshops) and are seen in most localities.

Some evidence
Where findings are supported by evidence from survey data and more than one qualitative source (interviews and toolkit workshops) and are seen in more than one locality.

Limited evidence [instead of ‘weak evidence’]
Where findings are supported only by survey data or by qualitative data, and are only seen in one or two localities.
Health and social care
This refers to the Uplift member cohorts in the following localities: Lancashire, Lewisham, West Norfolk and Wiltshire. Members within Uplift are likely to be a service user.

Well-being
Subjective well-being: A measure of how people think and feel about their own well-being, usually determined by using a survey or other research tool.
Objective well-being: A set of assumptions (based on existing research) about what is most likely to improve a person's well-being, for example meeting basic human needs and rights.
For the purposes of this evaluation, we are using the five ways to well-being developed by the New Economics Foundation as indicators of mental and physical well-being:

• Connect
• Be active
• Take notice
• Keep learning
• Give

Service user
Someone who receives services from an organisation.

Health and social care
A member who gives time to earn Time Credits from an organisation EITHER:

• In an Uplift cohort or locality (Lancashire) OR
• In an organisation defined as offering health and social care services in the following localities: Lewisham, West Norfolk or Wiltshire OR
• Is a Look Ahead service user

These people have a broad range of health and/or social care needs and are likely to come from vulnerable and at risk groups such as: disadvantaged families, socially isolated, learning disability, mental health, and they are likely to either have, or be at risk of, low to moderate health and social care needs.

Other
A member who gives time to earn Time Credits from an organisation that offers commissioned services in the following sectors: housing, health...

Service users are either:

• Elected – they choose to access a particular service in order to meet their health, care or support needs; or
• Non-elected – they are part of a service by virtue of their social circumstances (e.g. housing association, day centre)

Health

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

Reference: Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948. (The Definition has not been amended since 1948).
With thanks to the Spice funders and evaluation partners


Supported by the City of London Corporation’s Charity, City Bridge Trust

Design: daughterdesign.co.uk