

"If people living in an area cannot trade among themselves without using money issued by outsiders, their local economy will always be at the mercy of events elsewhere."

– Richard Douthwaite, *Short Circuit*

Benefits to the Community:

- Keep resources in the community, reduce dependence on imports while boosting local quality of life
- Reduce waste by facilitating repair and recycling, rather than disposal of goods
- Build trust and good will between neighbors

Benefits to Members:

- Use LETS credit even when you are short on cash – you can start trading immediately
- Earn credit for your under-valued talents or explore a whole new field of work
- Extend your purchasing power by saving your dollars
- Meet new people in your community and form lasting relationships with neighbors

Founded in 2006, Asheville LETS is a not-for-profit credit-based trading system operated by and for the benefit of its members and the greater-Asheville community. The network utilizes a formal consensus decision-making process in which each member is granted equal voice in determining the policies and direction of the network. An annual \$10 membership donation covers printing costs, postage and other cash-only expenses.

To join, you'll need to attend an orientation. For an up-to-date schedule of events and sign up opportunities, visit:
www.AshevilleLETS.org

For more information call (800) 627-9060 or write to:

Asheville LETS
PO Box 1291
Asheville, NC 28802

Asheville**LETS**

local exchange trading system



Asheville LETS

Beyond Dollars & Debt, There's LETS!

Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) break through the limitations of money to unlock the true wealth of our communities.

What is Asheville LETS?

Asheville LETS is a system to facilitate indirect trading and skill exchange. By providing services or resources to someone in the network, individuals earn LETS credits to exchange with other members. There is no interest charged - credits are issued by the community to benefit its members, not by a bank to make a profit. Anyone can join and every member is welcome to participate in network decision-making.

How Does it Work?

When you join the network, you'll receive an Asheville LETS directory listing other members' offers, wants and contact information. Your skills and needs will be added to the next printed directory and to the website.

When someone sees that you offer a service or resource that they need, they'll contact you to arrange a trade, or vice versa. After the exchange takes place, the seller's account receives credits in the amount agreed to by

both parties and the buyer's account receives an equal debit. This debit represents a commitment to provide a future service to someone else in the network.

Unlike being in debt, there is no stigma associated with being in commitment. Within a healthy system, all members spend time in credit and in commitment - the total commitment to the system is always equal to the total credit.

Why Use LETS?

LETS are adaptations of age-old community exchange practices found all over the world. Today, these systems can help to re-localize the economy, keeping more of our resources in the community where they can return to us. Additionally, they give us familiarity with the people who create our goods and provide us with services.

Due to high costs of living and low wages many of us are now living in debt. We shouldn't have to depend on companies that profit from our debt. LETS allow us to provide for and receive from the people we know and trust. This strengthened community provides true security: knowing we can obtain our basic necessities even in times of economic stress and uncertainty.

"A bank is a place where they lend you an umbrella in fair weather and ask for it back when it begins to rain."

– Robert Frost

What Can Be Exchanged?

You may think that you don't have much to offer because you don't have many "marketable" skills; but in reality, your non-professional abilities are valuable, too. You can earn LETS credits by painting a room, teaching someone to use their computer, offering vegetables from your garden or giving someone a ride.

Anything that you are good at or enjoy is a potential exchange. The only limitation is your ingenuity. Categories of offers include:

- Child & elder care
- Housing
- Craftwork
- Technical assistance
- Education
- Tool sharing
- Food & Gardening
- Transportation
- Health & fitness
- And more!

