



Trading skills and services

Not everyone trades goods. Some members trade services. Services currently on offer include childcare, pick-ups and deliveries, rug making classes, yoga classes, essay editing, home maintenance, psychic readings, Past Life Regressions, budgeting advice, participation in Working Bees, and more.

Letting people know

When a member begins trading services they often have a flier or business card to hand out. These are often paper ones made up on a home computer or a library photocopier. You are not expected to go to enormous expense to advertise your services or goods.

Services are also listed for free in the Offers section on the Central Coast LETS website. You can list your services there yourself and look up other members' Offers of goods and services.

(If you don't have the internet at home or don't know how to use it, contact Korina Ivatt – korina@centralcoastlets.org or 4342 5079)

Testing ground

Not everyone has business experience and LETS provides a good testing ground for business products and skills. Members can start their business in LETS, get practice and consumer feedback from members, iron out wrinkles in their services or goods and then take their business into the cash market with all the experience and practice of trading behind them.

Several members have confidently and successfully transferred their business from LETS into the dollar market.

Keeping your skills fresh

People looking for work can trade their skills to keep them fresh and to avoid a blank period of unemployment on their résumé or CV. They also gain references to show to potential employers.

There is also the simple network effect of members knowing you are looking for work and helping you find it.

For the love of it

Other members trade skills they simply enjoy performing. I list my skills as a speech-writer/rehearser because I like shaping someone's uncertain ideas about what they want to say into a good speech or work presentation, and rehearsing nervous speakers so they're able to deliver their speech or presentation without worry. I earn Shells doing something I enjoy and that rewards me twice over.

Someone else may enjoy looking after children and reading them stories, another person may enjoy a morning of pulling weeds out of someone else's garden at a Working Bee or cooking their favourite cake and getting praise and Shells for it at a Trade Day.

Participating in Working Bees

These happen every now and then, as they are needed. A member who needs work done on or around their house lists a Working Bee on the website, on the email list or just tells people at a Trade Day. Members come to the Working Bee and do the work in exchange for Shells.

Working Bees are a good opportunity to increase your trade and get to know members. They are great for new members who haven't traded before. It's another very social occasion like Trade Days and there is a lot of chat and talking about who's trading what and so on.

You don't have to be an expert to trade your time at a Working Bee.

Example of a Working Bee

A local member's garden had a lot of storm debris in her garden and also needed assistance pruning trees and large bushes. On the website she listed the work that needed doing and what tools she had. She also talked about it to members at Trade Day. Several members said they would come and would bring their own gardening gloves. One had a power pruning tool and brought it along. A new member said he would start trading by participating.

A lot of pruning and clearing of debris was done and the host provided morning tea and chairs for us to sit on in the garden. We socialised and answered the new member's questions about how LETS works. Participants got paid an hourly

rate of Shells for their time and labour and the host got a much clearer and safer garden.

Some skills & services currently being traded

Massage

Furniture renovation

Typing

Proof-reading & editing

Cleaning

Childcare

Pick-ups and deliveries

Artists' model

Rug making classes

Home maintenance

Psychic readings

Past Life Regressions

Pet minding

Legal/financial advice

Termite control

Budgeting advice

Home care

Tree lopping

Plumbing

House-sitting

Sewing

Facials & hand massage

(It's okay to trade the same skill or service as another member; in fact it is great as it gives more options to members.)