

### Why were you interested in time credits?

As a charity, we have limited resources to thank individuals who support us and we were struggling to engage some of our service users.

The deciding factor was that there were some residents who just wouldn't take up activities or get involved. This is partly because of the client group we work with - they just didn't see the point of getting involved.

### Who's involved and how are they earning?

We've got around 15 earners so far, the majority of residents are involved. We started off with the residents cooking for each other. Several of the residents felt they had skills they could share and were eager to do it. This activity worked well because they got a sense of achievement and felt they'd achieved something together. Some of the residents would never have a proper meal so this made a big difference for them. Residents now also get involved with cleaning the communal spaces, preparing art boards for communal areas, gardening communal spaces and some befriending...

## Unity House

Unity House is a hostel that supports individuals who have been street homeless for a variety of reasons. Residents usually stay for a period of 6-8 months and receive support while they get back on their feet. There are usually around 15 residents at the hostel, men and women, and a few younger residents aged 16 – 18. They started to use time credits in June 2012.

Time credits have definitely helped get service users more involved in the hostel, they're part of the moving on training programme and now residents help maintain the facility itself as well as support each other a bit more. One resident took another one, who had a physical impairment, to the medical centre the other day. We're planning a Graveyard clean-up with the local church soon and this will mean service users are starting to help the wider community as well.

### How have time credit earners spent their time credits?

Gym and swimming have been the most popular activities as health and fitness is a big issue for lots of our residents, especially if they're trying to recover from drug addiction. Time credits have meant that a couple of residents can now take their children swimming and pay for them. Being a worthwhile dad is a massive thing for them and changed how they feel their children perceive them. It's really hard for them to do this sort of thing on benefits.



These have all been new activities so I think time credits have helped create lots of new opportunities for our service users. We're hoping in the long run it will help create a more positive image for the hostel and our residents.