



Southern Counties Photographic Federation

SCPF Member Club Survey 2023

Report – December 2023

Areas Covered in this Report



The screenshot shows the header of a survey form. It features a blue header with the SCPF logo and the title 'Southern Counties Photographic Federation Club Survey - 2023'. Below the header, there is a paragraph explaining the survey's purpose. The main body of the form is light blue and contains a legend for required fields, followed by an introduction to the 'Club Activities' section. Three numbered questions are listed, each with a corresponding text input field.

Southern Counties Photographic Federation Club Survey - 2023

This survey is for the clubs in the SCPF. It should be completed by a nominated officer of the club. The goal is to understand more about what makes a photographic club successful, and to understand some of the challenges our clubs are facing. A report of the **ANONYMISED** outcomes of the survey will be shared with the SCPF members.

* Required

Club Activities

The first section of this survey is to find out a bit more about you and your role in the club.

The second section of this survey is to find out a bit more about your club and what it does to keep your members interested. It also asks you about your top 3 challenges.

The third section asks more specific questions about your club fees and any impact these have on membership

1. Provide the name of your Club *

2. Provide Your Name *

3. Provide your email address (may be used for follow up questions)

- Surveyed Clubs – Key Facts
- Risks reported by member clubs
- Membership
 - Trends and causes of increasing & decreasing numbers
 - Insight (Growing into a Successful Club)
- Member Satisfaction
 - What impacts satisfaction
- Activities
 - Frequency and preferences
 - List of suggested activities
- Finances
 - Fees vs member numbers
 - Guidance
 - Impact of fee changes on risk to membership, retention and exclusion due of cost of living
- Viability
 - Insight – Growing into a Viable Club

Note of Caution...



Some of the questions in this survey were subjective.



The responses from some clubs were the opinion of one person (rather than the committee)



Two people from one club replied and gave different spins on the club's success and viability

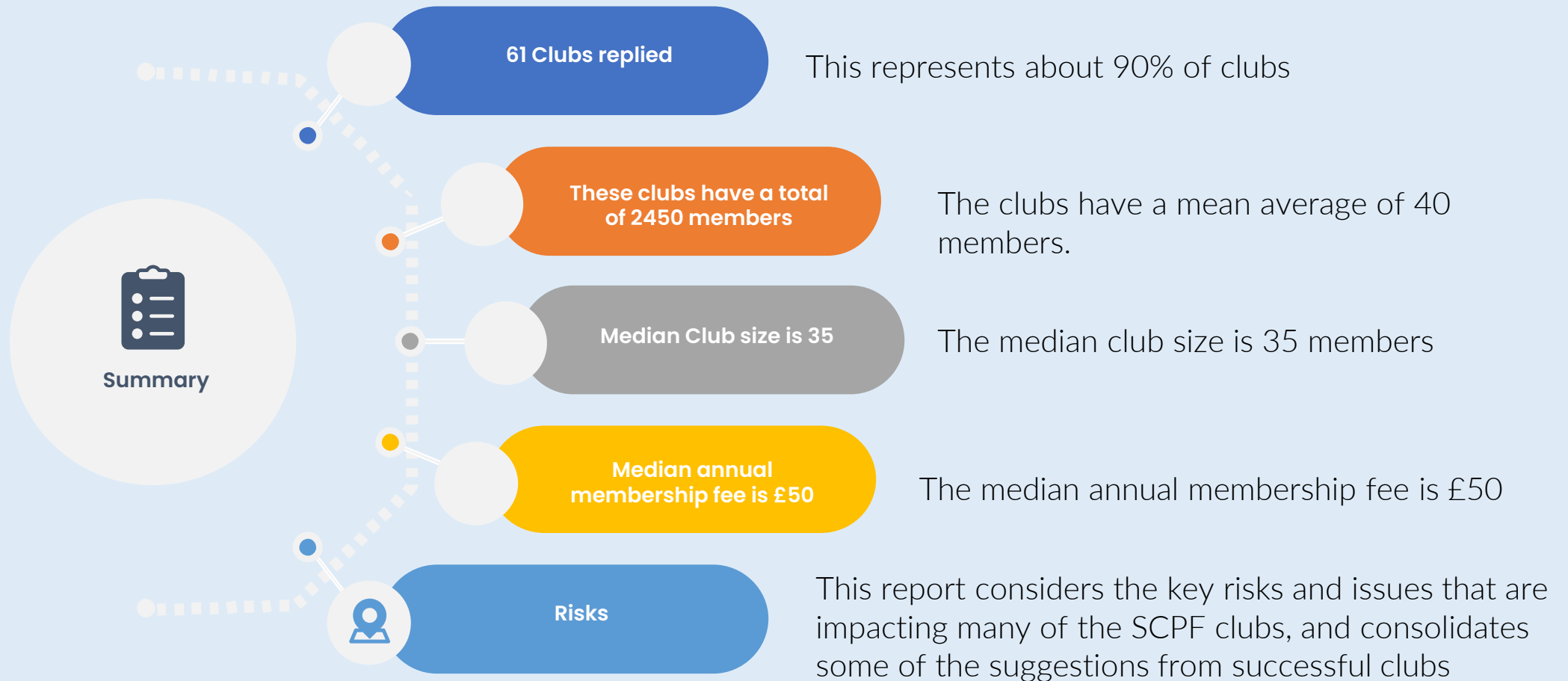


Thank You to all who responded

There was some rich feedback with some great ideas!

Surveyed Clubs – Key Facts

Below are some of the key facts from this survey



Some Results Analyzed in Tiers





Risks

Major and Less Frequent Risks

The biggest risks raised by our members

Six Major Risk Areas called out



Member Retention & Recruitment

Lack of sufficient recruitment of new and younger members to replace aging members.

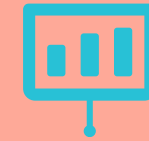
Impact on financial state & viability of the clubs. Risk is compounded when publicity is not working or not in place.



Club Size & Attendance

Reducing club numbers has a critical impact on viability when membership is too low to operate effectively.

Also impacts ability to create a pool of images for inter-club competitions.



Finances

Finding the right balance between costs and revenue to allow the clubs to remain viable.

Increasing costs inc. SCPF fees, rising speaker costs, and venue costs.

Planning for equipment replacement.

The biggest risks raised by our members

Six Major Risk Areas called out



Governance & Operation

Lack of volunteers to take on key roles to help run the club/committee

Succession planning for key club roles



Club Structure & Activities

Sentiment that club structure is old school and not attractive to young people

Evolving and maintaining a balanced programme of fresh and exciting activities to keep the interest, participation, and enthusiasm of all members (& retention).



New Technologies

Keeping up to date is becoming a challenge for older members (inc. social media and software).

This includes the impact of mobile phone photography

Less Frequent Risk Statements

In no particular order

Risk Area	Risk Statements
Club Size & Premises	Risk that if the club gets too big, larger premises will be needed Risk of the need to downsize club premises given the reducing member numbers
Participation in activities	Inability to encourage members to participate in club activities
Skills Development	Finding the right way to encourage members to take their skills to the next level
Competitions	Reduced number of entries to print competitions, often due to printing costs, mounting and storage
Pool of Speakers	Finding it harder to find speakers
Pool of Judges	Finding quality judges (avoiding negative attitude to judges) and available judges is harder
Website	Inability to create a club website
Camera Support	Risk that clubs may not be structured to provide much needed support on using new equipment
Expensive Hobby	Cost of cameras is excluding some members
National Exhibition	Possibility that the club may no longer be able to run its National Exhibition, so hugely impacting revenue
Formation of Cliques	Perception that cliques are excluding or putting off some members

Membership



Membership Numbers

We are seeing an overall decline in member numbers in the SCPF clubs, but the decline itself was reported to be mainly <5% of members



● **46% Decrease**

46% of the member clubs report that numbers of members are decreasing

● **36% Stable**

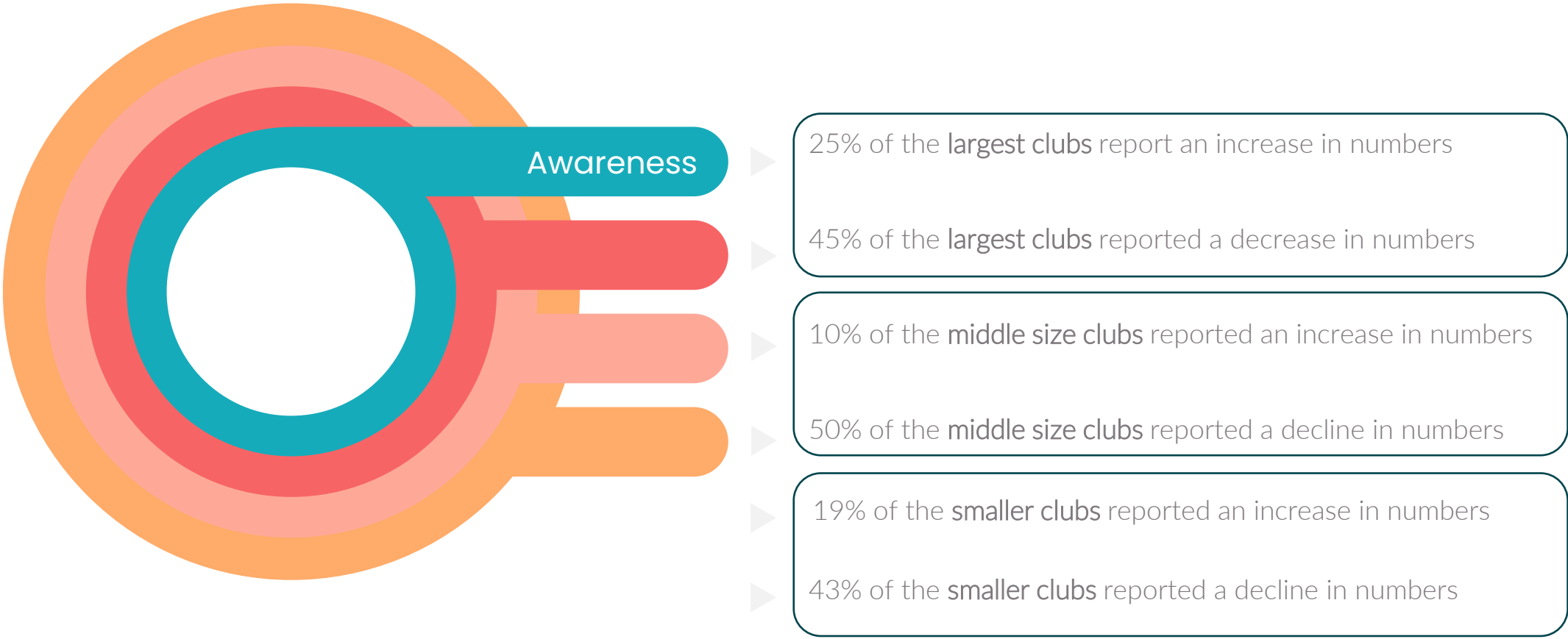
36% report no change in numbers

● **18% Increase**

18% report an increase in numbers, and 3 clubs reported an YoY increase of >10%

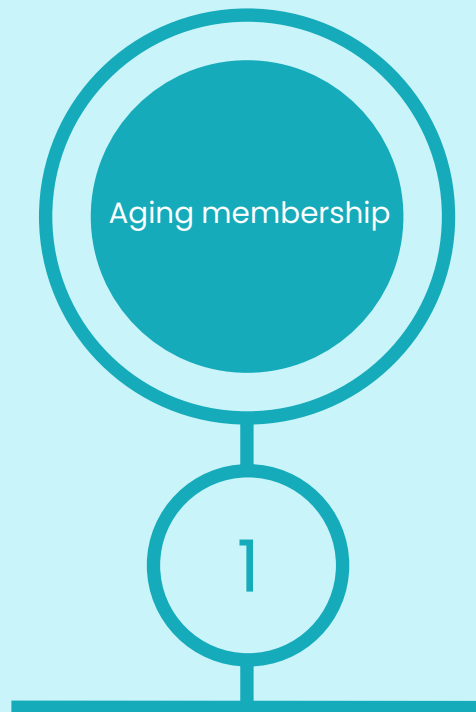
Member numbers vs Club Size

Middle size clubs seems to be showing the largest attrition of members, but the trend impacts all tiers of club size

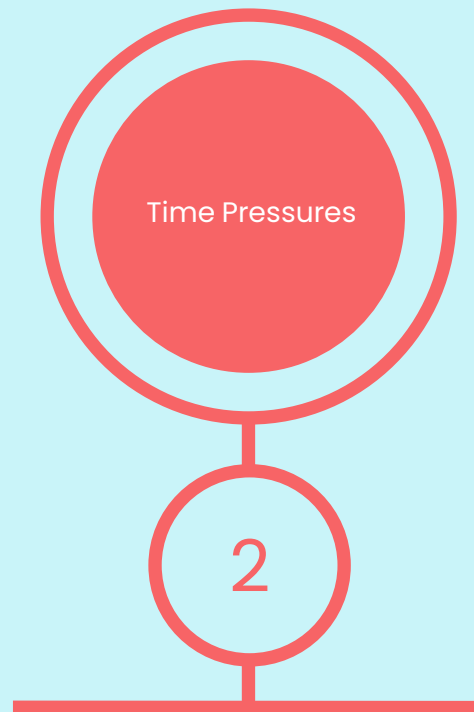


Trends concerning decreasing numbers

Rich feedback fell into four areas (aligned to identified risks)



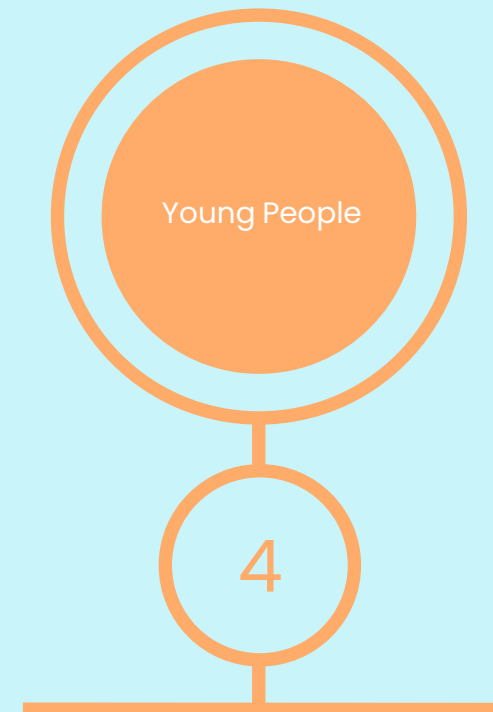
Ill health, infirmity, change in priorities. Reluctance or nervousness to attend face to face meetings (covid). Lack of interest as reduction of zoom meetings impacts "virtual" members



Difficulty attracting members of working age and those with families. Work commitments, and lack of time for photography. Complexity of image processing technology. Availability of online tutorials as alternative.



Inability to build a varied and interesting Programme of club activities to attract members (compounded by variety of member needs in the club).



Clubs believe that the current format and style is dated and not attractive to younger generation.

Rising use of mobile phones vs. expensive camera.

Trends concerning increasing numbers

Feedback from clubs with increasing numbers showed a different picture

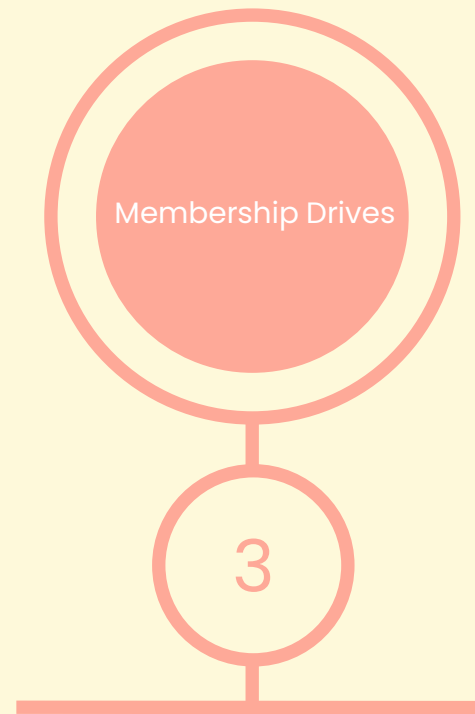


National and local exhibitions of work attracts members.

Talking to people in the community, attendance at local fetes, word of mouth, liaison with local newspaper

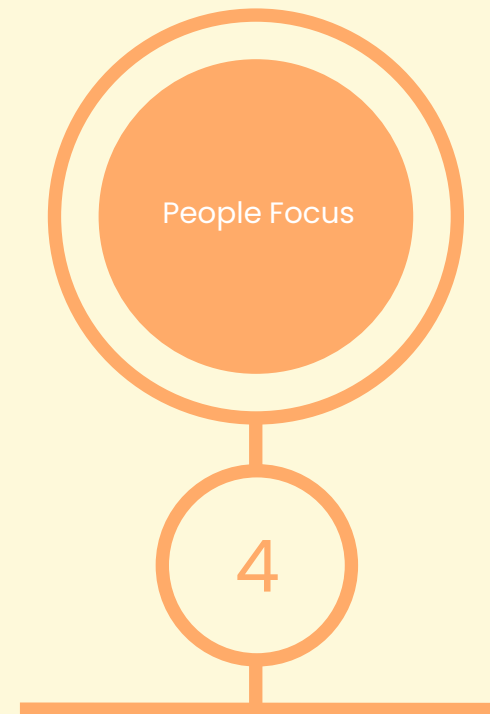


Advertising your website widely, Use Social Media (club Facebook page and Instagram pages) etc.



Community Talks

This includes talks in the community aimed at beginners.



Ensuring new members are given a warm welcome.

Being friendly and less rigid

Identifying and dealing with cliques.

Insight – Growing into a successful club

Need for change



You are aware of the real need for change to grow into a successful club

You need to allocate resource to participate in and support the change.

There must be a **willingness**, so the responsibility does not rest on too few shoulders.

Knowledge

To get your club's name out there, you need to have a **strong and appealing online presence**, attend local events, and publicize your activities etc

You will need to implement the desired skills and behaviours.

You will need resources allocated to **publicity, marketing or membership** etc. and to ensure the programme remains fresh.

To continue growing, you will need to sustain the changes and make sure there is a clear plan of reinforcement

Creating and preserving a warm and friendly club is key to maintaining member engagement

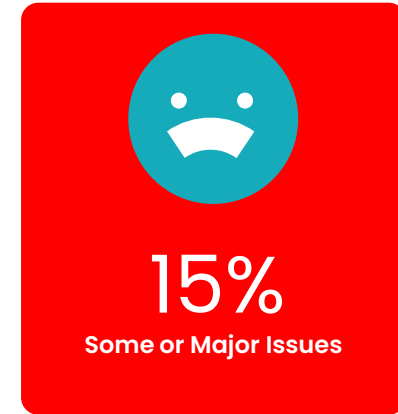
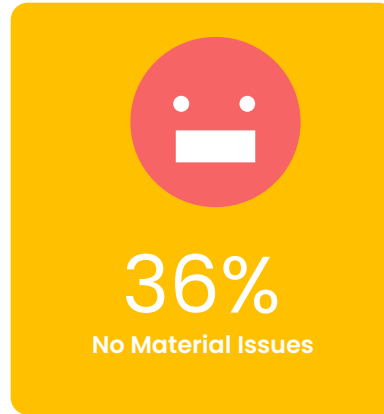
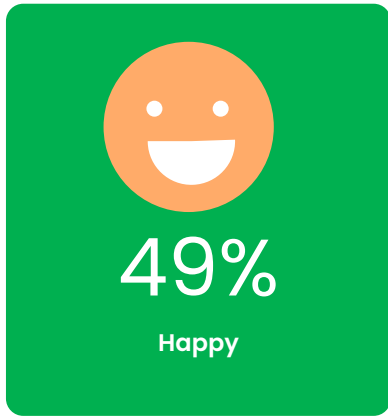


Member Satisfaction

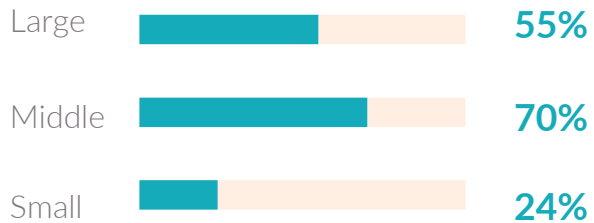


Member Satisfaction

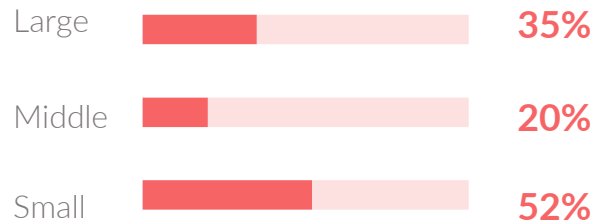
Overall, member satisfaction of SCPF clubs is good with about half of the clubs reporting that their members are happy. Smaller clubs are seeing most concerns



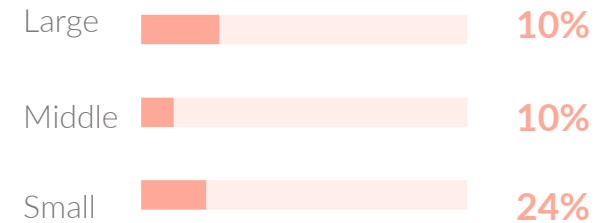
Large and Middle Size clubs have best member satisfaction



One third of clubs have no issues

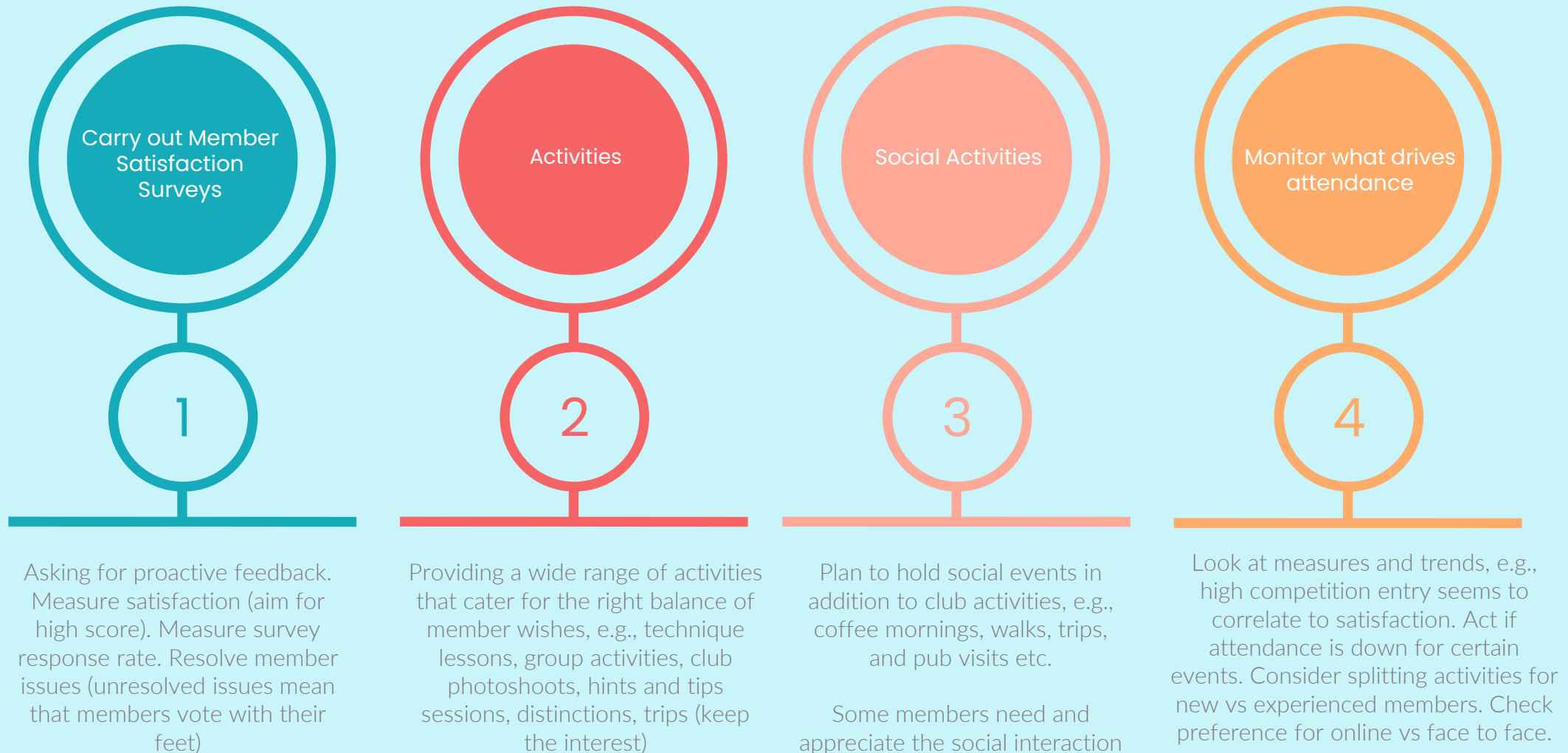


A quarter of small camera clubs report satisfaction issues



What impacts good member satisfaction?

A range of good suggestions from those clubs explaining why their members are happy





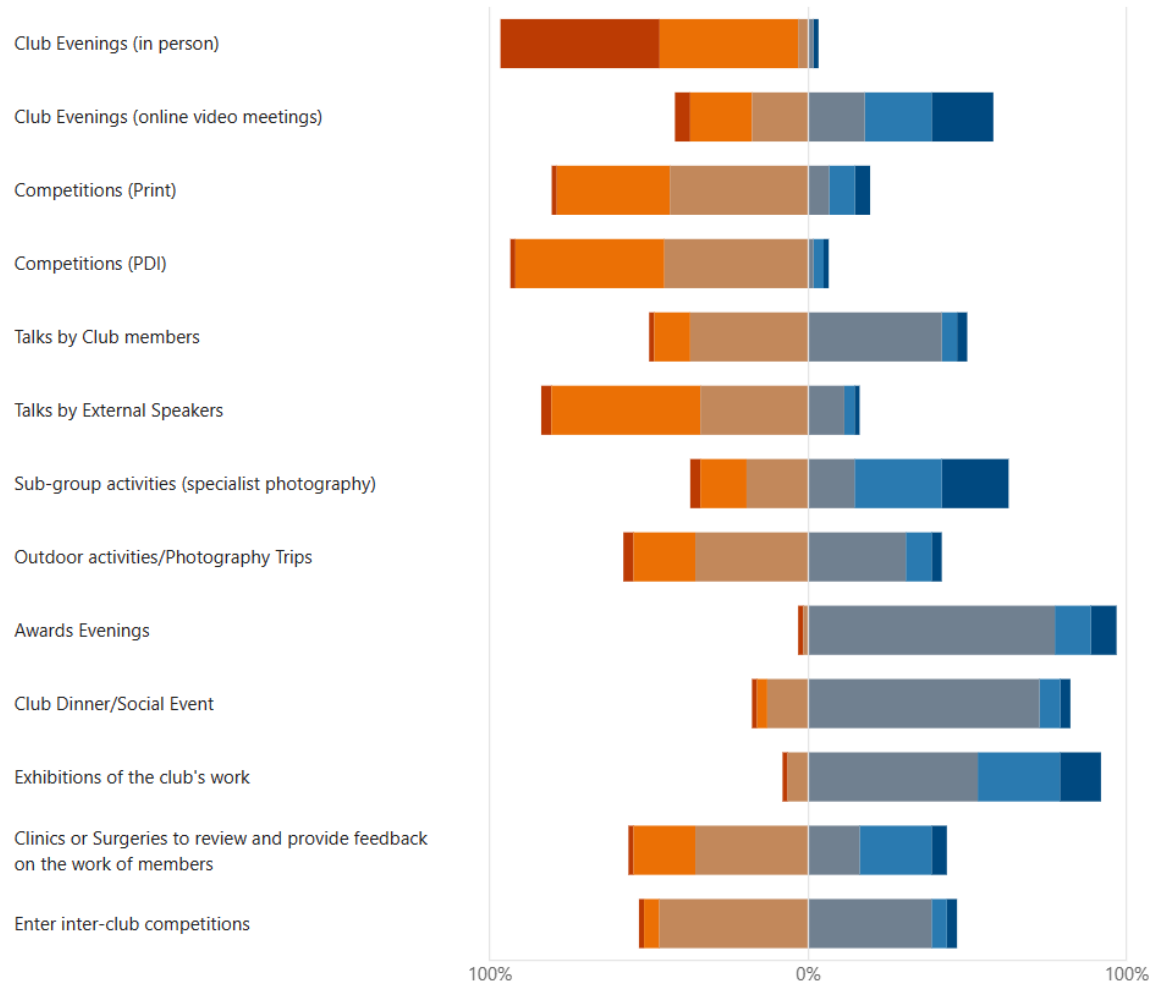
Activities

List of Preferred Activities and Rich Set of Ideas for Clubs to Consider

SCPF Club Activities

Frequency of typical activities run by clubs in the SCPF

■ Weekly ■ At least once per month ■ At least Quarterly ■ At least Annually ■ Never ■ N/A



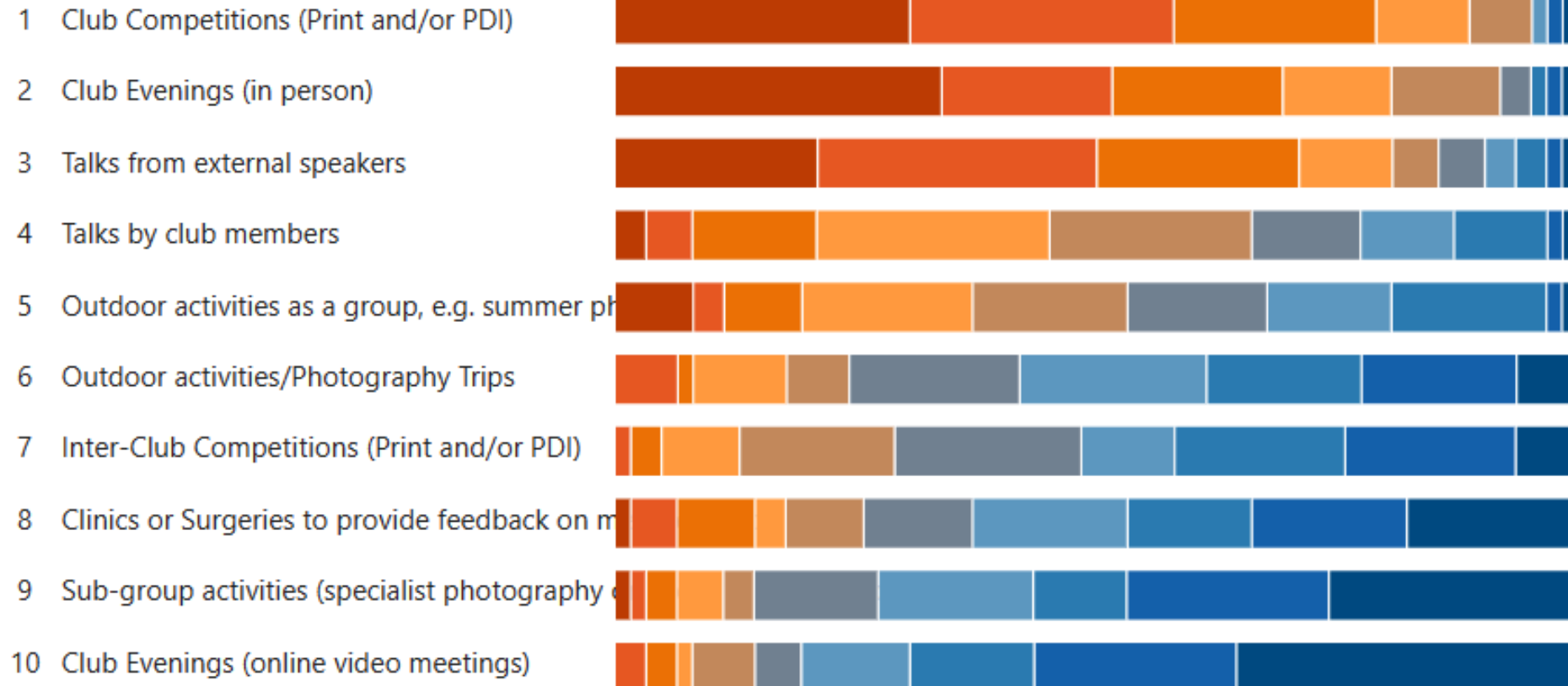
- Most clubs hold in person events
- Competitions are run by most clubs
- Most clubs hold regular/monthly talks
- Some clubs run extra activities
- Most clubs run some form of Exhibition

SCPF Club Activities

Stack Ranking of preferred activities run by clubs in SCPF (Subjective)

Rank Options

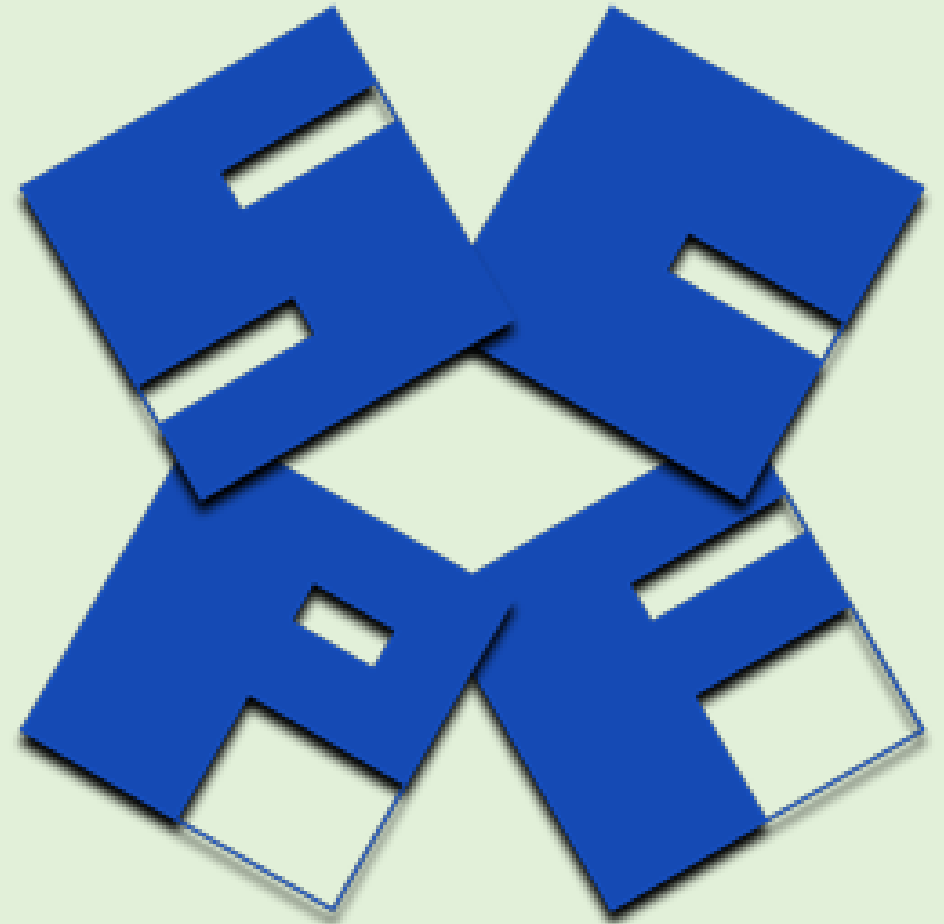
First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice



Other Activities to Consider

Many clubs run a wide range of activities to keep their members engaged and interested

Use this list to help develop a richer programme in your club



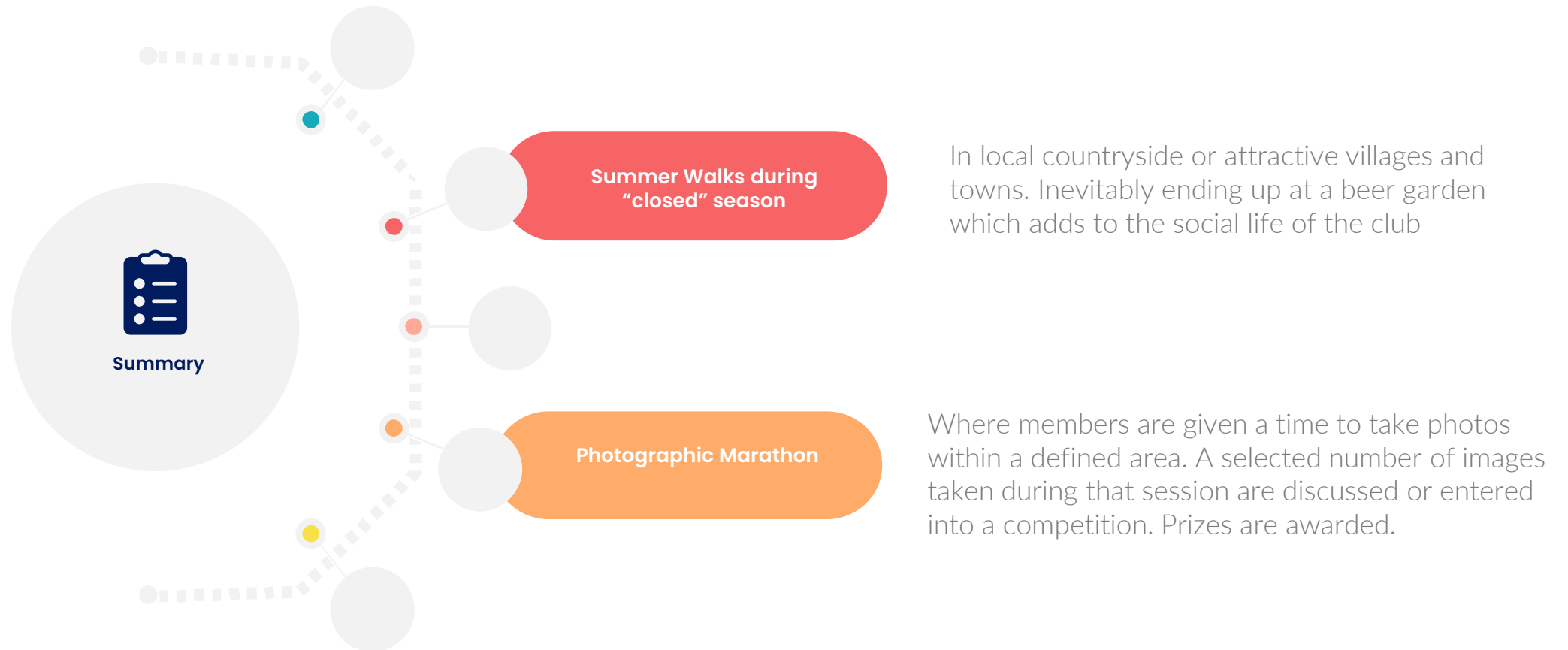
Other Activities to Consider (1/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



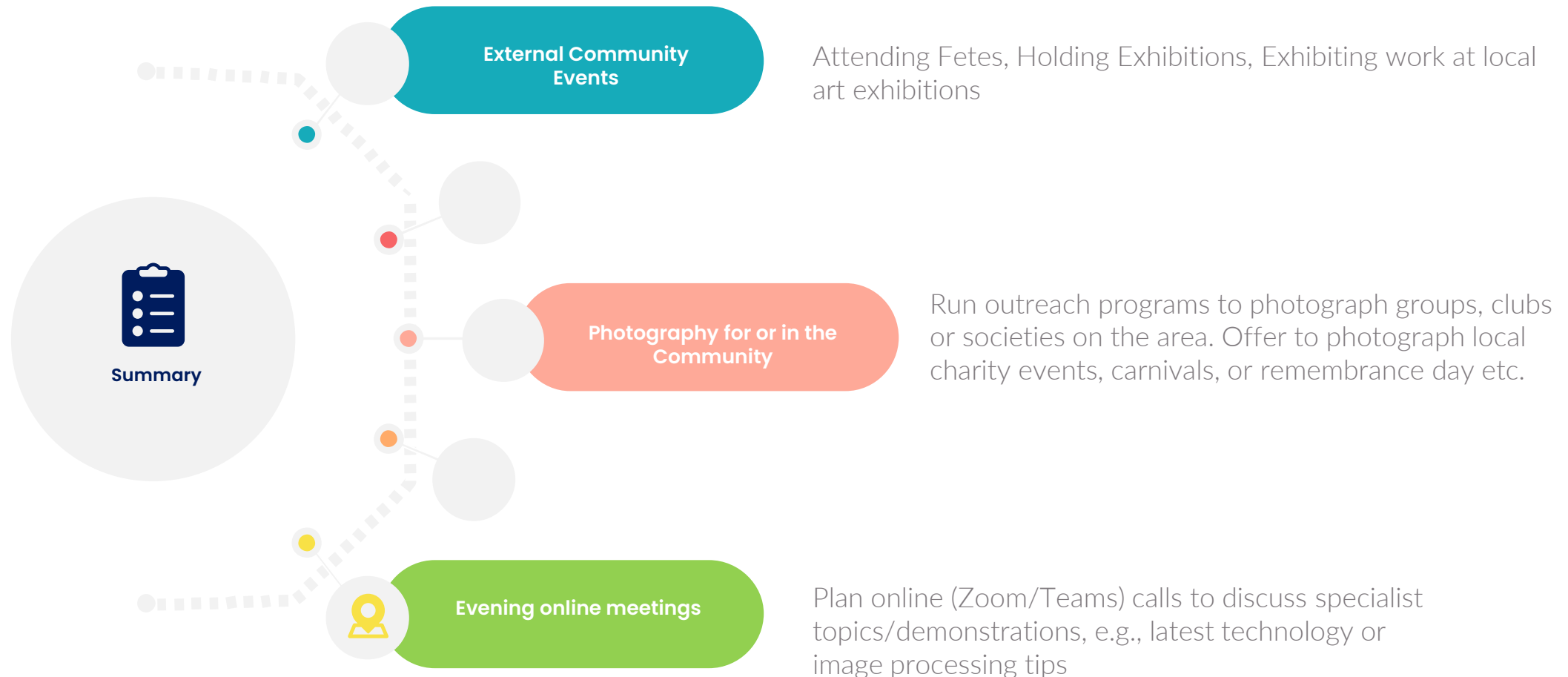
Other Activities to Consider (2/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



Other Activities to Consider (3/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



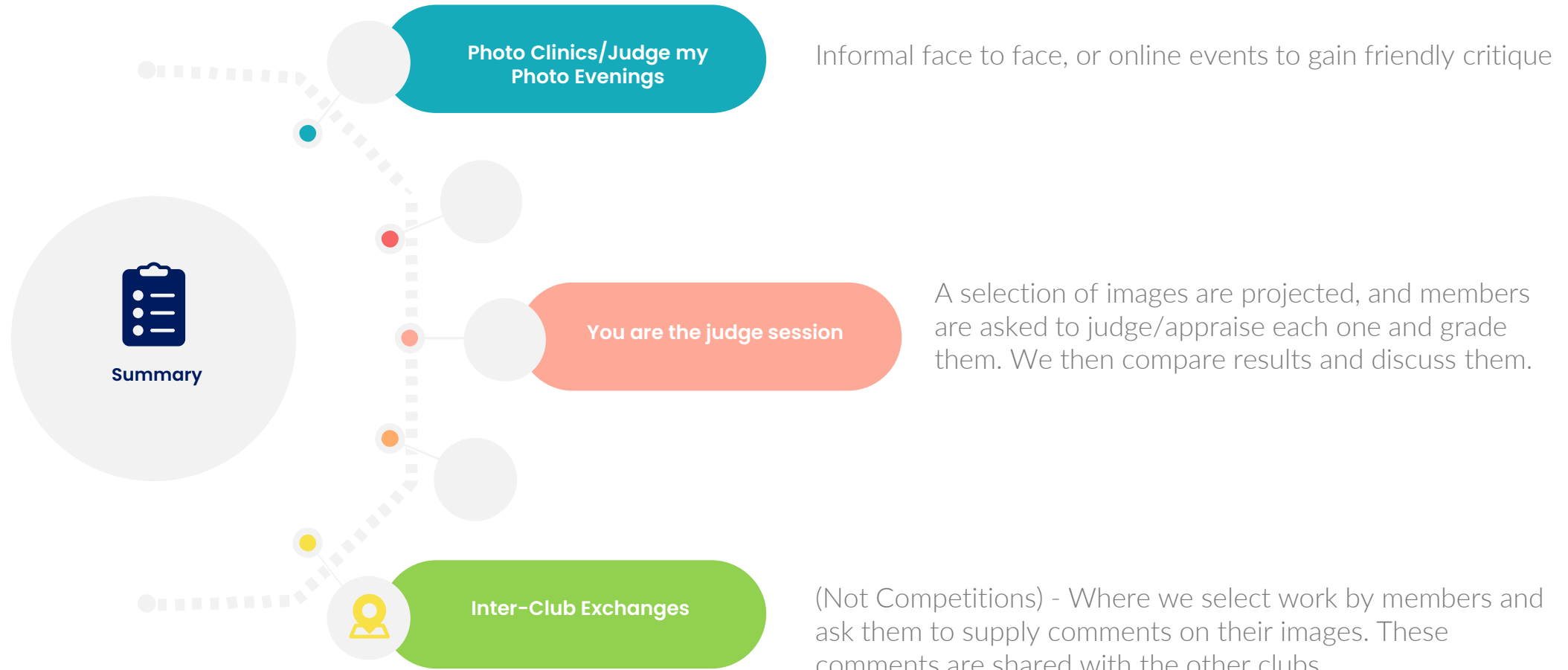
Other Activities to Consider (4/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



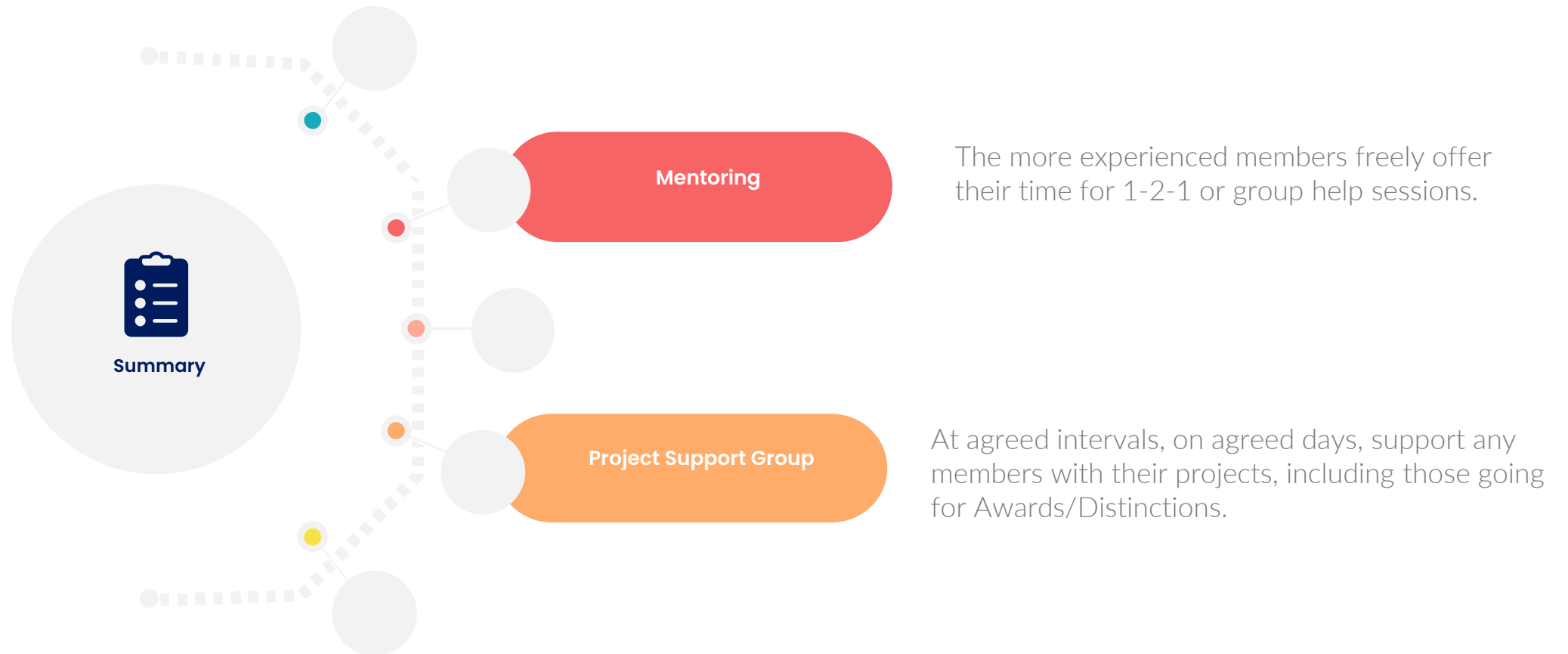
Other Activities to Consider (5/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



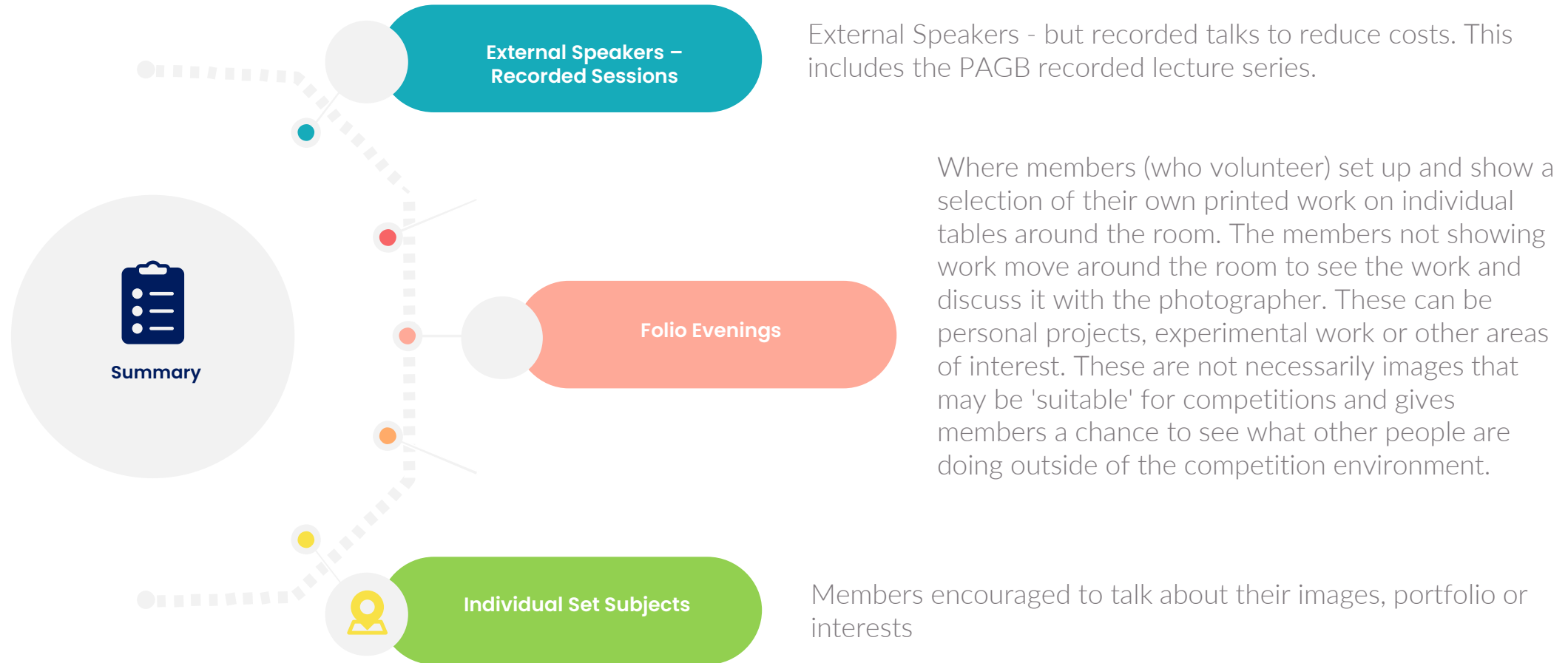
Other Activities to Consider (6/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



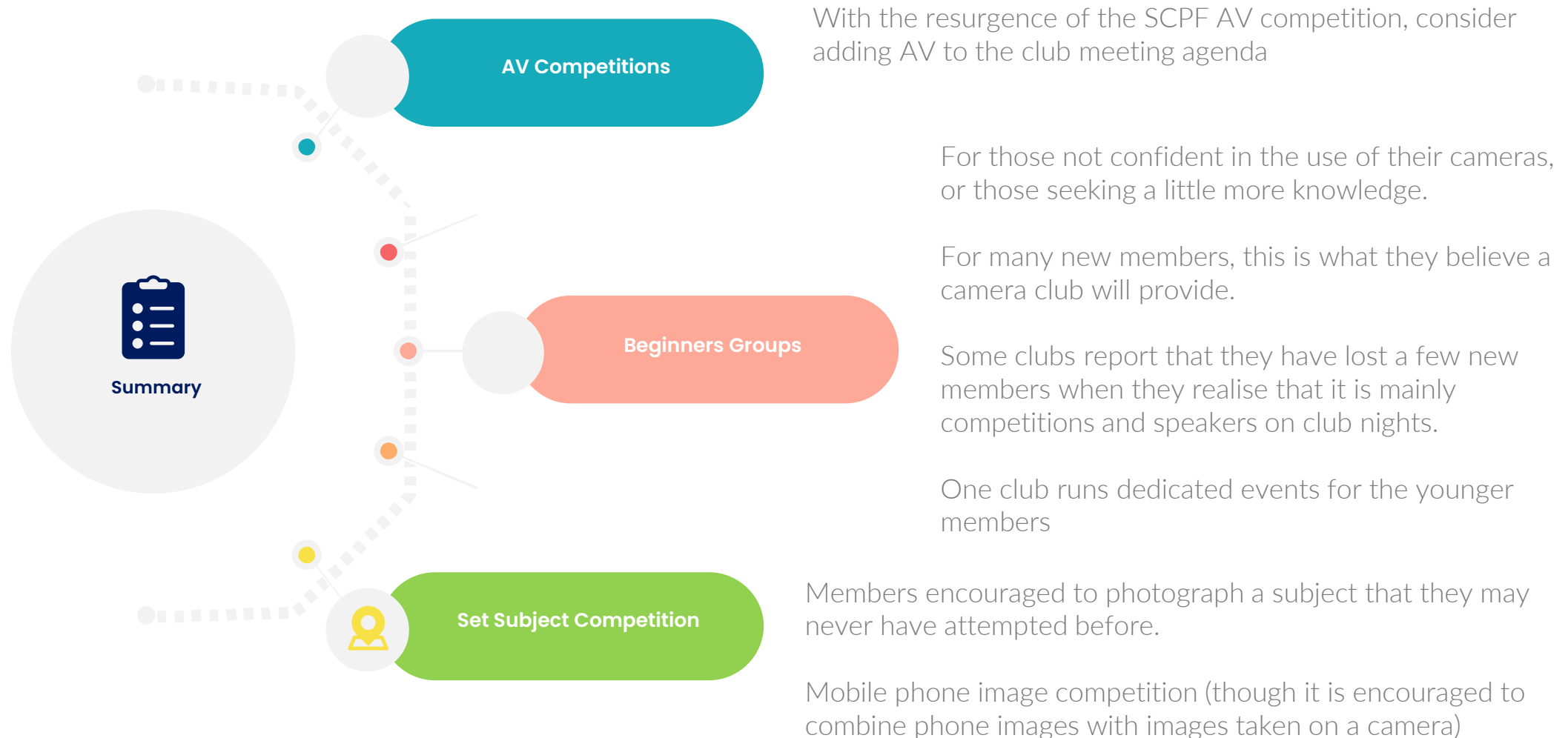
Other Activities to Consider (7/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



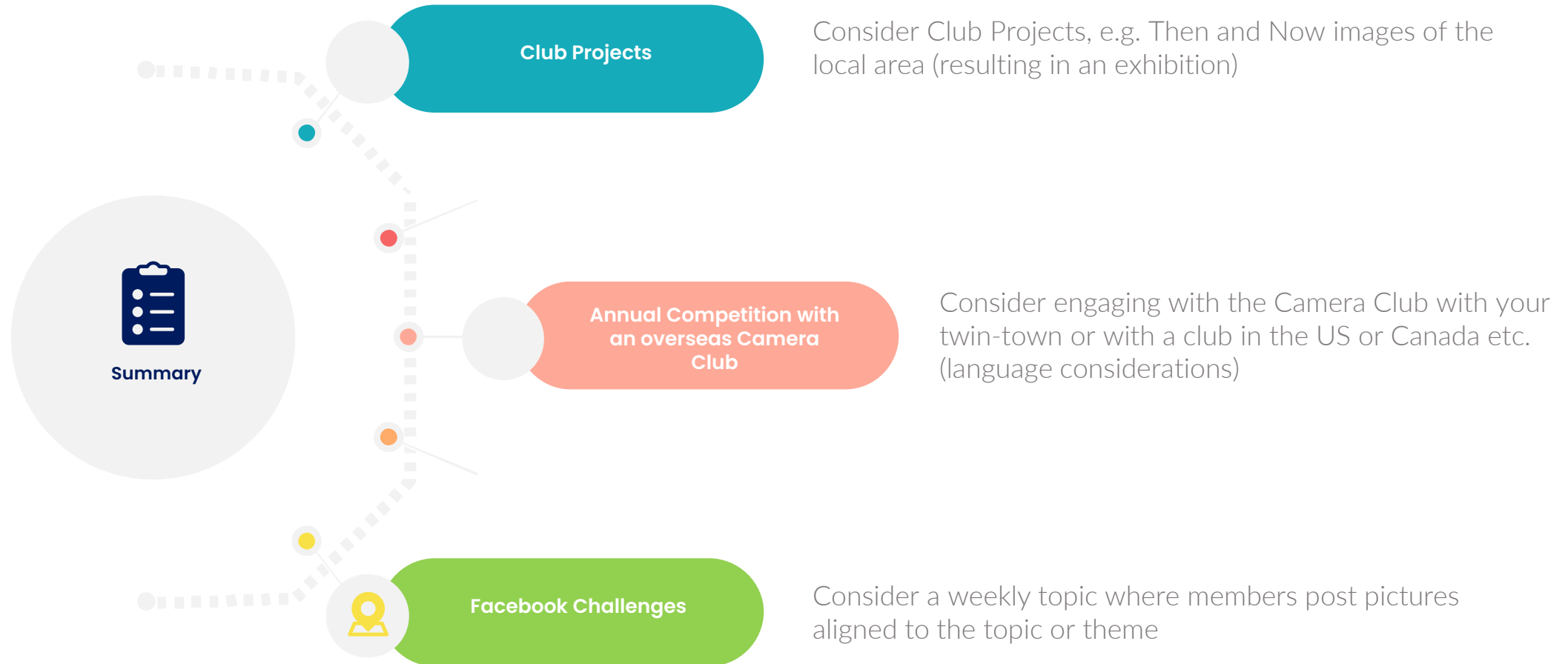
Other Activities to Consider (8/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



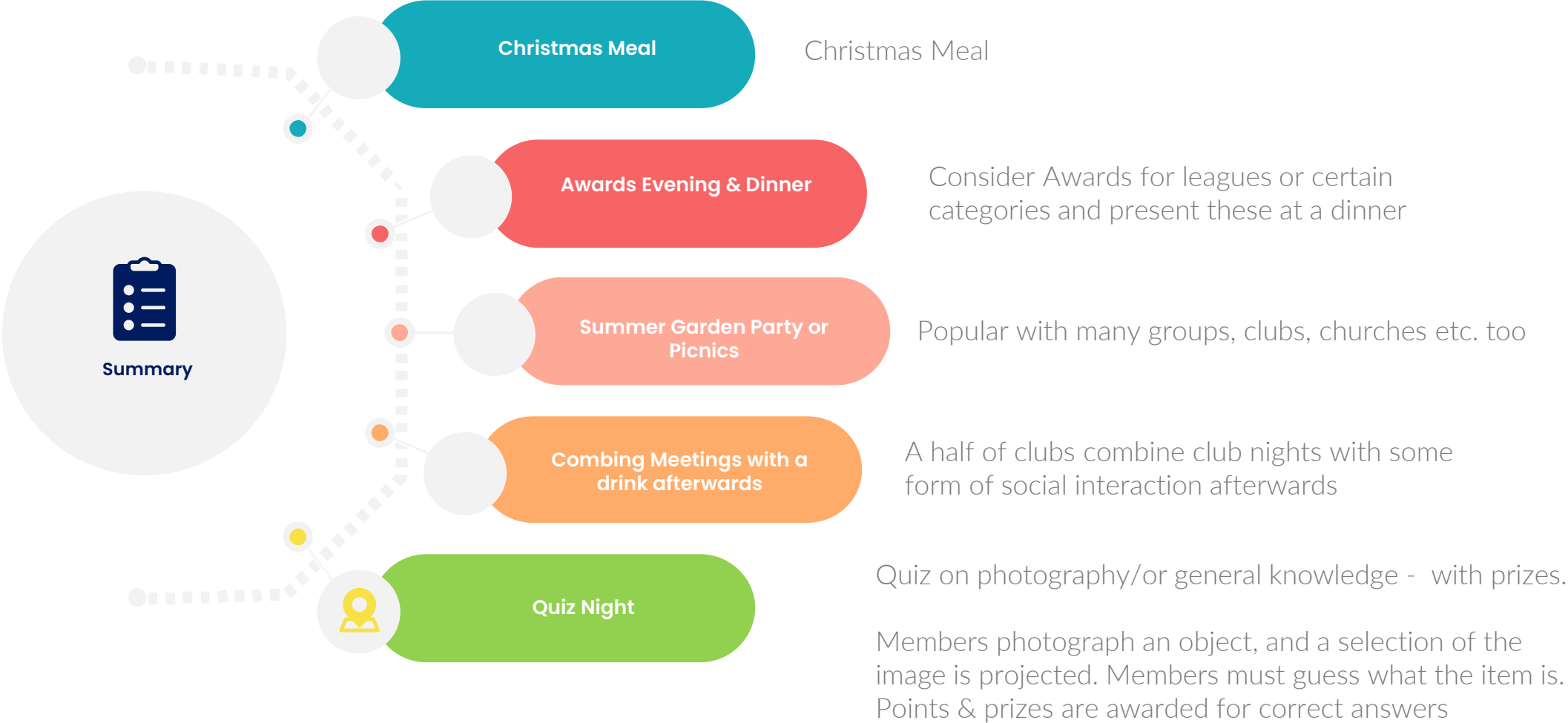
Other Activities to Consider (9/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



Social Activities to Consider (10/10)

There is a wide range of activities that clubs were able to share



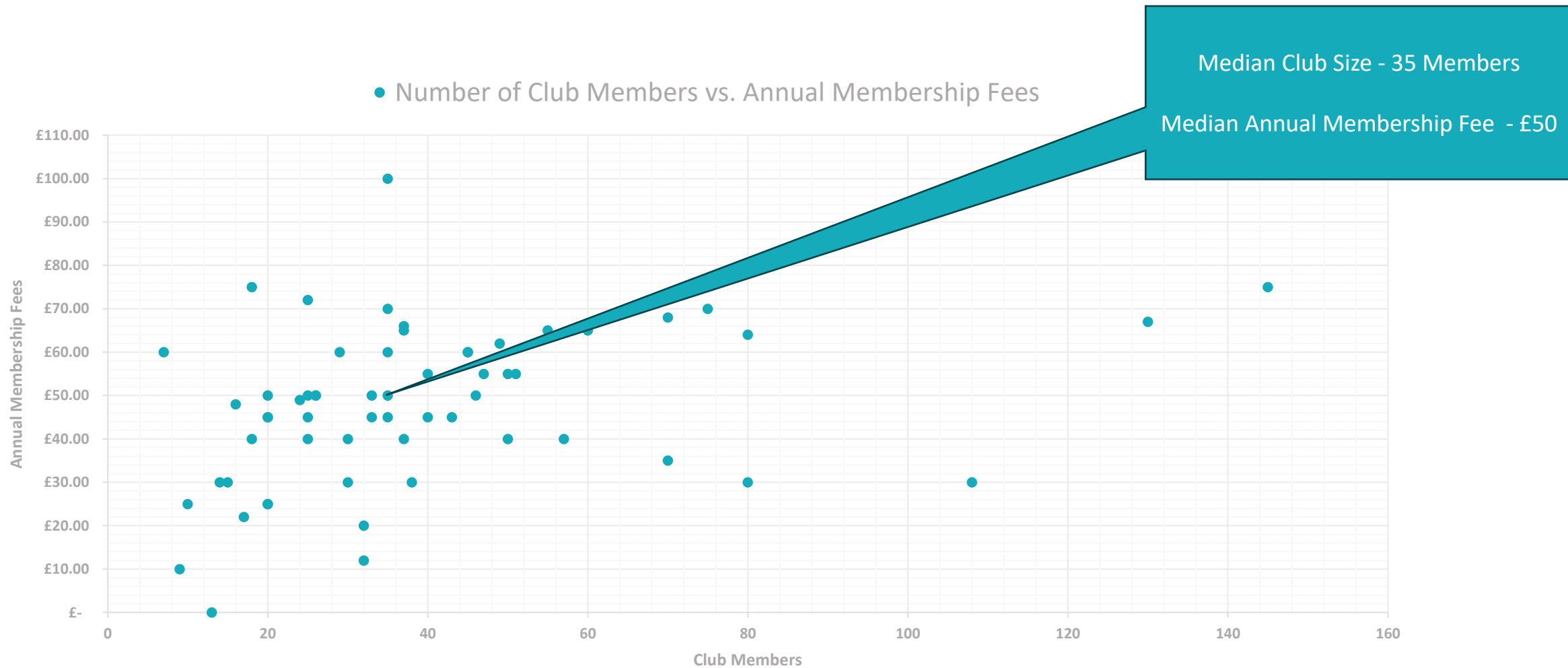
Finances

SCPF Survey



Finances – Members vs Fees

Plot of Reported Club members vs the Standard Membership Fees shows a wide set of data



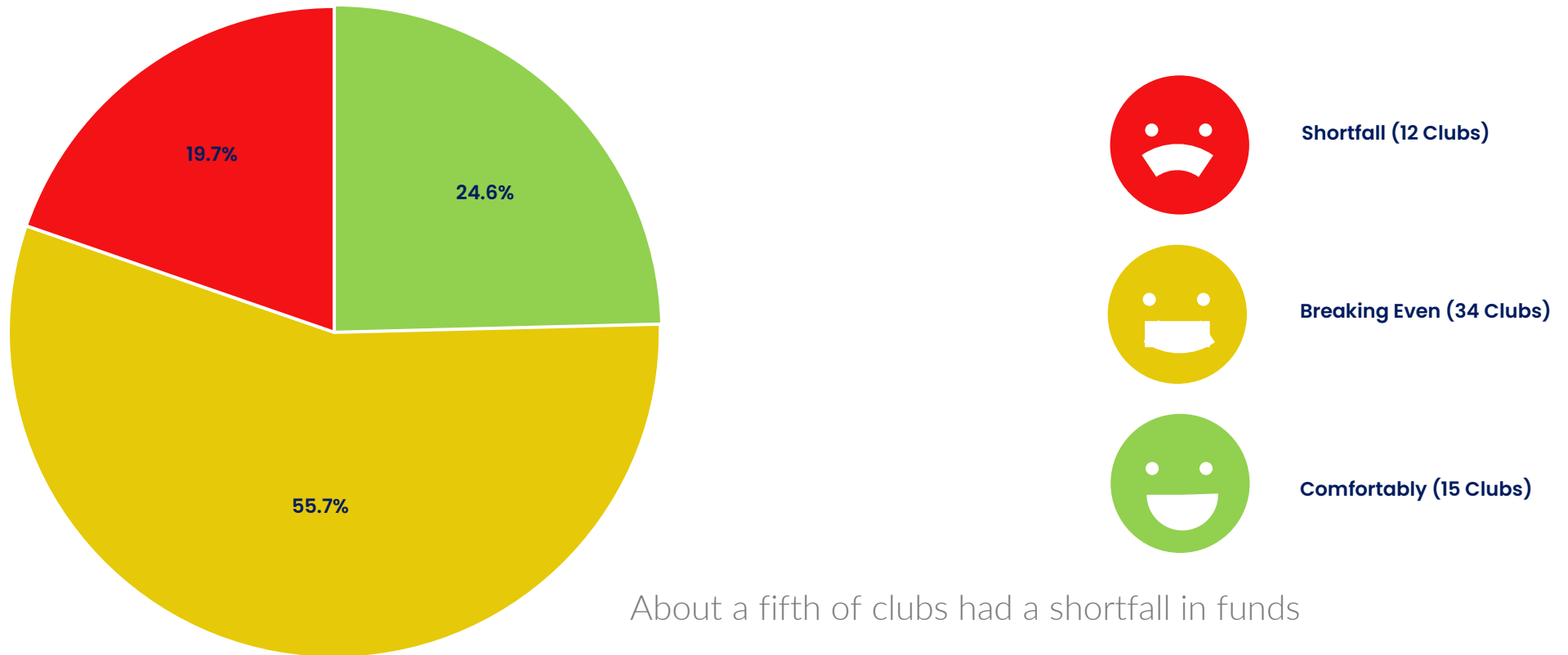
Finances – Members vs Fees

Analysis of Average Fees by Tier of Club Size – Larger Clubs Charge more, but maybe offer richer range of activities

Clubs	Avg 20 members	Avg 37 members	Avg 64 members	Avg 40, Med 35
Smallest Clubs	£33			
Middle Size Clubs		£48		
Largest Clubs			£63	
Average				£48

Finances – Do membership fees cover club activities

Most Clubs are dealing with tight finances



About a fifth of clubs had a shortfall in funds

There is no correlation between the state of the funds and the fees reported by these clubs, but shows that managing revenue vs costs is key



Guidance*

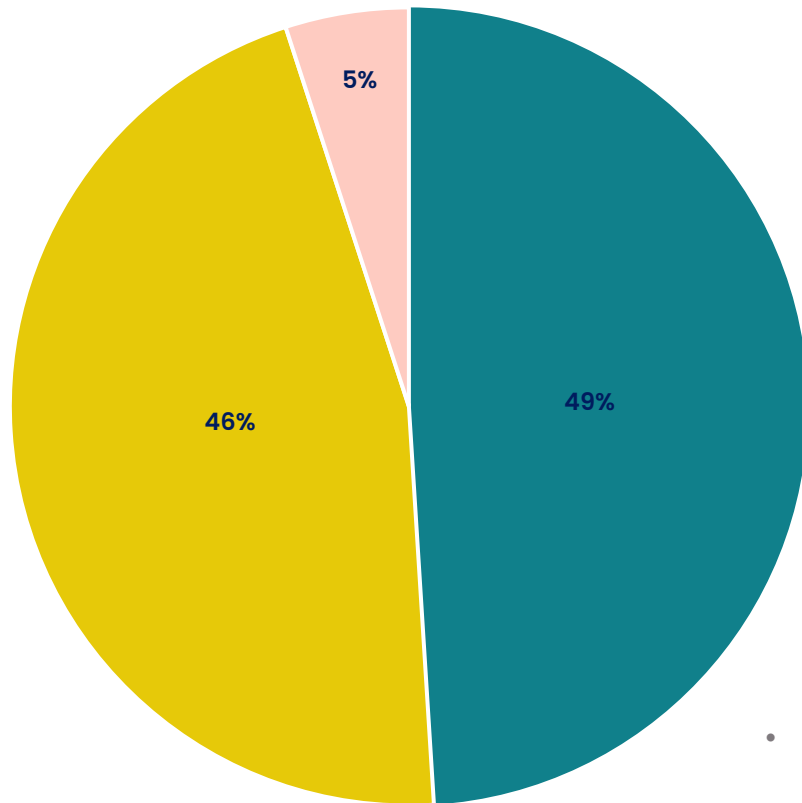
As part of accounting best practice, you should have enough monies in the group to run a full year without receiving any additional sources of revenue such as donations.

A third of clubs are currently running with a shortfall of funds. The average membership fees of these clubs is £41 and median membership is 27.

*Guidance from Audited Accounts of a local community group

Finances – Changes in Fees last year

About half of the SCPF clubs increased their fees in the last year, and 20% of the clubs increased the fess by >10%



Decrease



No Change



Increase

- 30 clubs increased their fees (to an avg of £54 per year). A fifth increased them by >10%
- 28 clubs made no, or marginal changes in fees (with one club introducing online meeting fees). Avg = £46
- 3 clubs (with an avg of 24 members) reduced their fees to an avg of £40. Note, one of these clubs has received a financial legacy

Impact on clubs that have increased their fees (Q22)

- Of the 30 clubs that increased fees, 15 (50%) felt there was **no or positive impact**
- 4 clubs reported a minor impact
- 11 clubs did not know the impact
- Only one club felt there would be a major impact of increasing fees on new member recruitment (£75 fee)
- Four clubs felt there may be a minor impact on recruitment from their fee changes (most charged over £50)



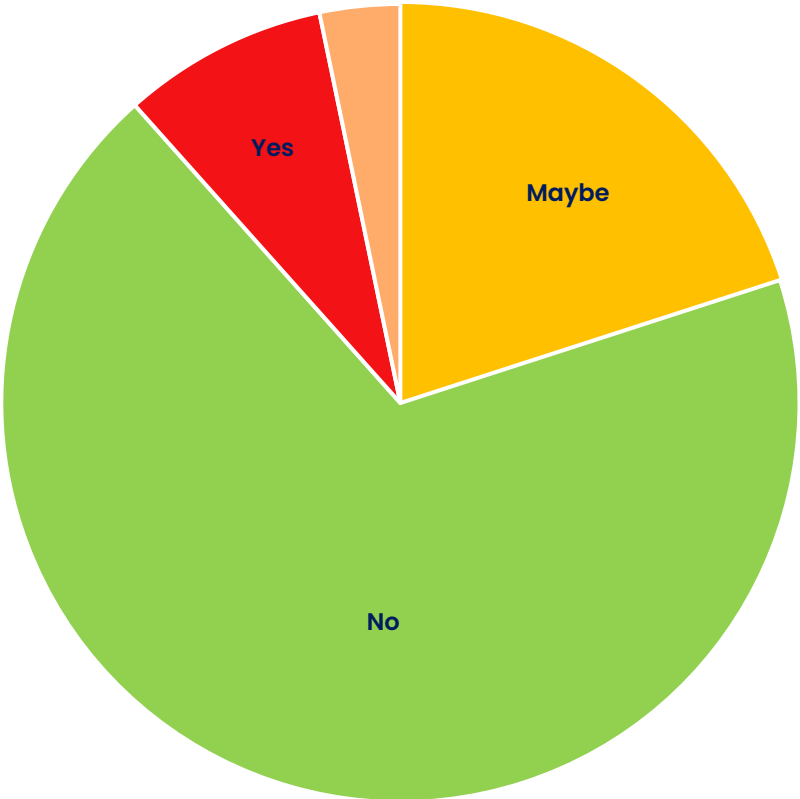
Impact of fee changes on recruitment (Q23)

- 6 of the 30 clubs that increased fees to an average of £54, reported that there may be some impact on recruiting new members.
- One club that made no change, but is charging £100 per year, felt the fees may cause some minor recruitment issues
- Two smaller clubs (avg. 23 members) who have reduced fees to an average of £37 reported that there may still be difficulty in attracting new members.



Impact of Fees on the exclusion of some members

Q24 Exclusion Risk based on fees



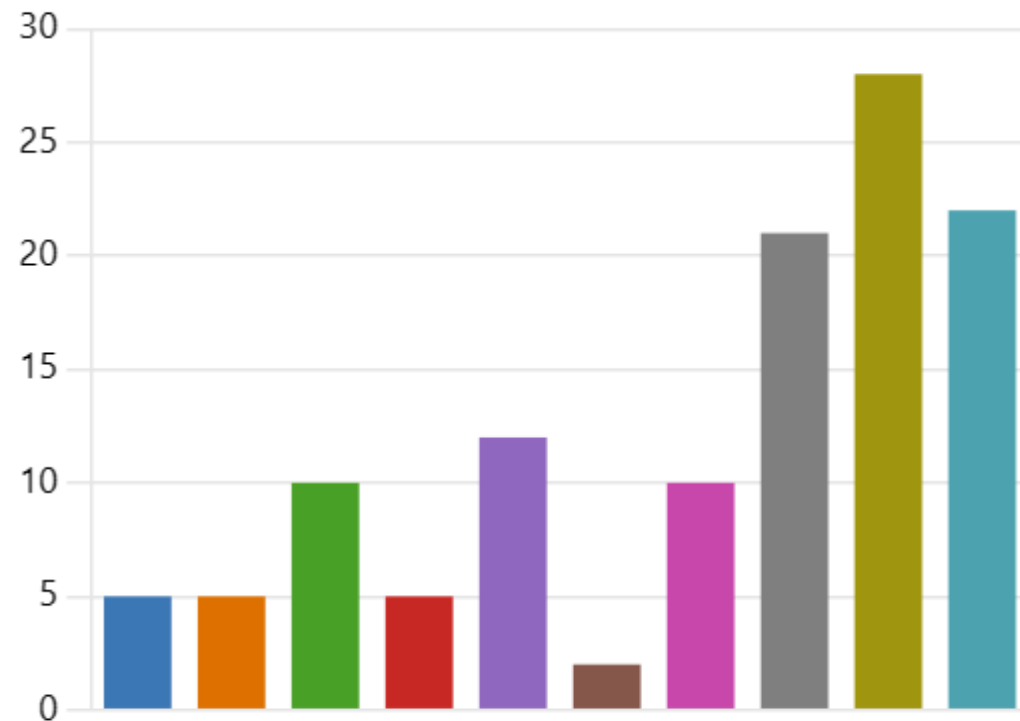
Exclusion Risk of Current Fees	No. of Clubs
No	41 Clubs
Maybe or Don't Know	12 Clubs
Yes	5 Clubs
Other	2 Clubs

- 41 clubs (67%) charging an average of £48 reported that their fees will not exclude members. Some use concession rates to mitigate the risk
- Of the 30 clubs that increased their fees, two thirds were expecting no exclusion risk
- 5 clubs charging an average of £50 reported that their fees may cause the exclusion of some members

Finances – Many Clubs rely on additional revenue streams

Consider looking carefully at new sources of revenue. This may include local council grants, company sponsorship or even National Lottery Grants

Grants (including local council, ...	5
Sponsorship	5
Donations	10
Legacies	5
Individual meeting entrance fees	12
Extra charges for external speak...	2
Exhibition entry fees	10
Provision of refreshments	21
Raffles	28
Other	22



Note: During the zoom call on 25th February with SCPF members, one club highlighted the potential tax implications from Corporate Sponsorship. We will check the guidance and confirm our findings

Viability



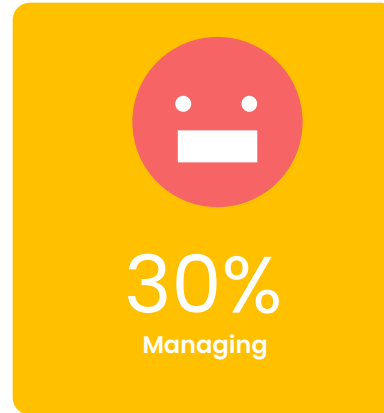
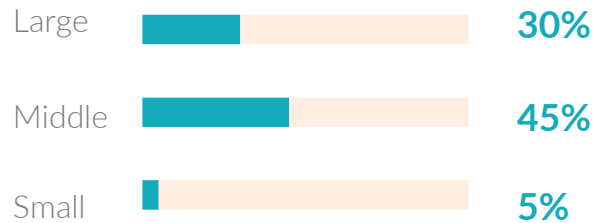
Viability

Rating of the overall viability of clubs, considering member numbers, the activities the club provides, and the state of club finances.

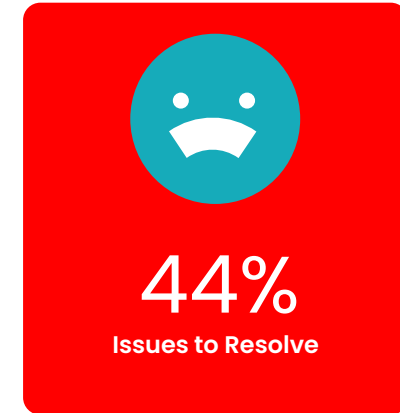
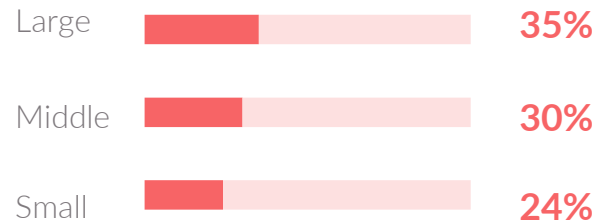
Almost half of clubs (27 clubs) have issues to resolve, and smaller clubs are seeing most concerns



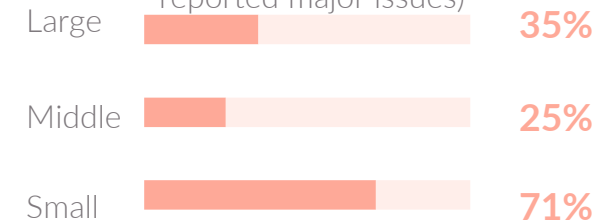
Almost a third of clubs (16) report no issues with their viability



About a third of clubs (18) are managing with no material issues



Over 70% of the smaller clubs report issues. 2 clubs (small) reported major issues)



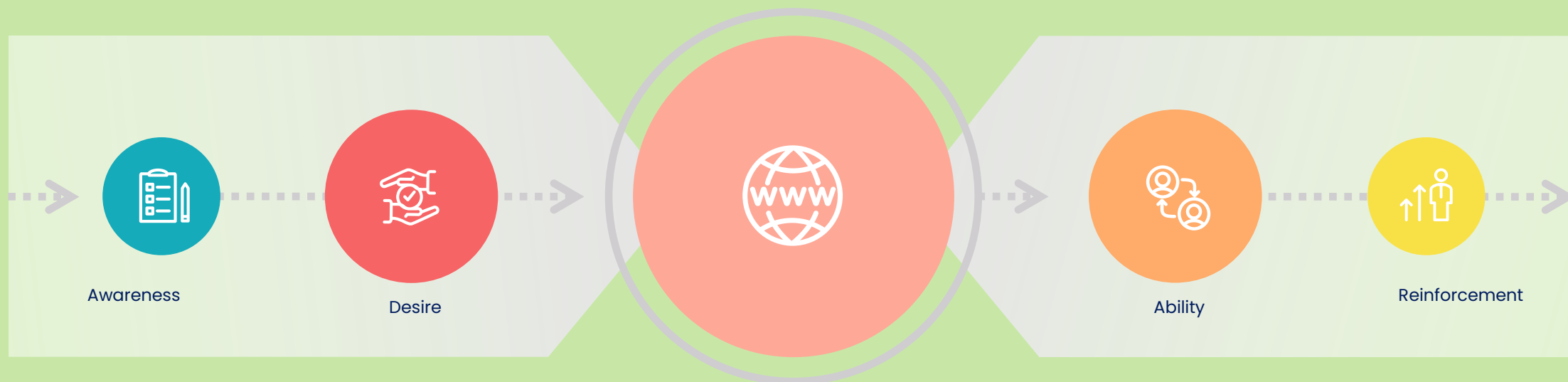
Viability – Observations/Comments

Distillation of feedback on the Viability Scores seem to align to four categories

Clubs	Finances	Governance	Membership	Activities
Clubs reporting issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fees too low & no longer sustainable (recognize that fee rises are needed) 2. Recognition that high reserves but low income is not sustainable 3. Costs (venue and speakers) are increasing and impacting the sustainability of the club. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased governance needed to track derailed finance 2. Lack of members to volunteer to run the club or join the committee (unwillingness) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reliant on only a core set of members (critical mass) 2. Inability to recruit new and younger members to replace dwindling numbers (and ageing members) 3. Reducing members is impacting revenue and viability 4. Reducing meeting attendance impacting feasibility to use the venue 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need to review & improve variability of the programme 2. Need to revive face to face meetings (vs zoom) 3. Lack of members is impacting viability of competitions
Clubs that are Managing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining subs vs. sufficient reserves 2. Recognizing the fine balance between fees and club needs 3. Managing costs, but having to pick and choose (e.g., external speakers) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong leadership required to ensure right investment in club. 2. Too few people willing to help manage activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition that new members needed 2. Avoiding cliques or groups forming. 	
Clubs that are happy with their viability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Several years of strong membership 2. Strong reserve of money/viable financial position 3. Member donations/gifts from committed members 4. Managing costs inc. rent 5. Aim to apply for annual grants 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong leadership to track revenue vs costs and ensure right investment in club 2. Steadfast and strong committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong core of committed members 2. Focus on recruitment 3. Strong engagement, happiness, vibrant club 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Variability of activities to cater for a wide range of aspects of photography 2. Kudos for success in leagues

Insight – Growing into a viable club

Need for change (Using the ADKAR model)



You are aware of the real need for change to grow into a viable club

This is especially true if you are a small club

A need to create a **robust club governance** that is focused on **financial strength** (revenue vs costs and creating a strong reserve of funds), **growing membership numbers**, and ensuring that members are offered a warm and friendly environment with a **varied, engaging and interesting range of activities**

Knowledge

Evaluate carefully what needs to be done to make your club more viable.

This will be a challenge for some clubs. Finding the key resources with the time and with the right knowledge is key.

You will need committed resources allocated to:

1. Governance with a steadfast committee
2. Finance management (inc. fund raising)
3. Membership & Publicity
4. Programme management

To continue growing, into a viable and sustainable club, you will need to maintain the committed resources to support the changes and make sure there is a clear plan of reinforcement

Good Luck!

As photographers, we often lack the motivation to keep taking images, something all artists struggle with from time to time. The same applies to running a camera club.

Looking at the inspirational work and activities of successful camera clubs can sometimes give us the boost we need but can also impact our enthusiasm to succeed. In such situations, the extra kick of energy and inspiration can come in the form of seeing that other clubs that have gone through similar struggles....

Anon...

