

CBA Research Bulletin

Taking the temperature of grassroots archaeological groups today

Findings and recommendations

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

This report summarises research carried out with 257 groups and societies representing the grassroots archaeology sector, 133 of which are organisational members of the CBA, 121 of which are non-members, and three of which are no longer operating. The research took the form of online surveys, one-to-one discussions, and group discussions through a series of webinars.

The aims of the research were as follows:

- To understand the current state of community and grassroots archaeology
- To facilitate further research into the state of grassroots archaeology
- To draw from the findings to understand the implications for the CBA and for the wider grassroots archaeological sector

The research content responded to, and was a continuation of previous research findings carried out by the CBA in 2018 and in 2021.

The CBA are grateful to Historic England for their support of this project.

1.2 Summarised findings

The research findings are described in Chapter 3, and may be summarised as follows:

- **Membership numbers are largely staying the same or going down.**
- Demographically, **the groups' membership is above the age of 60 and largely White.**
- Collectively, the groups' activities are many and varied, contributing significantly to the archaeological sector as a whole, and to society's understanding of the UK's heritage and of human history generally. However, **the level of activities has gone down in recent years**, with the ceasing of more costly activities in particular, such as digs and some types of fieldwork.
- There is a heartening number of groups undertaking activity in partnership of other heritage sector bodies, such as museums, local HERs, and archives. There are also cross-sector partnerships with the community, education and natural environment sectors in particular.
- The strongly held aspirations to work with youth, health and arts sectors is encouraging. However, these aspirations are not yet being realised, with a lack of capacity being the most cited reason for this.
- **The groups' challenges may be summarised as: an aging membership, an aging volunteer cohort; not enough volunteers to sustain a healthy level of activity, a lack of expertise and access to equipment, a lack of training in several relevant**

areas, and in many cases, a lack of funding. Feeling siloed away from commercial and academic archaeology sub-sectors was another finding to emerge through one-to-one discussions.

- The groups' **challenges when viewed objectively** may be extrapolated as being: **a narrow, representational demographic leading to entrenched attitudes and practices; a lack of understanding of how cross-sector working can lead to a potentially younger membership and routes to a wider reach generally; a need for training in specific areas, and a need to shift the perception of archaeology** away from activity-led practice (digs and fieldwork) to more accessible, less expensive ways to engage with the heritage.
- Also viewed objectively, there is clearly **a lack of understanding of the relationship between developing audiences and attracting new members**, given the low priority indication most groups allocated to 'audience development'.
- **Support required** is commensurate with the challenges faced, and clearly falls into four main areas: **reaching a younger audience to attract a younger membership and volunteers, more members, more volunteers, and funding/fundraising.**
- **Factors that drove groups to close include: not enough volunteers; a lack of confidence and expertise**, and in one case, **a shift in strategic direction** by the group's 'host body' which no longer saw a match the group's own activities.

1.2 Recommendations

A set of strategic themes has emerged from the findings of the research. These need to be addressed to help support the vitality and growth of grassroots archaeology, to prevent further loss in numbers and to better understand how the CBA can act as the sector support lead for grassroots archaeology.

They are in no order of hierarchy, and in many cases, intersect with each other:

- Audience research and development
- Engaging younger people
- Creating a live network of groups and societies
- Supporting the sector through training
- Promoting inclusivity and diversity
- Working towards a carbon net zero future
- Fostering cross-sector working
- Shifting the perception of archaeology
- The role of the CBA in transforming the sector, including advocacy and funding

2 Introduction

2.1 Research context

The Council for British Archaeology (CBA), with funding from Historic England, wished to undertake a rapid survey of community and grassroots archaeology, to better support grassroots archaeology and active participation in archaeology.

Understanding the current state of community and grass roots archaeology is essential for the ongoing health of the groups that constitute this sector, for the funding bodies that support it financially, and for the CBA in its ability to represent, support and enable both its organisational members and the wider network of archaeological societies.

The findings presented in this report enable a greater knowledge of the current state of archaeological societies, identifying opportunities for change, skills development and growth within their existing framework and creating greater resilience for the future. Extrapolating from these findings, the report also identifies key areas for development, which are outlined in Section 4, below.

About the CBA

The CBA was founded in 1944 to champion archaeology in post-war Britain. It emerged out of a series of conferences seeking to understand the opportunities post-war reconstruction of the UK historic towns and cities would present. It took on the mantle of the Congress of Archaeological Societies, which was established 1888 to bring together local archaeology and history societies throughout the UK. Many members of the Congress were set up in the mid-19th century in response to the archaeological discoveries arising from the construction of the UK's railway network, and have collectively become bedrock of community and grassroots archaeology in the UK for well over 150 years. This makes the network inherited by the CBA one of the oldest such heritage networks in the UK and its reach and strength is recognised for its importance across Europe. The oldest of these county societies, the Sussex Archaeological Society, celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2021.

Archaeological groups and societies are part of the CBA's DNA, and at its height CBA membership consisted of over 500 organisations, societies, and member groups. Today that number stands at just over 250.

Archaeological and heritage groups have been fundamental in shaping the CBA

which itself has shaped the structure and interests of archaeology in the UK today. In particular throughout the 70s and 80s, voluntary-led excavations were the backbone of the rescue archaeology movement. When this evolved into commercial archaeology in the 1990s many of those volunteers became professional archaeologists who in turn sustained archaeological groups and societies through voluntary activities. As commercial archaeology flourished during the 2000s this relationship started to change, and the CBA has seen the number of organisational members decrease since this time and a less integrated relationship between commercial, academic and grassroots archaeology .

In the mid-1990s CBA membership was expanded to individuals and the organisation now has over 3,500 individual members and over 1,500 subscribers to *British Archaeology* magazine. The CBA also supports over 2,000 members of the Young Archaeologists' Club and over 600 volunteer leaders.

The CBA has five core activities, namely:

- CBA membership
- CBA Events, most notably the annual Festival of Archaeology
- Casework and advocacy
- Publications and communications
- CBA Youth Engagement, through the coordination of the Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC) and the recent formation of a Youth Advisory Board.

The CBA also works closely with key partners, stakeholders and community groups across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2.2 Research purpose and content

The project's aims were initially twofold:

- To understand the current state of community and grassroots archaeology; and
- To facilitate further research into the state of grassroots archaeology

As the research data is essential in shaping the CBA's own plans as the body supporting and driving the grassroots archaeological sector, a third project aim was included soon after the project began, specifically:

- To draw from the findings to understand the implications for the CBA and for the wider grassroots archaeological sector

The research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current state of the groups' membership numbers and activities?
2. Is their membership stable, increasing or declining?
3. What information do they have about the demographics of their current membership?
4. What activities are they undertaking?
5. What challenges are they facing?
6. What kinds of support do they need to face the future with confidence?
7. In the case of groups which have closed, what factors drove their decision to close?

And additionally, in response to the third, subsequent research aim listed above:

8. How can the CBA support the sector in response to these findings?

2.3 Building on previous research findings

2.3.1 *Supporting Community Archaeology in the UK: Results of a 2018 Survey*

In 2018, the CBA undertook a survey of archaeological groups and societies which sought to identify the following areas:

- the current range of activities carried out in the Community Archaeology Sector
- which activities are not carried out and why
- learning and development, specifically:
 - the training taken place to date
 - future requirements
 - identify a peer to peer training network
 - ascertain if an accreditation programme was required
 - identify what motivates people to take part in archaeology
- the requirement for a community archaeology digital resource

The survey received 866 responses, of which 693 were statistically valid.

The findings revealed that while there is a wide range of activity carried out by people of different ages throughout the sector, there had been a dramatic decline in available training during the previous eight years. There had also continued to be a low ethnic diversity within community archaeology. In addition, a distinct lack of cohesion was found amongst professionals, specialists and individuals who were unable to network, receive advice or understand industry procedures.

Key recommendations centred around more local training required in all areas, an accreditation scheme and a comprehensive digital provision providing up-to-date information about national, regional and local activities, training, and procedures.

2.3.2 CBA – *Adult Community and Voluntary Heritage Group Development in Wales*, November 2021

This research sought to map the state of all community heritage, archaeology, local history and related groups across Wales. Around 450 groups were contacted by email, with 62 responding. The research questions had an emphasis on the impact of Covid-19 on the groups, and also explored other areas, such as funding and ongoing challenges.

The findings revealed that across the country, and across different types of groups, there were clear, common themes. These were:

- The ageing demographics;
- The lack of ability to recruit younger or more diverse members;
- The lack of ability, time, or resources to develop an online presence for groups either on their own websites or on social media.
- The unique challenges of returning to activities post Covid-19 and finding ways to both reassure and re-engage with members of their safety.
- The loss of several traditional funding options and sources of support;
- A low take-up of using the Heritage Exchange Newsletter, which is intended to facilitate communication and engagement.

Key recommendations focussed on:

- improving communications and access to information both between the groups, and with stakeholder agencies, including through a comprehensive database;
- the creation of an online ‘hub’ of resources for use by the groups;
- a programme on training including on governance and recruitment, digital skills, and online content creation; and
- a new, salaried position responsible for community heritage liaison for Wales.

2.4 Methodology for ‘Taking the temperature of grassroots archaeological groups today’

Online survey

An online survey to grassroots archaeological and heritage societies and groups was sent first to the CBA’s organisational membership on 29 September 2023, reaching 250 groups and organisations. 133 responses were received. The second tranche was focused on non-CBA organisational members. This was undertaken as an open call on social media and via the CBA’s network of contacts and partner organisations over a three-week period ending on 20 November 2023. 121 responses were received, making

the total number of groups reached 254. The findings from these surveys are reported on under section 3.1.2 below.

Members were reached through CBA's mailing list, non-members through a call-out on social media, and communications sent through CBA's advocacy network which included the Heritage Alliance, Historic England, Archaeology Scotland, CiFA's community archaeology special interest group, and others.

One-to-one discussions

The survey included an invitation for a follow-up one-to-one discussion with a CBA representative. 111 of the organisations' representatives expressed an interest in this, and 22 online or telephone interviews were subsequently conducted. The findings from these discussions are explored under section 3.2 below.

To date, 64 of the 111 groups have been offered the opportunity to attend a webinar given by CBA's Executive Director, which included discussion. The main points raised at the webinar, which was repeated three times and attended by a total of 15 group representatives, contribute to the findings in this report and can be found under section 3.3 below.

One-to-one discussions were also held with three that have ceased to operate, which came about after a direct call-out generated by the CBA. The discussions centred around the challenges faced by the groups prior to their closure, and any support they would have liked to address those challenges. Their responses are summarised under section 3.6 below.

Depth interviews with CBA stakeholders

Another valuable set of data included in this report resulted from 10 in-depth interviews conducted with CBA's Stakeholder group. This group was convened for its proposed project 'Reconnecting Archaeology' which at time of writing is being assessed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a potential Resilience Fund grant. It consists of representatives from three regional CBA organisations, three community archaeology projects, and four established archaeological societies.

In total, the views of 257 grassroots archaeology group representatives contributed to this report through the online survey, with 47 of them contributing further through one-to-one or group discussions. The input of two key staff members from Historic England are also reflected in the recommendations relating to Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (EDEI) and Environmental Sustainability, respectively.

Research findings and implications

The society was once very active but it's most active members have died and the society is now a mostly dwindling group of elderly 'armchair' enthusiasts

Lack of volunteer help in general. The bulk of activities are provided by a small and aging group of members.

We are trying to engage with a younger (early 60s vs late 70s) membership and encourage their involvement in the management and delivery of activities

Our group is trying new modes of engaging people, including the creation of online lectures.

Our group has recently filled key roles with dynamic, younger members, and these are already driving a change in culture that we hope may encourage new members. Importantly, this has been supported by the longest-established members, who have expressed their willingness to adapt, and so has not been a source of conflict as it might have been.

[Proud of] hearing that an 'at risk' young person we introduced to archaeology graduated with a 2.1 archaeology degree.

We can undertake the fieldwork but then making sense of it and writing it up in a way that is valuable and helpful is where a lot of these groups really struggle.

Comments from online survey respondents

3 Research findings and implications

3.1 Findings from online survey

3.1.1 Introduction

The online survey sent first to current CBA members, and then again to non-CBA members. The reason for the two-fold approach was the hope that CBA could draw useful connections these two cohorts. This has indeed been the case, and a brief comparison of the main findings of both surveys can be found in section 3.1.6, below. A separate Research Appendices presents the complete data for both the CBA members' survey, the non-CBA members survey, together with the write-ups of the follow-up depth interviews for both.

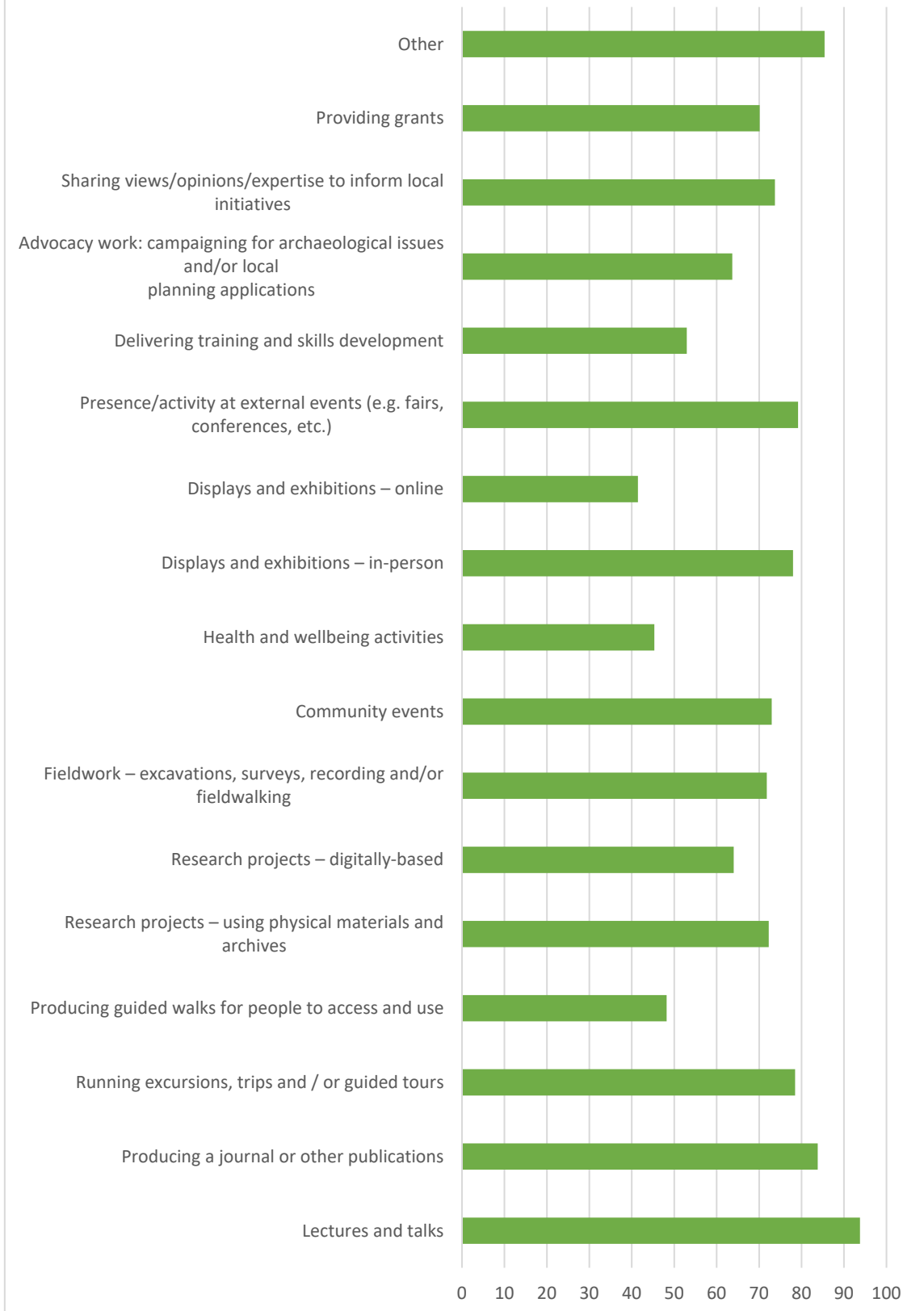
The survey consisted of 27 questions which explored in some detail the research aims, delving particularly into the following areas:

- Type, age and size of group;
- The group's membership numbers, (broadly) ages of members, if/how membership might have recently fluctuated, and (broadly), the members' demographic make-up;
- Number of volunteers, funding sources, methods of communication, digital provision, and any recent fluctuations in this area;
- Areas of achievement over the last year; current activities, and aspirations for future activity;
- Partnership working – current and aspired to – both within the heritage sector, and with other sectors;
- The top three challenges current facing the groups, and the top three priority areas of support required;
- Aspirations related to environmental sustainability, recent training received, and training needs.

The following summary analysis presents both sets of survey data collectively, representing the responses from 254 organisations. The sample sizes vary throughout the analysis, as answers to each question were not obligatory. The full set of graphs can be found in Appendix 1 of this report, with the most notable findings reported on immediately below.

The survey results paint a vivid picture of rich and varied activity taking place across the UK. A question was asked what type of events and outputs the group delivered, and the following graph conveys at a glance the wide range of activity that the 228 organisations who responded to this question contribute to their local area or region. This data is useful to bear in mind when reading the summary bullet points below, with more details being provided later in this section in the areas of challenges, aspirations around cross-sector working, and priority areas of support.

Please indicate the type of events and outputs you currently deliver (%)



3.1.2 Main findings

The main survey findings are summarised in brief in this section, with three specific areas explored in detail. Please refer to the summarised graphs in Appendix 1 for more detail, and to the separate Research Report (available on request) for the detailed results.

Throughout this chapter, text has been bolded below for emphasis in certain areas which relate particularly to the recommendations made in Section 4 of this report.

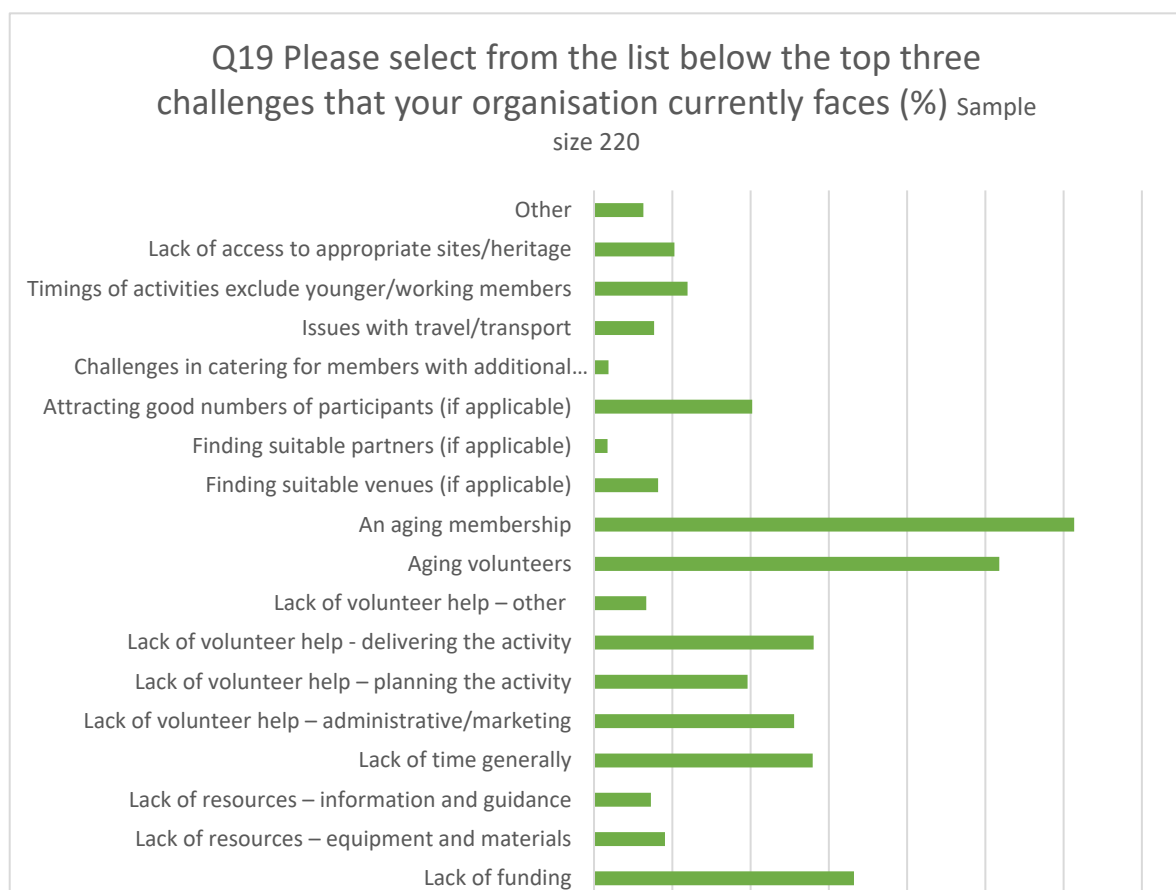
- The majority of the surveys was filled in by the organisation's chairperson (32%) or Secretary (20%), suggesting that there is **a good level of accuracy in the information conveyed through the answers.**
- To a question where more than one answer could be given, the majority representation of types of group were 'archaeological society or club' (73%) or historical societies or clubs (38%).
- 90% of the groups represented have been in existence for over 10 years, with 16% of them being over 100 years old. The majority were either between 50-99 years old (26%) or between 10-26 years old (26%).
- Groups of less than 50 members constituted the majority responses (30%), with the next highest proportion (26%) having between 51 and 99 members.
- **Membership numbers are fluctuating.** 66% have stayed the same or gone down (35% and 30%, respectively), with only 31% of them going up – most prevalently within the newer cohort of non-CBA members.
- **82% of the groups do not currently keep records on their members' demographics,** such as age or ethnicity. 12% do keep records, and 6% are intending to.
- Largely anecdotally, therefore, and in answer to a question where more than one option could be ticked, **87% of the respondents indicated their membership constitutes adults aged between 50-69 years, and 65% indicated adults aged 70 years and over.** 25% of the groups indicated that their membership included adults aged 49 or under.
- Again largely anecdotally, **the groups' collective ethnic representations are 93.2% White,** 4.8% mixed or multiple ethnic, 0.4% Black, African, Caribbean or Black British, and 0.8% Asian or Asian British. 4.1% of the groups indicated 'Unknown'.
- **64% of the groups have under 10 volunteers involved in organising the group's activities,** which accords with this being one of the majority challenges faced collectively by the sector. 22% of the groups have between 11 and 20 volunteers involved.
- **Funding sources** required to run the groups vary. Respondents could tick more than one source, with the data **showing an 83% response to membership fees, 52% for donations, and 37% for 'Fees for specific activities' and 'Grants',** respectively.
- The top three methods of communications used to promote activities, where more than one answer could be indicated, are the group's own website (78%), their Facebook page (50%) and their newsletter (42%).
- Respondents were asked which three things they are most proud of their groups achieving this year. There was huge array of responses which make for inspiring

reading (accessed in the Research Report, available on request). Collectively they illustrate **a great deal of commitment and activity related to the sector, and range from the creation of new digital platforms, new research and publications, a rise in membership, the reignition of activities that had lain dormant since Covid, additional partnerships, and reaching new audiences.**

- As the graph above demonstrates, the collective majority activity delivered by the groups - a question where more than one choice could be selected - is 'Lectures or talks' (94%), followed by 'Producing a journal or publication' (84%) and 'Presence/activity at external events' (79%).
- **When asked what groups would like to deliver in the future** (a question where more than one choice could be selected), **the majority collective response was 'Displays and exhibitions online' (59%), followed by 'Health and wellbeing activities (55%), and then 'Producing guided walks for people to access and use' (52%),** suggesting an encouraging aspiration to engage a wide range of people with their heritage.
- The survey explored partnership working, both current, and aspired to, within the heritage sector - a question where more than one choice could be selected. **Collectively, 'Local government' (82%), 'Other archaeological groups and societies' (77%) and 'Museums' (75%) constitute the majority of the current partners,** followed by the group's Local Historic Environment Records (HER) Office (74%). Universities and archives/libraries also featured relatively high on the list (71%).
- The aspirations for future partnerships within the heritage sector - a question where more than one choice could be selected - differ somewhat from the current state, with **a wish to work with the Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC) far outstripping all the other choices (62%).** This is followed by 'Archaeological sites/attractions' (43%).
- The survey also explored **non-heritage sector partnership working**, again both current and aspired to, and again being a question where more than one choice could be selected. **With current partnership working** in this context, the Community sector was top of the list (47%), closely followed by the 'Natural environment and landscape sector' (42%). Perhaps significantly, **90% of the collective responses indicated the statement 'Not applicable for our group/society'.**
- **The collective aspirations to work with non-heritage sectors put the 'Youth sector' at the top of the list at 84%, followed by the Health & Wellbeing sector at 81%. 10% of the collective responses indicated the statement 'Not applicable for our group/society'.** This response is explored in more detail below.
- Also explored in more detail below, the groups were asked about **the top three challenges** they currently face - a question where more than one choice could be selected. In top place was **'An aging membership' (61%), followed by 'Aging volunteers' (52%) and then 'Lack of funding' (33%).** 'Lack of time generally' and 'Lack of volunteer help – delivering the activity' came next, each constituting 28% of the responses.
- The majority of the groups' digital provision since Covid has increased (56%), with 40% of the groups stating that it has stayed the same.

- **47% of the groups have no plans to become more environmentally friendly through more sustainable practice. 31% do have plans, and 22% of them 'don't know'.**
- **Only 3% of the groups have a plan to become net zero by 2030. 84% don't have a plan, and 13% 'don't know'.**
- Explored in more detail below, groups were asked (from a list provided where more than one choice could be selected) which **three priority areas of support** they require in order to face the future with confidence. **Ranking in top place was 'Younger volunteers' (58%) followed by 'More members' (56%). A close third was 'More volunteers' at 54%.** It is interesting to note that a need for training came 8th out of the list of nine areas, scoring just 12% collectively, and that 'Audience development' also fared poorly, coming 7th.
- The groups were asked which **training they had received** (from a list provided) within the last five years. Two clear areas were revealed through the responses: **Safeguarding (46%) and Governance and committee management (29%).** The comments relating to the category 'Other' included First Aid, Health & Safety, and Geophysics equipment training. It should be noted that many respondents chose not to answer this last question, and the sample size was only 81, compared to the other questions where most exceeded a sample size of over 200. This suggests that the majority of the groups do not engage with training, though this is not to assume that the groups do not want training. (See next point.)
- Respondents were asked **what training they would like to receive.** There was a range of answers provided which included **governance, audience development, marketing and communications (including social media), fundraising, IT support, technical skills relating to archaeology fieldwork and research, photography, and specialist expertise in finds identification.**

3.1.3 The top three challenges currently faced by the respondents



The data above clearly demonstrates the two main issues faced collectively by the grassroots archaeology sector: an aging membership, and commensurately aging volunteers. Taken together (aging membership and volunteers), this is the most prevalent finding across all of the methodology approaches. The data was reflected in several of the comments provided, where respondents have related this issue with other challenges. These include older members' difficulty in participating in certain activities, a gap in IT skills and in one case, the very existence of the Society:

We have trouble finding people to serve on the committee, and the aging membership is a concern, as younger people do not generally seem to have the time (or the inclination, or both) to join and get involved.

We have enthusiastic members, but some are no longer able to actively participate in activities.

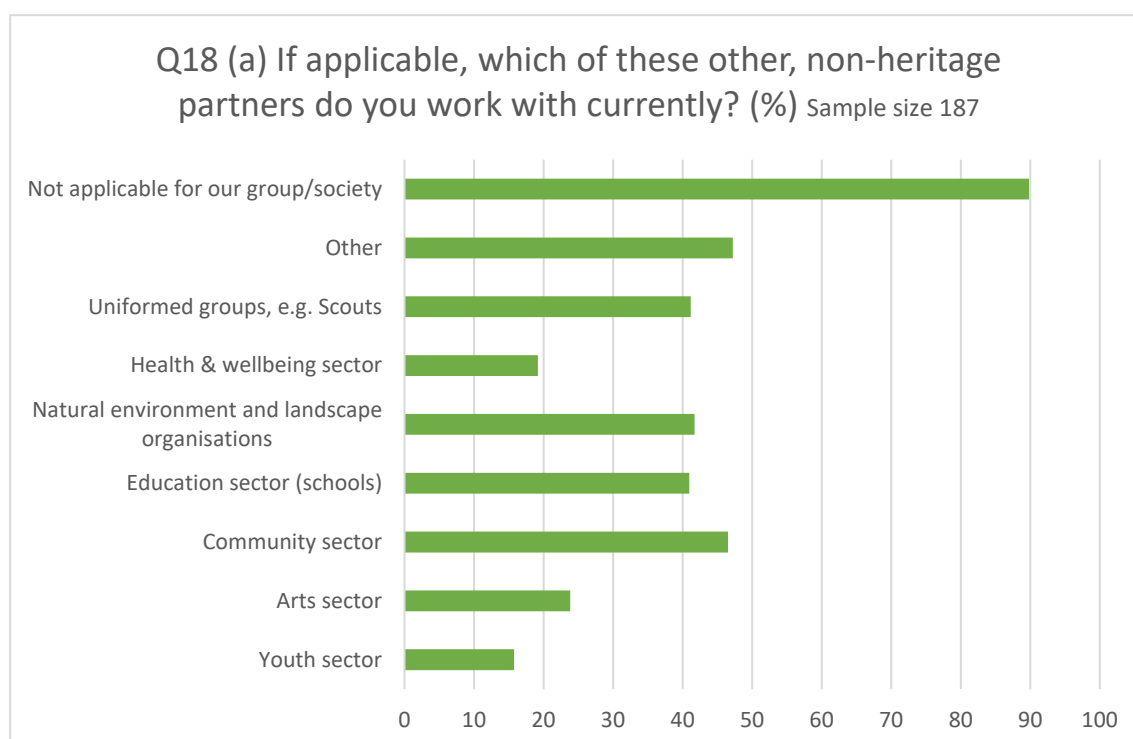
Lack of volunteer help in general. The bulk of activities are provided by a small and aging group of members.

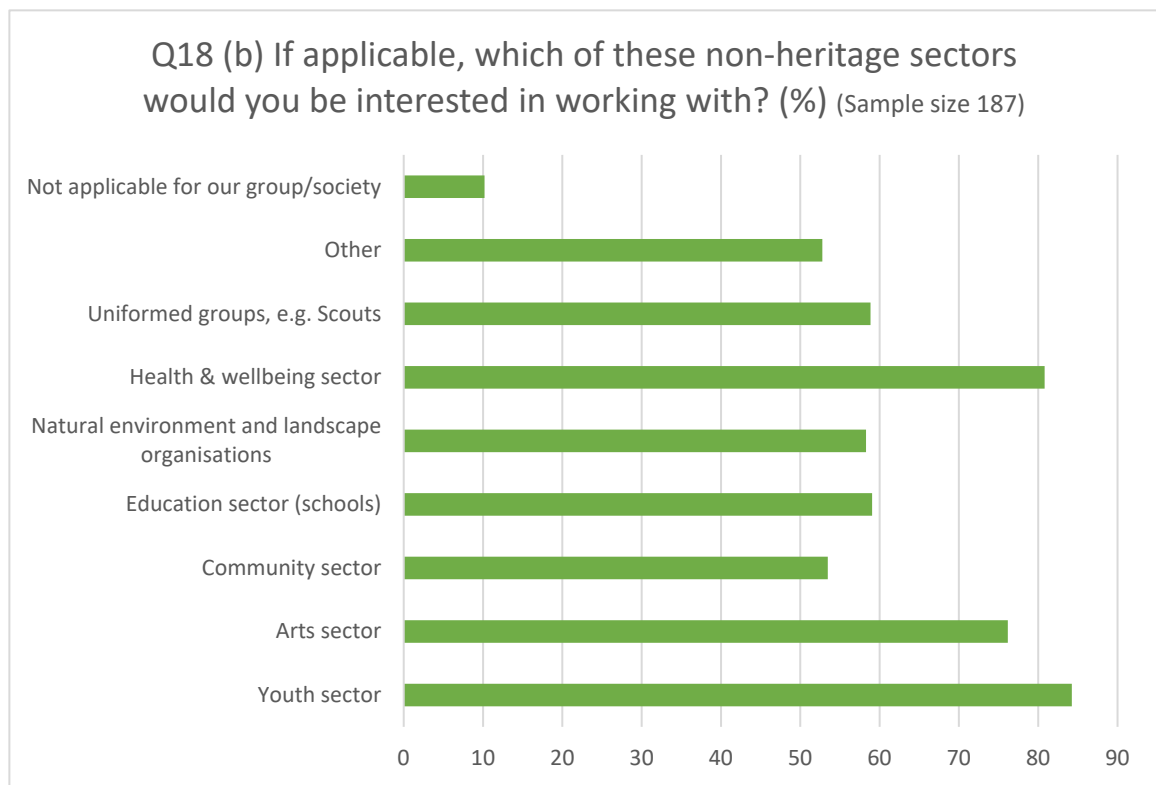
The aged demographic of membership is a key barrier to maintaining and continuing the Society now.

Aging and reluctance to lead activities amongst members is a problem. They are used to being led. Also lack of IT skills due to age demographic.

The graph data presents challenges in other areas, to a much lesser extent. However, the comments provided by respondents do reflect a repeated concern for expertise and/or training in several areas.

3.1.4 Cross-sector working





Cross-sector working may arguably become a means of survival for some heritage sub-sectors, where participation has been clearly evidenced as of value to the beneficiaries involved, but which relies on a partnership to enable it. It is also a way of addressing some of the challenges reported above, such as the aging membership and volunteer base. With this in mind, it is heartening to view through the data above the level of activity that takes place in partnership between the grassroots archaeology sector and other, non-heritage sectors.

As the first graph in this section demonstrates, the most prevalent sectors being worked with currently are the Community sector, the Education sector and the Natural environment and landscape sector. When it comes to groups' aspirations to work across sectors, the Youth, Health & Wellbeing and Arts sectors are the collective priorities.

A number of examples of cross-sector working was provided through the comments:

Relationship with residential school for at risk teenagers. Strong link with local National Landscape officers

We have offered excavation days to primary school children in previous summer holidays. Recently we have assisted with extra-curricular archaeology at a local primary school

Other comments accompanying these questions do indicate that groups understand the clear benefits to working with other sectors, but that their lack of capacity is preventing this from happening:

It would be hard to find the resources to engage with other bodies.

It would be good to work more with other groups however that would need more people willing to volunteer which we are having difficulty in finding.

Any of these would require a larger volunteer force than we have.

Yes, we have worked with a range of local (and beyond) groups, but capacity with active Society volunteers to organise, deliver events is strongly a barrier currently.

Discouragingly, 16% of the responses subscribe to the statement 'Not applicable for our group/society' regarding current non-heritage partner working, with 10% subscribing to the same for future non-heritage sector partnerships. Comments relating to these answers included:

No obvious need.

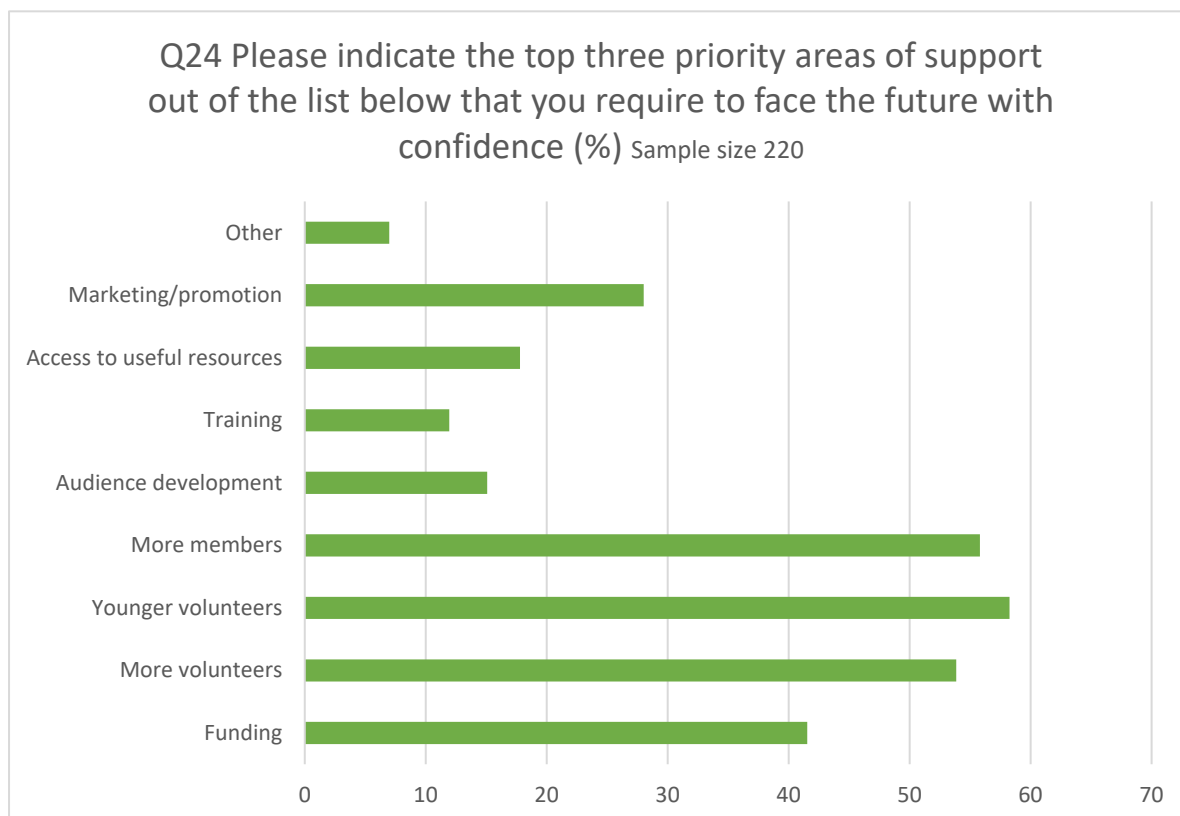
Not sure what is meant by 'community sector'.

A comment shows that in one instance, it was the other sector which was preventing the partnership from taking place:

We have tried getting the local schools involved but either they do not have the time or are not sufficiently interested which is a crying shame because the history from Neolithic (and probably earlier) through Roman, Medieval, and all the way up to now is here right on their doorstep.

3.1.5 Priority areas of support required

When it comes to the top areas of support required, it is perhaps of no surprise that these would match the challenges faced, and reported on above, with the areas being younger volunteers, more members, and more volunteers. Since the majority of the groups' funding models are based on membership numbers, more members would provide a reassuringly consistent level of income, and an increase in volunteers, including younger volunteers would safeguard the future of the groups. However, the lower response to the options of both 'Audience development' and 'Training' does suggest a perceived disconnect between the positive results that this activity could bring, and the priority support area of 'younger volunteers' in particular.



The accompanying comments cover a range of areas, as broad-ranging as those included as 'challenges' earlier in the survey. They vary from help in securing speakers, more effective IT systems, storage space, technical advice/expertise, and support from local authorities. One comment alone reads:

Website development, social media, financial management, publicity, events organisation, heritage conservation, planning

One respondent's comment highlights a certain inertia in their group, which compounds the more general issue relating to a lack of capacity:

The current volunteers need to go. Only one of us ever really does anything and it's exhausting to maintain. The other 10 members only show up to meetings and that is it. No one even shows up to our own events. It's so disappointing and frustrating.

Several other comments also relate to the quality of the volunteers, or members who could presumably become volunteers:

Volunteers who have delivery skills of projects

Qualified and/or experienced members.

3.1.6 Comparing CBA member responses and non-member responses

As outlined in the methodology, two different cohorts groups were approached and responded separately to the online survey questions, resulting in two separate but comparable sets of data: current CBA members, and non-CBA members. Some interesting conclusions can be drawn when viewing the data sets side by side. These have been collated accordingly in Appendix 2, with the main, generalised observations summarised here.

- **Non-member groups have existed for a shorter period in time than member groups**, suggesting that they have been formed or consolidated as a result of National Lottery Heritage funding or similar.
- **Non-member groups have far fewer members than the established member groups.**
- Non-member groups' membership numbers have gone up over the last five years, and the older, member groups' membership has gone down. This suggests that **the newer groups are engaging people, and attracting membership accordingly, in more dynamic ways** compared to the older member groups.
- The majority of **both cohorts fail to collect demographic data**, suggesting that this is an area in which CBA could support and guide.
- **The member groups consist of older people**, and reportedly, the non-member groups have a larger proportion of culturally diverse members.
- The newer, **non-members rely less on membership fees** for their income than CBA members.
- Non-member groups have a higher prevalence in promoting their activities locally, such as through the local media and posters. This implies that **non-members have a higher level of engagement with their local communities.**
- **Non-members**, perhaps because of funding requirements such as strategic outcomes to be reached, have a **higher level of cross-sector working** than member groups.
- When it comes to citing main challenges, the **non-members are less concerned with their membership numbers** than member groups, though it is still their top challenge. An **additional challenge for them is funding**, as they are unlikely to enjoy the benefits of legacies or investments often held by the older, established member groups.
- **Neither cohort is active in the area of environmentally sustainable practice**, suggesting – as with the area of recording demographic data – that this is an area in which the CBA could help to support and guide.
- Training needs differ between the groups, with the **non-members having received considerably more training in safeguarding, inclusion and equity**, and insurance in the last five years, compared with the member groups.

In summary, the findings suggest that the newer, younger - both in the longevity of the group and in its membership - non-member groups are more dynamic than the established, larger, older member groups, with a demonstrable willingness to enter into

collaborations with non-heritage bodies and to undertake the training required to engage with new, diverse audiences.

3.2 Findings from Depth interviews

Survey respondents were invited to indicate if they would like a one-to-one discussion with the CBA to explore their survey responses in more detail. 14 such discussions took place with CBA members, and another eight discussions with non-CBA members, totalling 22 interviews. These were carried out largely by Zoom and occasionally by phone, and afforded a deeper insight into the issues faced by these groups. The interview write-ups can be read in full in the separate Research Report.

When viewed together, clear themes emerged, allowing some generalisations to be made about the state of grassroots archaeological groups today. These are listed here, with the substantiating details and further information provided in Appendix 3.

- Aspirations and barriers around **developing audiences/engagement**
- Support for a **‘live network’**
- Potential **roles for the CBA (including advocacy)**, and support for it generally
- Assistance with **fundraising**
- Wish for **‘How to’ resources/tool-kits**
- Issues with **capacity and volunteers**
- **Communications**, website and social media
- Issues with **membership and membership numbers**
- Assistance required with **sourcing speakers and specialist expertise**
- **Archaeological activity**: needs/barriers
- **Areas for support by CBA**
- **Training** needs
- **Need for recognition** and appreciation
- Confusion between regional and national CBA

3.3 Findings from Executive Director online presentations

As 64 member groups had indicated an interest in one-to-one discussions where only 22 such interviews were possible, a webinar was run on three separate occasions. This was to enable any of this cohort to attend and share their concerns, as well as to learn about the survey findings and CBA’s initial response to it.

At time of writing, webinars have been held for current CBA members totalling 15 attendees, with further events to be held for non-members. The summary findings and implications of the three webinars carried out to date are reported in Appendix 4 of this report, and précised in this section.

- Efforts are being made by some groups **to actively seek out a younger membership**, where they are strategically targeting A-level and University students for their activities.
- There is a **strong interest in** the much-appreciated **British Archaeology magazine to be offered in digital format.**
- **The sector needs help and advice in brokering new partnerships**, including with the commercial and academic sectors. The commercial sector is seen as potentially sharing its expertise to fulfil its obligations around Corporate Social Responsibility, and the academic sector is seen as a potential partner for equipment, resources and expertise.
- **The sector requires training and guidance in subject and technical expertise**, governance, administrative and bureaucratic processes, social media, reaching new audiences (including children and young people) and writing grant applications.
- **There is a strong endorsement from the sector representatives for a 'live network'** where advice/expertise can be sought and best practice/case studies shared.

3.4 Findings from Stakeholder consultations

Ten consultations were carried out with representatives from organisations which form the CBA's Stakeholders group. This group consists of the organisations listed below, and was convened for a CBA-led project which at time of writing is being assessed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a potential Resilience Fund grant:

- CBA East of England
- CBA South East
- CBA North West
- Roman Carlisle Revealed
- Caer Heritage Project Cardiff University
- The Prehistoric Society
- Sussex Archaeological Society
- Scottish Crannog Centre
- Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society
- Ulster Archaeological Society

The points below reflect the themes which emerged through the discussions. Appendix 5 of this report contains a summary of the qualitative data, and a full write-up of each interview is available in a separate Research Report.

- **There is a strong endorsement for there to be some way to connect easily across the sector**, and an agreement that there is a need for this.
- **Stakeholders would welcome the CBA in helping to broker cross-sector partnerships**, including within the wider Archaeology sector.
- **There are some excellent examples of cross-sector working**, including with the arts, health, young people, community, and education.
- Facebook has been mentioned as the strongest engagement tool, in one case attracting 19,000 followers for a group that had 800-900 members.

- **Stakeholders recognise the importance of reaching younger people**, but the majority has not succeeded in doing so yet.
- **There are some compelling examples of where local communities are meaningfully engaged as active participants**, specifically to in a bid to shift the perception of archaeology and to provide opportunities for people to engage with their heritage.
- It was noted that 'There is whole audience with the metal detectorists but **there is a historic mistrust between the metal detectorists and the archaeologists.**'
- Strong doubt was expressed by several stakeholders on the validity of the traditional membership model.
- **The CBA was seen as the most appropriate body to provide guidance and training clinics/resources** in areas such as EDIE, Net Zero, youth engagement, and in modelling best practice.

3.6 Findings from closed groups and societies

The data for groups that have ceased to operate is limited to three one-to-one discussions. These came about after a direct call-out for any groups who had ceased operating to contact the CBA. The call-out was promoted for 3 weeks in December 2023 and early January 2024. Whilst this is a very small sample, the discussions did unearth useful findings which could be seen to be representative and potentially explored through further research. The discussions centred around the challenges faced by the groups prior to their closure, and any support they would have liked to address those challenges. A summary of the main findings is below, and the notes from the discussions can be found in the Appendix 6.

- **Key issues for the group active in fieldwork included** access to sites, the group's relationship to professional archaeologists, **a lack of confidence, and too much responsibility being placed on too few individuals.**
- Linked to this, **there were too few volunteers involved in the work required to keep two of the groups operational.** In one case, when the Chair moved away, the group folded. In another case, when the Chair needed to care for his partner, the group became 'moribund'.
- One group commented on **a lack of expertise generally**, and, linked to this, a lack of confidence.
- The **lack of involvement by younger people** was viewed by one group's representative as a result of a generation-related attitude, stating that, *'a lot of them are much happier to pay considerable sums of money to have an archaeological field work experience that fits in with their lifestyle'*.
- One of the groups folded due mostly to their grant being ceased by a larger heritage body, due to the larger body's shift in strategic direction which newly prioritised **broadening appeal and providing more access to the heritage**, whereas the ceased group's focus was around researching and cataloguing particular finds.
- **These groups would have welcomed expertise** in areas related to writing up fieldwork, or signposting to where to find this.
- One group would have welcomed CBA's **help in making stronger connections with the local museum.**
- One group would have **welcomed advice around planning and local activism.**

3.7 Summary conclusions from data findings

The research findings summarised in this chapter allow for the following generalised statements:

- **Membership numbers are largely staying the same or going down.**
- Demographically, **the groups' membership is above the age of 60 and largely White.**
- Collectively, the groups' activities are many and varied, contributing significantly to the archaeological sector as a whole, and to society's understanding of the UK's heritage and of human history generally. However, **the level of activities has gone down in recent years**, with the ceasing of more costly activities in particular, such as digs and some types of fieldwork.
- There is a heartening number of groups undertaking activity in partnership of other heritage sector bodies, such as museums, local HERs, and archives. There are also cross-sector partnerships with the community, education and natural environment sectors in particular.
- The strongly held aspirations to work with youth, health and arts sectors is encouraging. However, these aspirations are not yet being realised, with a lack of capacity being the most cited reason for this.
- **The groups' challenges may be summarised as: an aging membership, an aging volunteer cohort; not enough volunteers to sustain a healthy level of activity, a lack of expertise and access to equipment, a lack of training in several relevant areas, and in many cases, a lack of funding.** Feeling siloed away from commercial and academic archaeology sub-sectors was another finding to emerge through one-to-one discussions.
- The groups' **challenges when viewed objectively** may be extrapolated as being: **a narrow, representational demographic leading to entrenched attitudes and practices; a lack of understanding of how cross-sector working can lead to a potentially younger membership and routes to a wider reach generally; a need for training in specific areas, and a need to shift the perception of archaeology away from activity-led practice (digs and fieldwork) to more accessible, less expensive ways to engage with the heritage.**
- Also viewed objectively, there is clearly **a lack of understanding of the relationship between developing audiences and attracting new members**, given the low priority indication most groups allocated to 'audience development'.
- **Support required** is commensurate with the challenges faced, and clearly falls into four main areas: **reaching a younger audience to attract a younger membership and volunteers, more members, more volunteers, and funding/fundraising.**
- **Factors that drove groups to close include: not enough volunteers; a lack of confidence and expertise**, and in one case, **a shift in strategic direction** by the group's 'host body' which no longer saw a match the group's own activities.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The question is, how do you future-proof a literally antiquarian idea to make it relevant and appeal to younger audiences?

We've worked with schools where the kids hadn't even been to a woods before. And then I heard that the parents came with the kids the week later... The concept of involving a group in archaeology is a lot broader than gazing at the ground holding a trowel.

I need to understand everything that is going on in the academic world and in the field, but that person over there doesn't see that person over there. The CBA role is connecting up that awareness in the sector.

Having any sort of platform to share those resources and ideas, there's a real need there. I think there is a significant gap, and [we] would be very interested in looking at how we can support that and amplify that.

The CBA has got a real opportunity to become a people-led, storytelling organisation, a 'canopy' to hold together quite disparate voices – create a 'choir' or movement that could really shape and shift the sector... both for individuals and organisations. It really needs shifting and shaping. Some of these hierarchies need to be reimaged, reflecting on what has worked before.

How the hell do you tackle Net Zero?

Comments from online survey interviews and stakeholder consultations

4 Recommendations and next steps

4.1 Introduction

This research set out to measure and understand the state of grassroots archaeology today, through surveying the groups and societies that make up this sector. Through doing so, key findings have emerged, which have been summarised in the previous chapter. These can be extrapolated into specific strategic areas for development, which is the purpose of this chapter. As the sector support body for grassroots archaeology, the CBA, is necessarily engaged with, and included in the recommendations.

The strategic themes to emerge from the findings are listed below. They are in no order of hierarchy, and in many cases, intersect with each other:

- Audience research and development
- Engaging younger people
- Creative a live network
- Supporting the sector through training
- Promoting inclusivity and diversity
- Working towards a carbon net zero future
- Fostering cross-sector working
- Shifting the perception of archaeology
- The role of the CBA in transforming the sector, including advocacy and funding

4.2 Strategic areas for development

4.2.1 Audience research and development

A good understanding of current and potential audiences demonstrably leads to better communications and a higher likelihood of participation by these cohorts. The online survey not only indicates a need for the groups to understand their current audiences better, but also audiences who could potentially engage in this sector's activities. This would in turn raise the levels of participation, and potentially, numbers of members and volunteers, starting to resolve some of the key challenges faced by the groups.

The CBA has identified three key audiences for its own aspirations in this area, based on the results of Historic England's recent audience segmentation work¹. The three are listed here, and divide further into the following sub-groups:

i. 'Known to archaeology'

- Groups & Affiliates: - members, ex-members, potential members (i.e. those closest to archaeology)

¹ Audiences in Focus: Segmentation Pen Portraits - Audience System: Segmentation © Historic England

- Individuals – members/subscribers, YAC children/young people, YAC volunteers/branch organisers
- ii. **‘New to archaeology’**
 - Families - YAC parents/carers, Festival of Archaeology family attendees
 - Festival of Archaeology attendees
 - Young people aged 18-25²
 - Special interest individuals and groups, e.g. already engaging with heritage
- iii. **‘Archaeology: Why me?’**
 - Local communities and/or under-represented groups (geographical)
 - People facing specific barriers to participation³

While the ‘Known to Archaeology’ group most likely to understand and engage in archaeology, at its core it is a small audience, estimated through existing research to constitute less than 0.33% of the UK population (7,000 ‘employed’ archaeologists⁴, 6,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students⁵ and 9,700 members of archaeology group and societies⁶). The potential for grassroots archaeological groups and societies to engage new audiences lies most with the ‘New to archaeology’ group. However, as has been made clear in this report’s findings, these groups are certain to lack the capacity and the resources – and, arguably, the drive – to undertake the research required. The first two recommendations are therefore positioned as the CBA taking the lead in this area in its role as the sector support membership body:

Recommendation 1: The CBA to undertake audience research with a view to engaging a wider audience in its activities and the activities of grassroots archaeology.

Recommendation 2: The CBA to disseminate its audience research findings and recommendations in ways that are applicable for its member groups to use.

4.2.2 Engaging younger people

In the context of the ongoing operations of grassroots archaeological groups and societies today, ‘younger people’ in this section refers to adults between 18 and 55, with the upper limit defined by the legal minimum age where adults can start drawing from their pension.

For the lower end of this spectrum, such as the 18-25 bracket, a sample of young people aged up to 25 was consulted to inform the CBA’s Youth Advisory Board in a separate report commissioned by the CBA in 2022⁷ and is usefully guiding the CBA in related

² I.e. Those that visit heritage and arts settings already, usually a strong interest in history but have not undertaken any active archaeological activity. They may well be at university doing adjacent degrees to archaeology.

³ E.g. low income; ethnicity; disabilities; and ill health.

⁴ <https://profilingtheprofession.org.uk/1-1-size-of-uk-archaeology/>

⁵ University Post- and Undergraduates Personal Comms Chair, University of Archaeology UK (UAUK) 2022

⁶ Grassroots 9700 - Supporting Community Archaeology in the UK: Results of a 2018 Survey (CBA Research Bulletin 6, 2018)

⁷ Youth Voice Consultation, September 2022

areas. The research concurrently explored motivations for taking part in archaeological activity, and the nature of preferred activities. This data can be helpful in prompting grassroots archaeology groups to better understand how to engage with young people, and is therefore incorporated into one of the recommendations below accordingly. Similarly, the YAC, which engages children and young people aged 8 to 16, provides an excellent model for the grassroots archaeology sector, notably in the way that it is facilitated and supported by the CBA.

As well as the formation of the new Youth Advisory Board, the CBA is currently setting up a Young Associates Network. Both groups could form advisory roles to assist the CBA in guiding grassroots archaeology groups in extending their reach to younger adults. Importantly, additional factors, such as a willingness on the part of the groups to change the way they develop, promote and run their activities, will play a part in the success or otherwise of this aim.

Recommendation 3: The CBA to consult with its organisational membership to ascertain and address in more detail barriers to engaging with younger adults.

Recommendation 4: The CBA to draw on existing research and to conduct new research, on ways to successfully engage and involve younger adults in grassroots archaeology.

Recommendation 5: The CBA to disseminate its audience research findings and recommendations in ways that are applicable for its member groups to use.

4.2.3 Creating a live network

The Stakeholder consultation finding in particular demonstrate a strong endorsement for an active participation network. While its nature and content is still to be determined, it is likely that it will need to be agile enough to hold resources, facilitate conversations, showcase best practice, signpost to sources of expertise, and create a communications network for the different factions that exist within the grassroots archaeology sector, and in time, across the wider archaeology sector.

Recommendation 6: The CBA to conduct comparator research into models of 'active networks', and on what the grassroots archaeology sector's needs are in this area, with a view to implementing and managing the network when possible.

4.2.4 Supporting the sector through training

The findings present a repeated call for several intersecting areas which could constitute the term 'training'. Advice and guidance in certain key areas could be communicated through 'clinics', online and/or in-person, with the live network promoting such events and providing the platform for post-clinic conversation. There is already strong data suggesting areas of training need, both explicitly and implicitly through the survey data provided, and further research could be easily undertaken to canvass further the need in this regard. Additionally, the ongoing sharing of case studies, best practice and resources in specific areas, potentially through the live network, will boost the

knowledge and understanding of the groups in ‘what’s out there’ and how their own activities could benefit from this information.

Recommendation 7: The CBA to develop and run clinics for its membership in areas of located need, including governance, environmental sustainability, EDIE, IT and digital, and social media/marketing.

4.2.5 Promoting inclusivity and diversity

Engaging the target audience ‘Archaeology: Why me?’ described under 4.2.1 above, will require a focussed and informed approach, and is an aspiration shared across the heritage and cultural sectors. In the specific context of grassroots archaeology, the CBA’s Executive Director has spoken of three overriding issues, namely:

- The issue of ‘othering’, as the membership of grassroots archaeology – so strongly evidenced through the survey results - is not representative of UK society’s diverse population. It is clearly an imperative that a sense of belonging is created for all within the sector.
- Not everyone currently has the same opportunities to take part. There is a need to understand the barriers and help people overcome these.
- Increasingly emerging narratives around nationalism, promoting an exclusive and often White agenda, need to be overcome and redefined⁸.

The CBA is well-placed to raise awareness of, and provide guidance and signposting services to its members, in the area of EDIE – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Equality. After first receiving essential training and guidance in this area, the CBA then has the potential to provide an essential service in rolling out these approaches in ways that are relevant to its members, and in facilitating applicable training opportunities for its members.

Recommendation 8: The CBA to undertake advanced EDIE training and development for CBA staff, trustees and stakeholders.

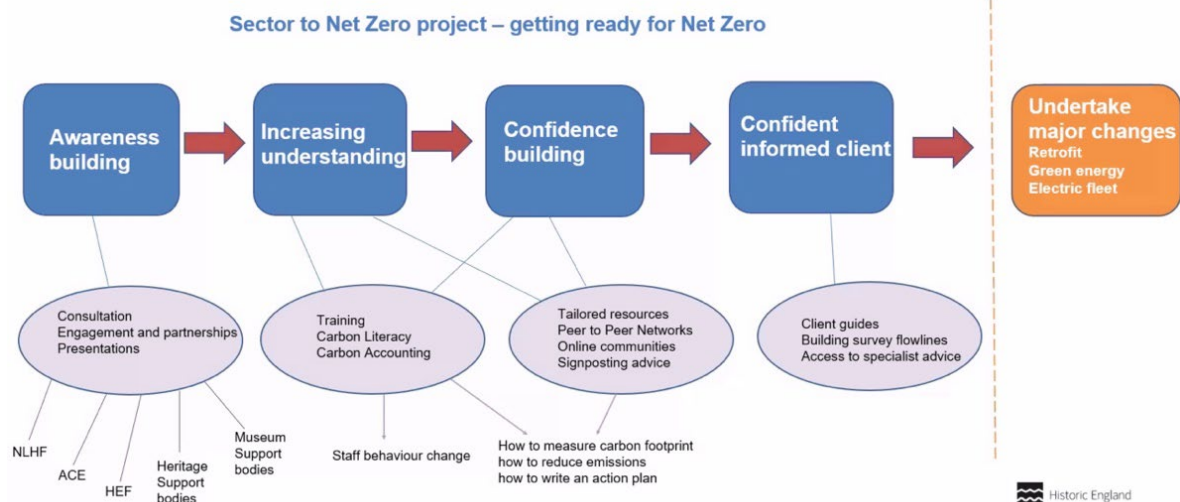
Recommendation 9: The CBA to repackage and promote Historic England’s Board Diversity and Sector Workforce Diversity training for its organisational members in ways that are appropriate for voluntary groups and organisations, providing EDIE-related support and signposting services to further information and guidelines where applicable.

4.2.6 Working towards a carbon net zero future

It is clear from the survey data that grassroots archaeological groups and societies today have some distance to travel in understanding and planning for a net zero future. Relevant support, training and guidance is available through Historic England, which has formulated the heritage sector’s required journey in this area through the following graphic:

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalism_and_archaeology

Heritage organisation journey to Net Zero



As with EDIE, the CBA is well-placed to first undertake the necessary training and activity to fully understand the requirements around net zero and carbon accounting, after which it will be in a position to signpost resources and support to its members groups.

Recommendation 10: After working with an Environmental Sustainability consultant, the CBA to promote and run Heritage Carbon Literacy and Carbon Accounting sessions for its members, and to continue to signpost them to relevant guidance and advice.

4.2.7 Fostering cross-sector working

As with other sub-sectors within the wider heritage sector, such as museums and archives, working cross-sector can provide immediate, mutually-beneficial and positive outcomes, both for the organisations involved, and for the participants. The online survey data and the follow-up interviews demonstrated that some organisations are working in this way already, for example, engaging children and young people through an activity related to health and wellbeing, or interpretation, and introducing them to the archaeological heritage in the process. However, it is just as clearly an area which the grassroots archaeology sector requires support with, and several group representatives interviewed specified that they would like advice and guidance from the CBA in how to broker cross-sector partnerships.

In achieving this aspiration, the groups and the sector as a whole would begin to successfully reach the target audience, 'Why me?', discussed earlier in this section.

Recommendation 11: For the CBA to promote cross-sector working, and to provide for its members guidance and best practice case studies in cross-sector working and partnerships.

4.2.8 Shifting the perception of archaeology

It is clear from the survey data that the groups which make up the grassroots archaeological sector are at risk if they fail to engage younger volunteers and operate their activities that are relevant to a much wider audience than is the case currently. In many cases, their view of archaeology is – in the words of one stakeholder – ‘literally antiquated’. There is evidently some way to go for grassroots archaeology to be inclusive, where anyone has the opportunities to take part. The barriers are compounded by the growing and invidious mis-interpretations of archaeological heritage. There is therefore an imperative for sector support bodies to act rapidly to redress the issues located in this report. As part of this, the prevalent paradigm of grassroots archaeology itself needs to be challenged and re-presented, potentially with a focus on ‘sense of place’ – a concept which can resonate anywhere and with anyone. If this aspiration succeeds, it will – as with Recommendation 11 above – inevitably engage a wider audience, including the target audience ‘Why me?’.

Recommendation 12: Informed by research, for the CBA to strategically work towards challenging and shifting the current perception of grassroots archaeology to become inclusive and resonant for anyone, through all of its communications and activities.

4.2.9 The role of the CBA in transforming the sector, including through funding and advocacy

Consultation with stakeholders demonstrated their heartfelt view that the CBA was best placed to lead the grassroots archaeology sector through the transformation it requires. This quote was just one example of many expressing the same:

As the CBA you are in a unique position as you have a lot of partnership across the UK and you know a lot of people in grass roots archaeology, linking up communities that live in the shadow of important archaeology, who have similar or different challenges who can share their ways of doing things

Many different areas of support have been proposed for the CBB to potentially provide, and two of these include funding, and advocacy.

Funding: If the CBA was in a position to facilitate small grants to support the dissemination of, and audience engagement with grassroots archaeology outputs, it could effect a shift current practice in this area commensurately. As the National Lottery Heritage Fund has increased a wider participation in heritage through its mandatory outcome for all its funding streams, so here there is the potential for the CBA to specify obligatory requirements for these small grants which will necessitate groups to operate more inclusively.

Advocacy: There is also the need for a sector support body to ‘fight the corner’ of grassroots archaeology, particularly if it can potentially embrace a more ‘place-making’ paradigm.

As an agency that has a deep insight into the sector, the CBA is well-placed to lead in both of these areas.

Ongoing leadership and communications: The CBA is also well-pleased to lead on the facilitation and dissemination of key communications, dialogue and ongoing conversation within the grassroots archaeology sector. The creation of the live network will go some way in enabling this need. Webinars keeping members aware of key developments could take place once every two months, led by the CBA's Executive Director, and an online survey similar, if not the same in content as that presented in this report, could take place biennially. These activities would ensure that the CBA was continuously abreast of the state of its membership and the issues they face, and that these could be discussed and addressed ongoing.

Understanding grassroots archaeology: Understanding the strength and vitality of the groups and societies that form the backbone of grassroots archaeology is essential to developing support and advocacy structures. This research is a key data set for the historic environment and should sit alongside surveys such as Profiling the Profession and the assessment of local authority heritage services. The CBA has shown it can undertake this work both within and outside of its existing network. Adequately resourcing a bi-annual survey of grassroots archaeology should be seen as a priority.

Recommendation 13: For the CBA to strengthen its advocacy role for championing the grassroots archaeology sector, speaking out on behalf of the sector in areas of resources, participation, engagement, funding and inclusivity.

Recommendation 14: For the CBA to ensure that the state of its membership and grassroots archaeology is regularly researched, reported on, and discussed through a biennial survey, bi-monthly webinars and other communication channels where applicable.

4.3 Next steps

The CBA turns 80 this year, 2024, and so will celebrate an impressive longevity through rapidly changing times. Its founding purpose – to support and promote archaeology – is increasingly informed by data gathered from its membership, and evidenced here in this report. As the umbrella agency for the groups, the CBA is best-placed to meet these.

The findings here provide the CBA with a clear roadmap on how it might progress. Resources and funding will need to be found to address the recommendations and the CBA has recently submitted a Resilience Grant application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (the result of which are pending at time of writing). If awarded, the grant will enable the CBA to start the process of implementing a wide-ranging programme of audience consultation, active research through four community-led pilot projects, research into the feasibility of a live network, training, and advocacy. Longer term, and again pending external funding, the CBA can successfully implement and disseminate these activities and the wider recommendation in this report in full.

5 Appendices

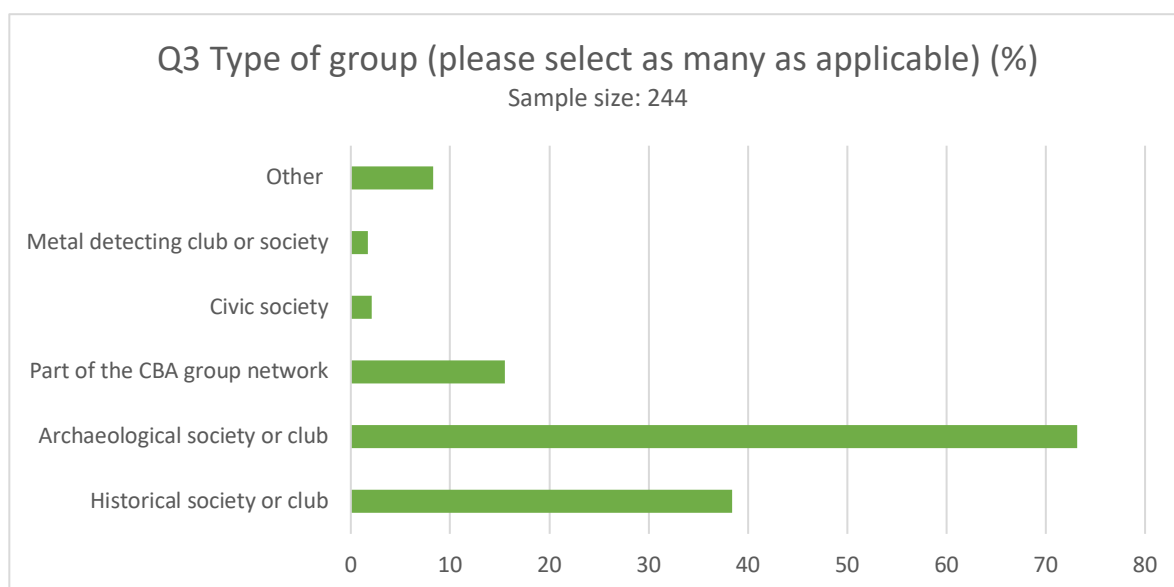
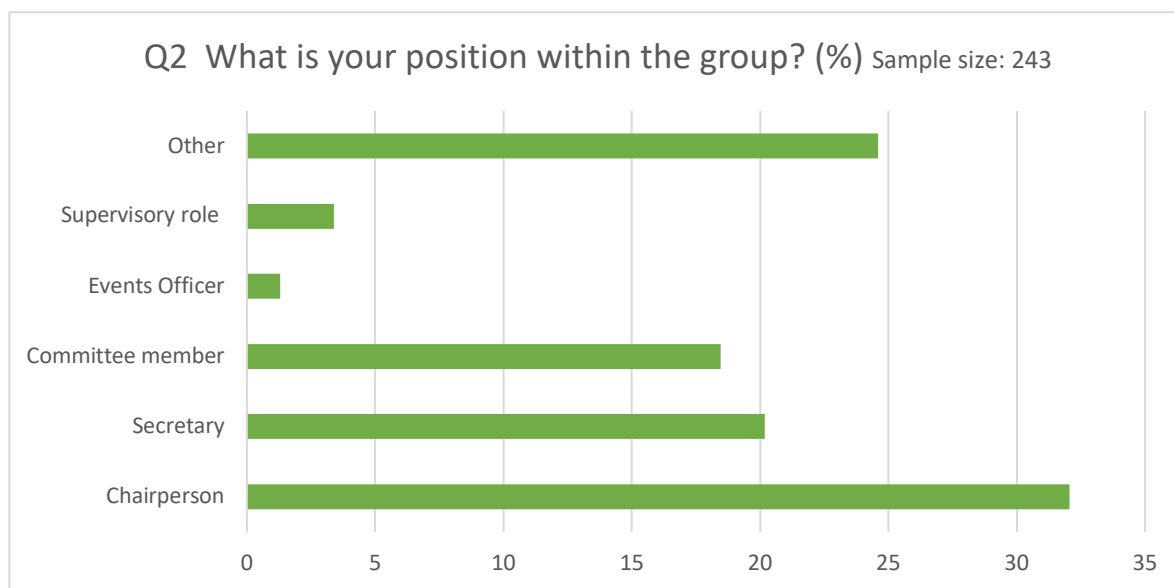
- 5.1 Appendix 1: Online survey results - summarised
- 5.2 Appendix 2: Online survey comparisons - CBA members and non-members
- 5.3 Appendix 3: Summarised points from 1:1 discussions with online survey respondents
- 5.4 Appendix 4: Summarised points from CBA webinars
- 5.5 Appendix 5: Summarised responses from CBA Stakeholder consultations
- 5.6 Appendix 6: Summarised responses from groups no longer operating

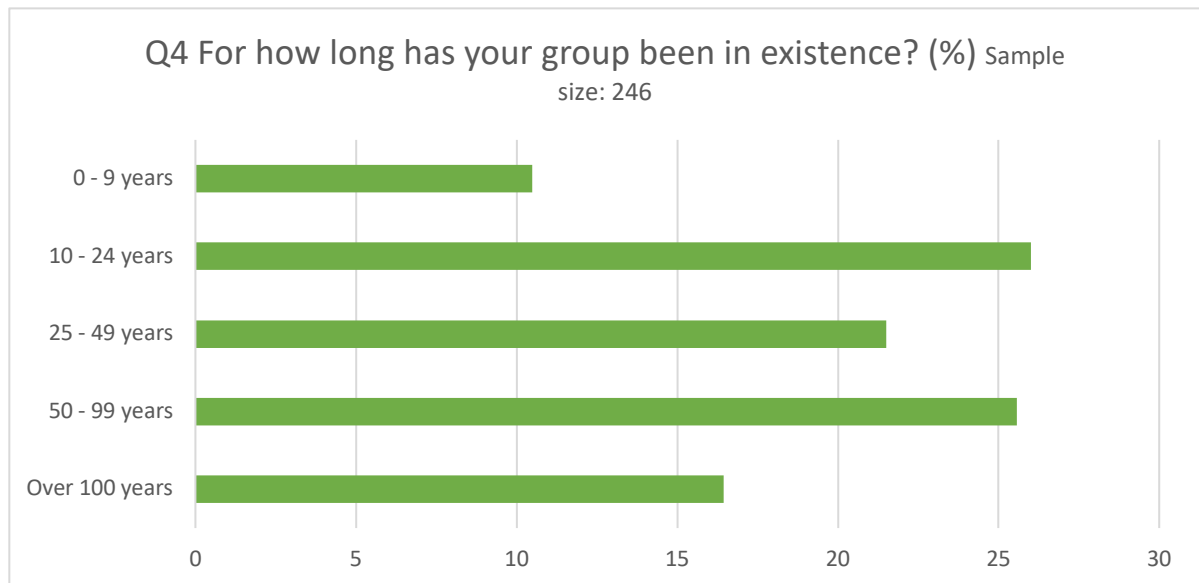
An additional Data Research Report including all of the survey results, one-to-one discussions and full write-ups of the Stakeholder consultations interviews, is available on request.

Appendix 1: Online survey results - Summarised

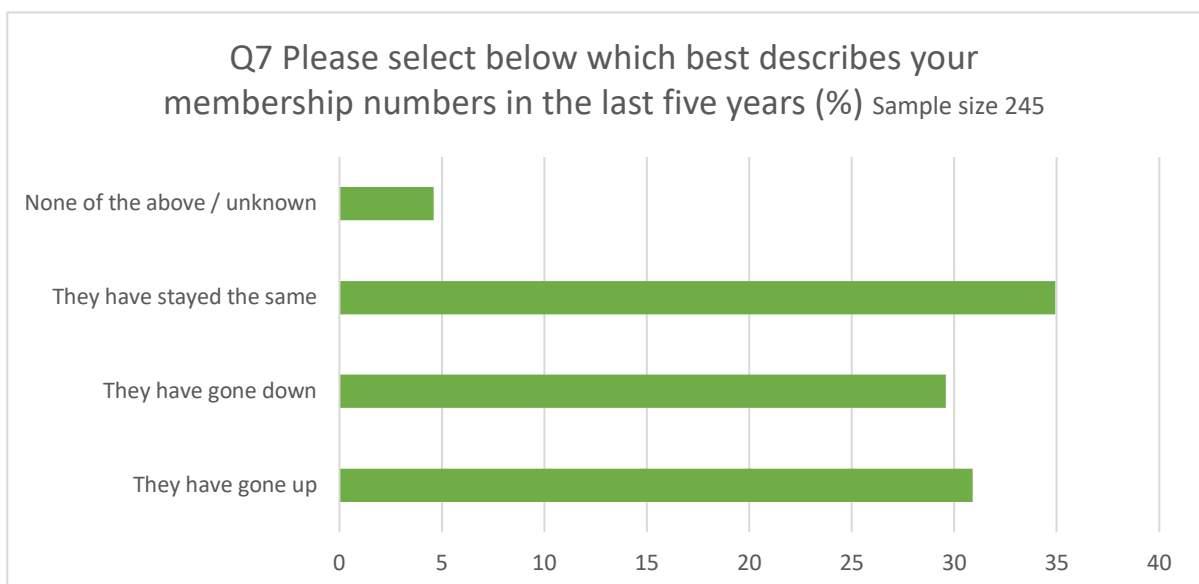
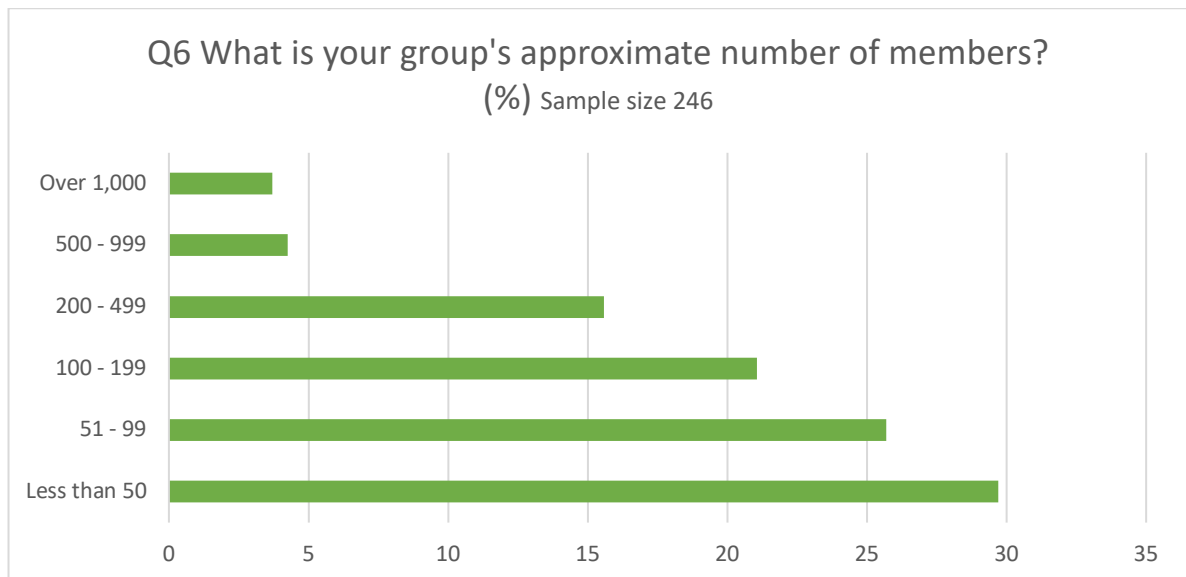
The following summary analysis collectively presents both sets of two different survey data, representing the responses from a total of 254 organisations. The sample sizes vary throughout the analysis, as answers to each question were not obligatory.

[Question 1: What is the name of your group or Society – Text answer]

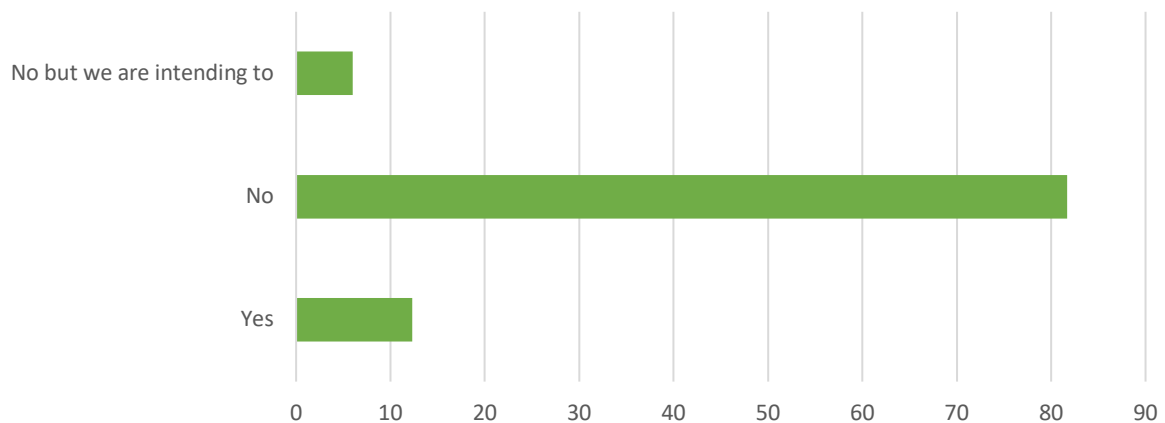




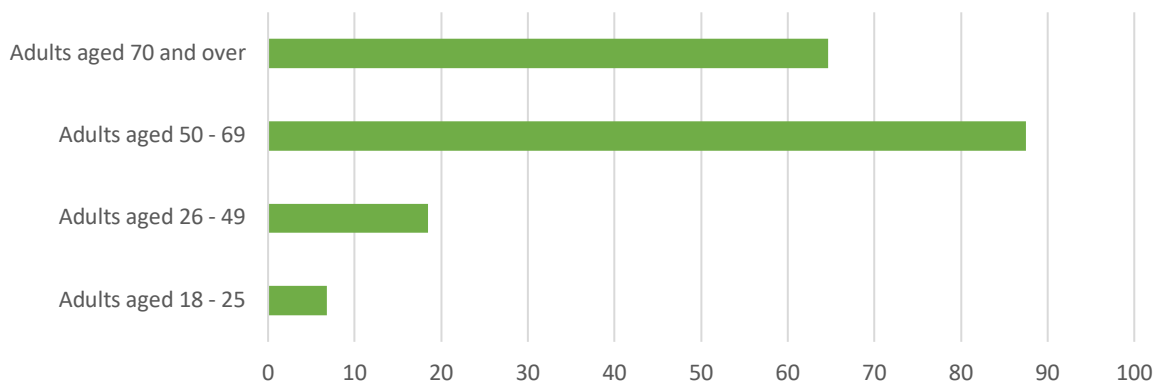
[Question 5: What is the geographical area your group works within? – Text answer]



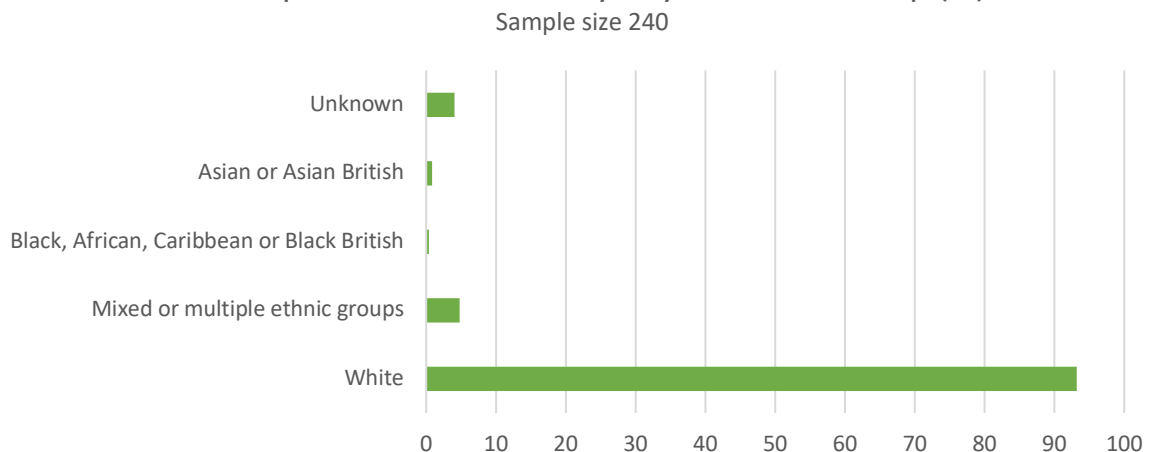
Q8 Do you keep records of the demographics (age, ethnicity, etc.) of your members? (%) Sample size 240

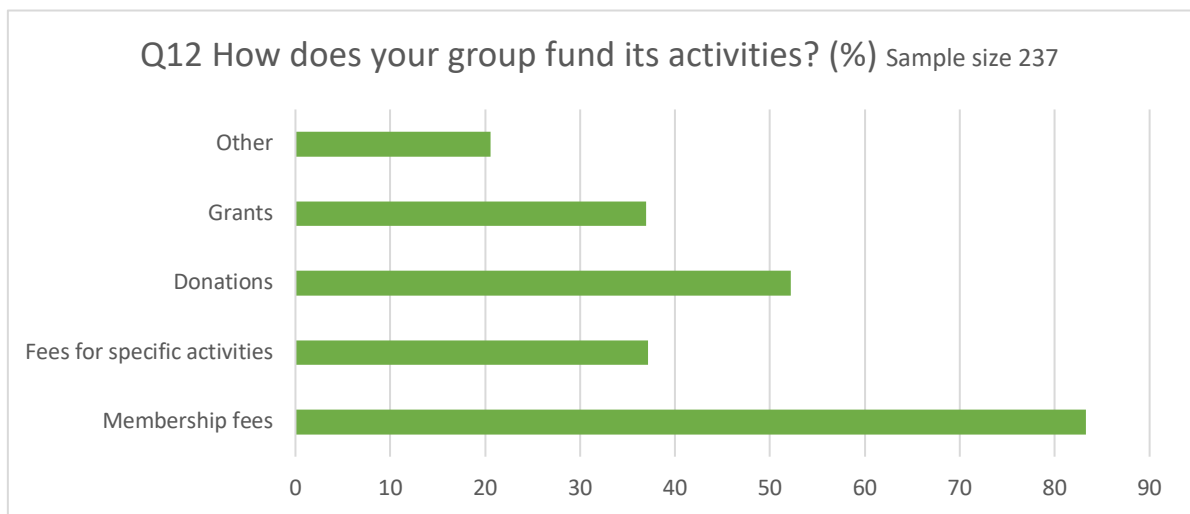


Q9 Please indicate which out of the following list best represents your age profile (you may tick more than one option) (%) Sample size 234

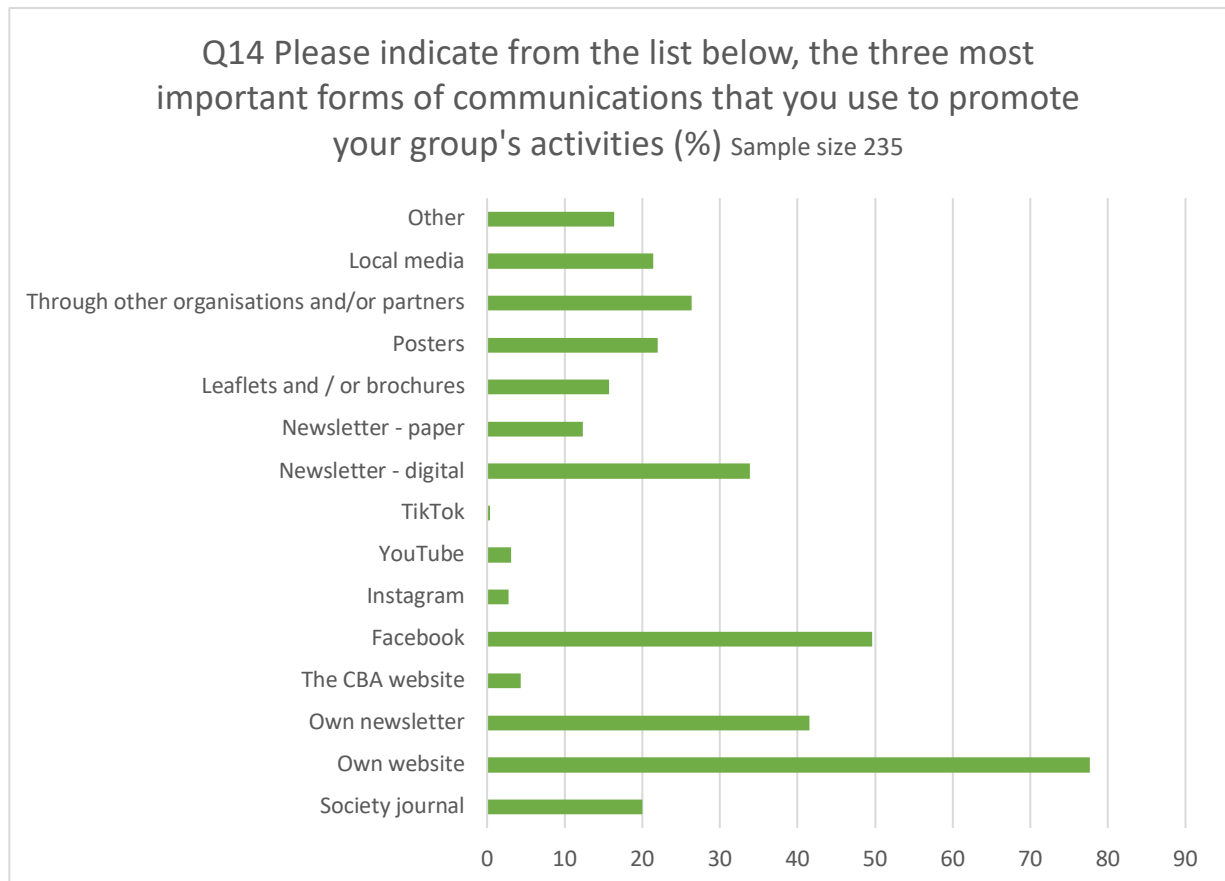


Q10 Please broadly indicate which, out of the following list, best represents the ethnicity of your membership (%) Sample size 240

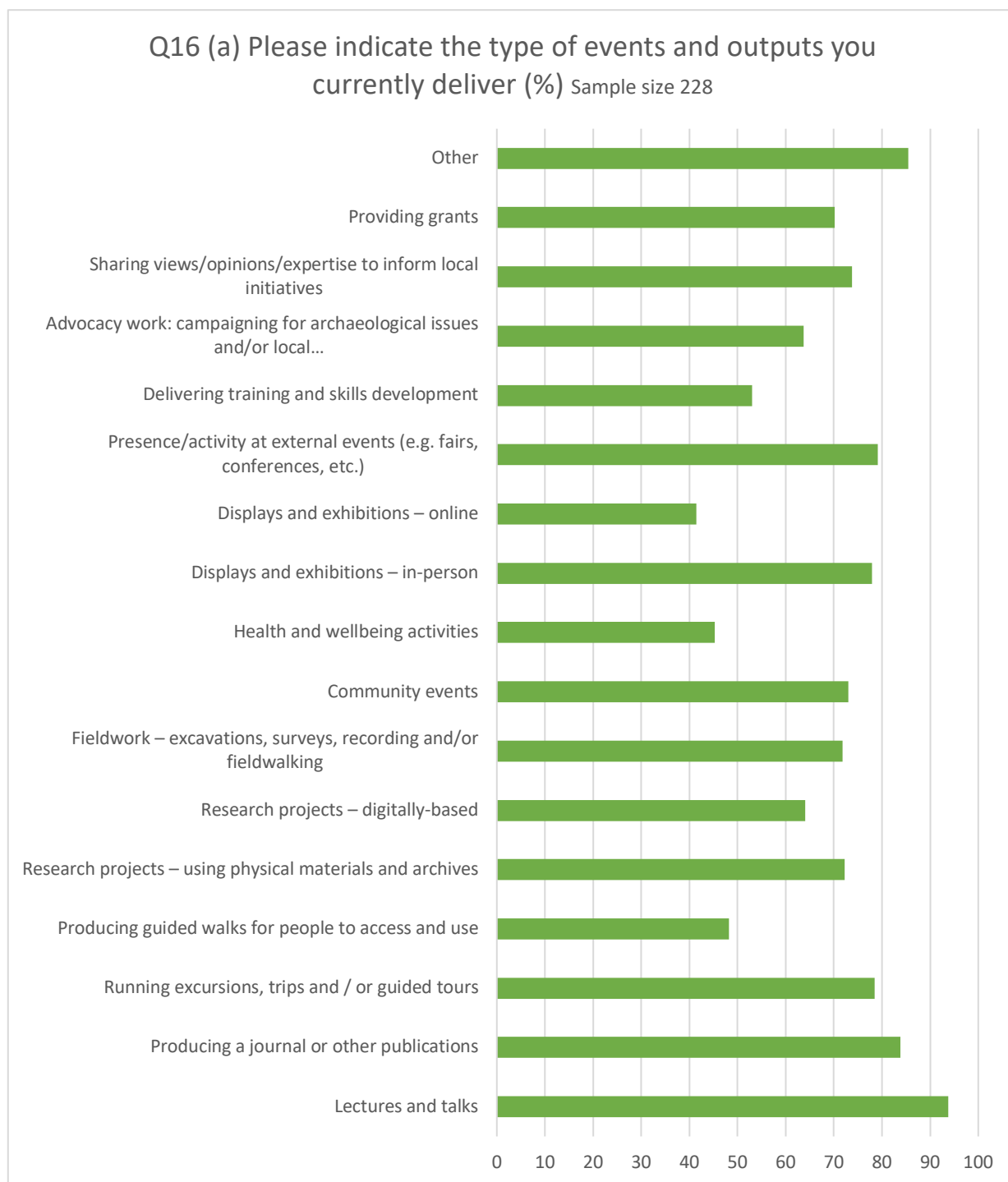




[Question 13: Are these sources of income stable, or at risk? Please briefly explain
– Text answer]



[Q15 What are the three things that you are most proud of your group achieving this year?
- Text answer]



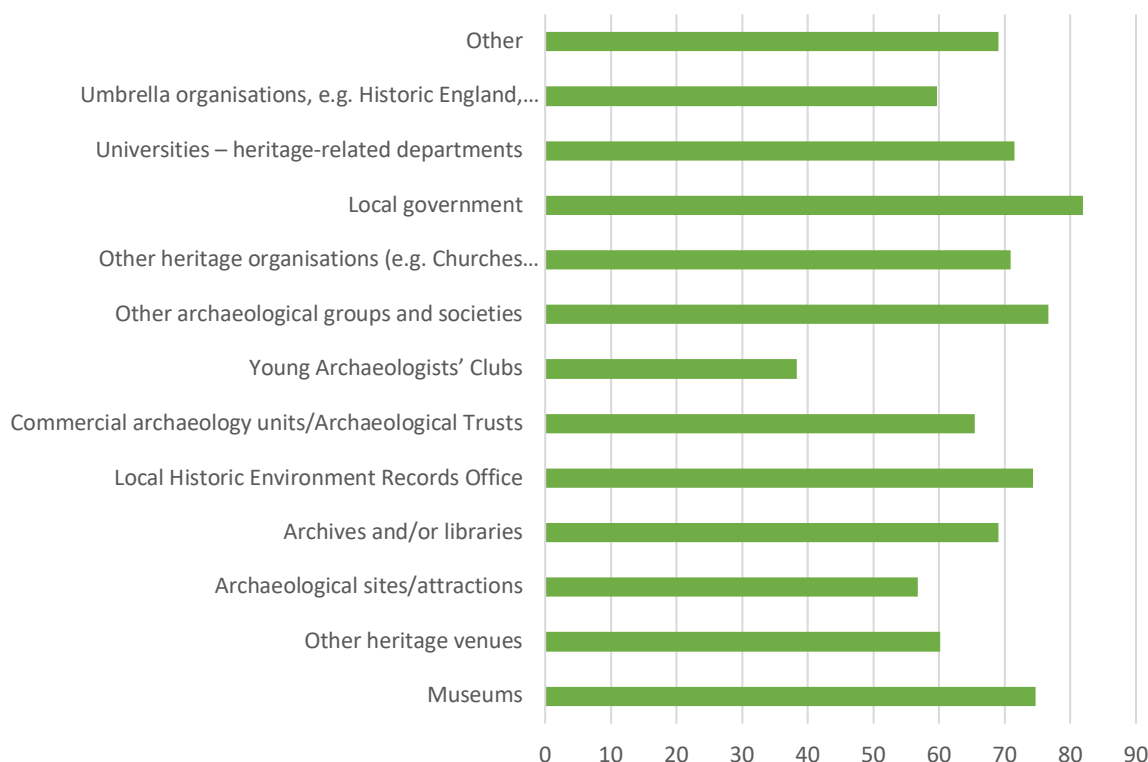
Q16 (b) Please indicate the type of events and outputs you would be interested in delivering (any current barriers aside)

(%) Sample size 228



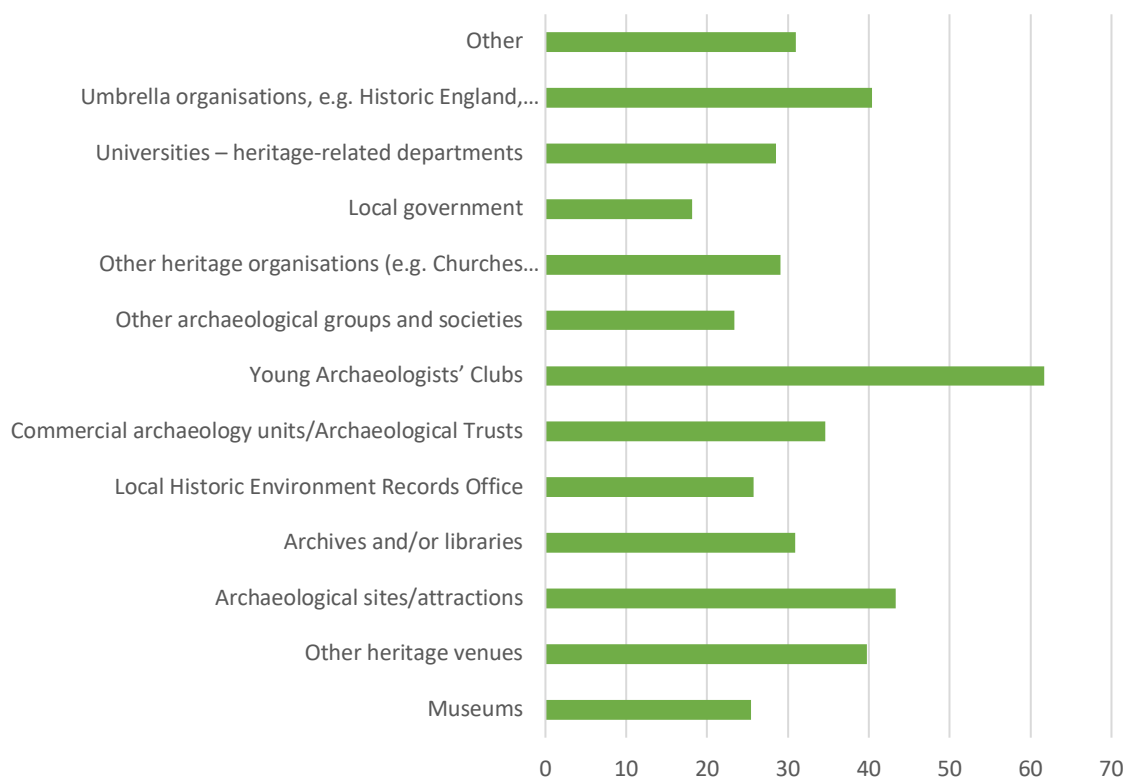
Q17 (a) Please indicate below the archaeological / historical partners you work with currently in any of your activities (%)

Sample size 217

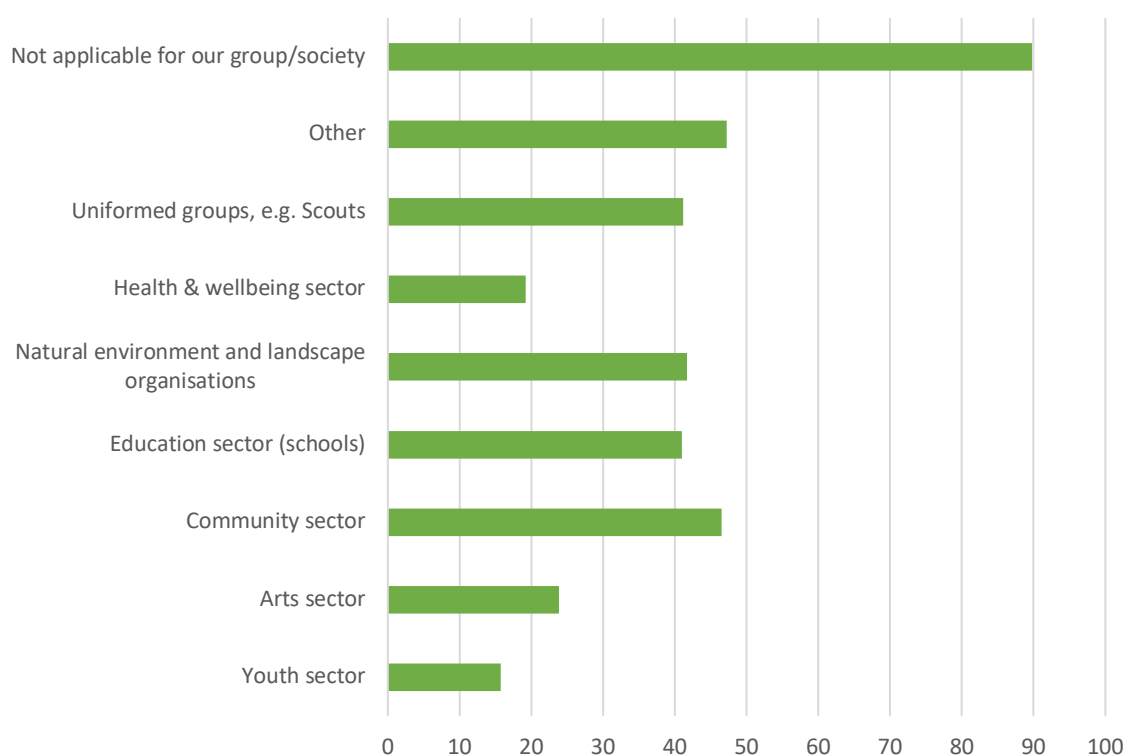


Q17 (b) Please indicate below the archaeological / historical partners that you would like to work with in the future (%)

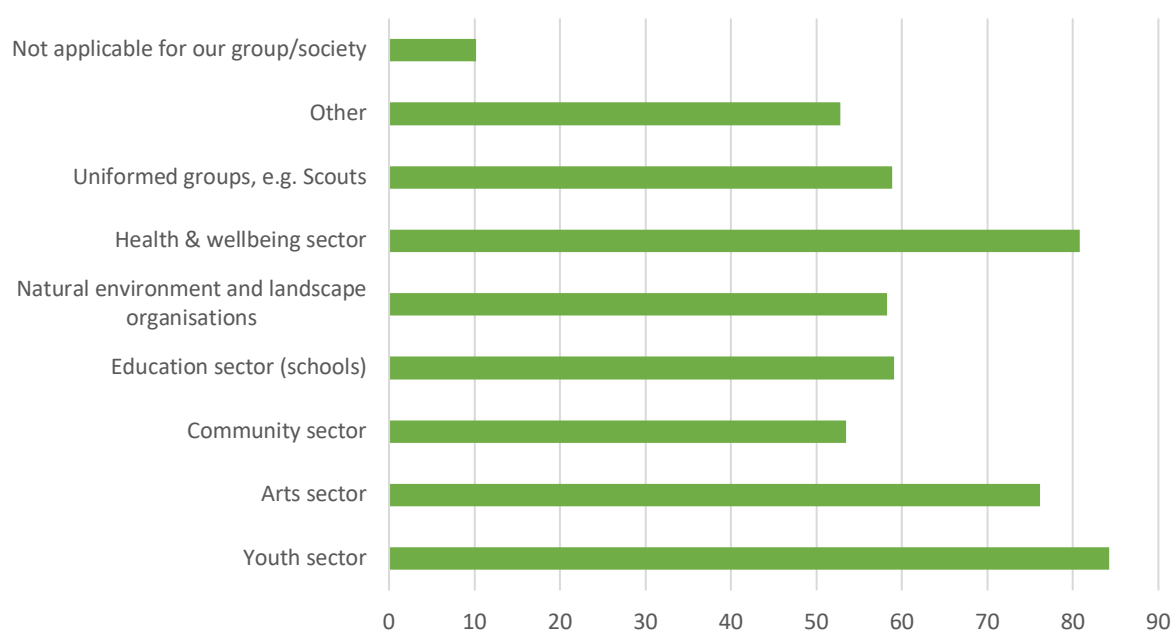
Sample size 217



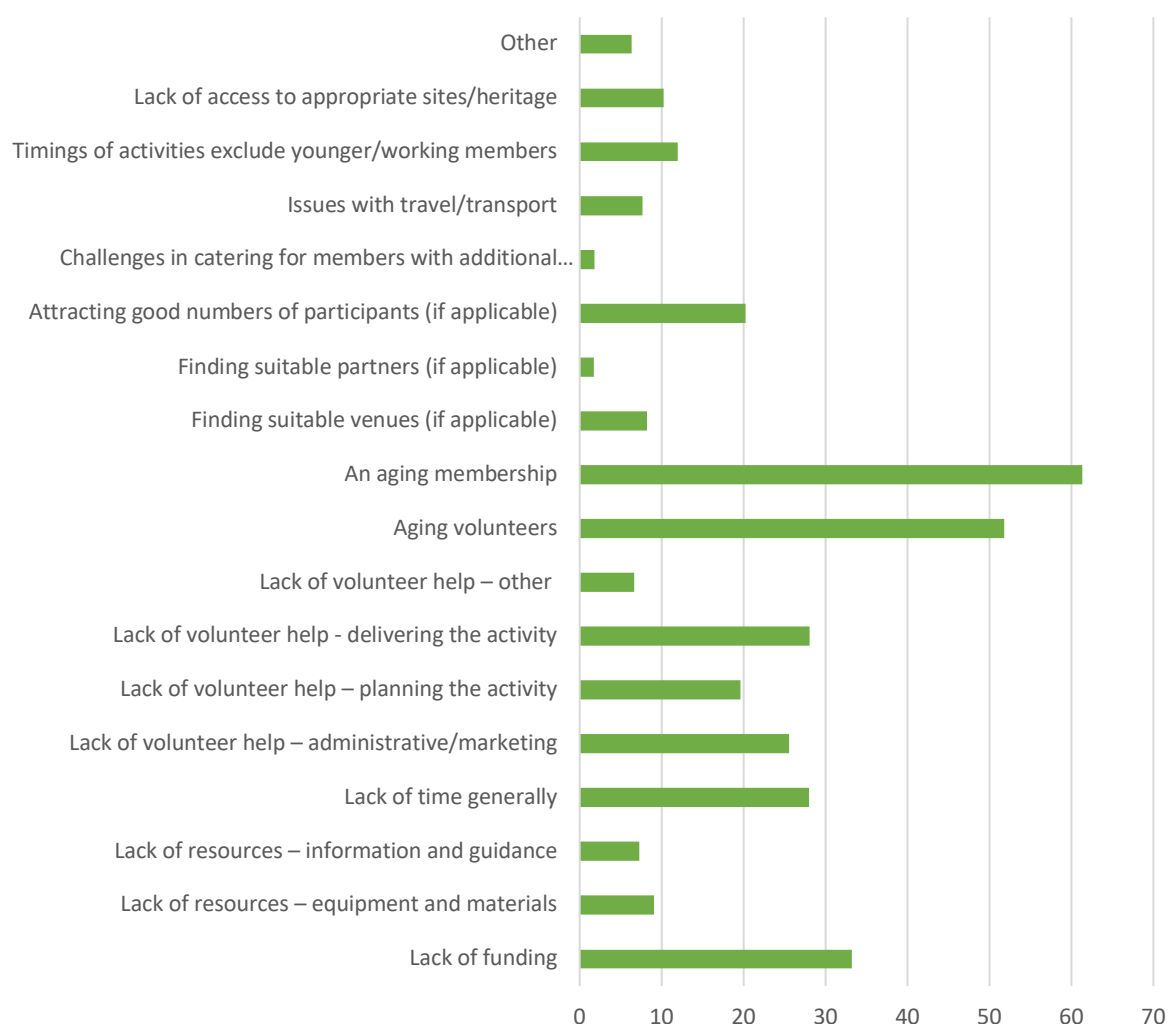
Q18 (a) If applicable, which of these other, non-heritage partners do you work with currently? (%) Sample size 187

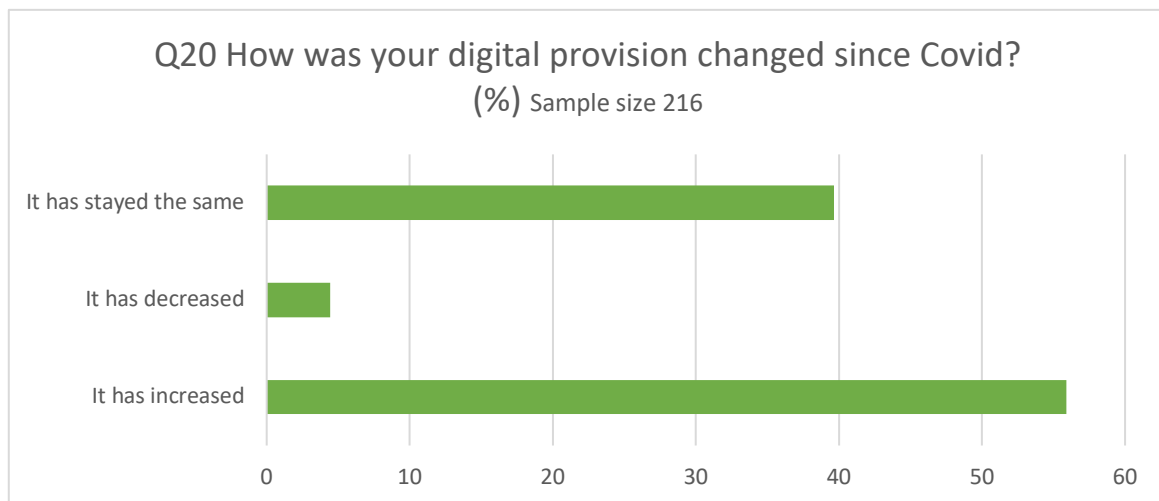


Q18 (b) If applicable, which of these non-heritage sectors would you be interested in working with? (%) (Sample size 187)

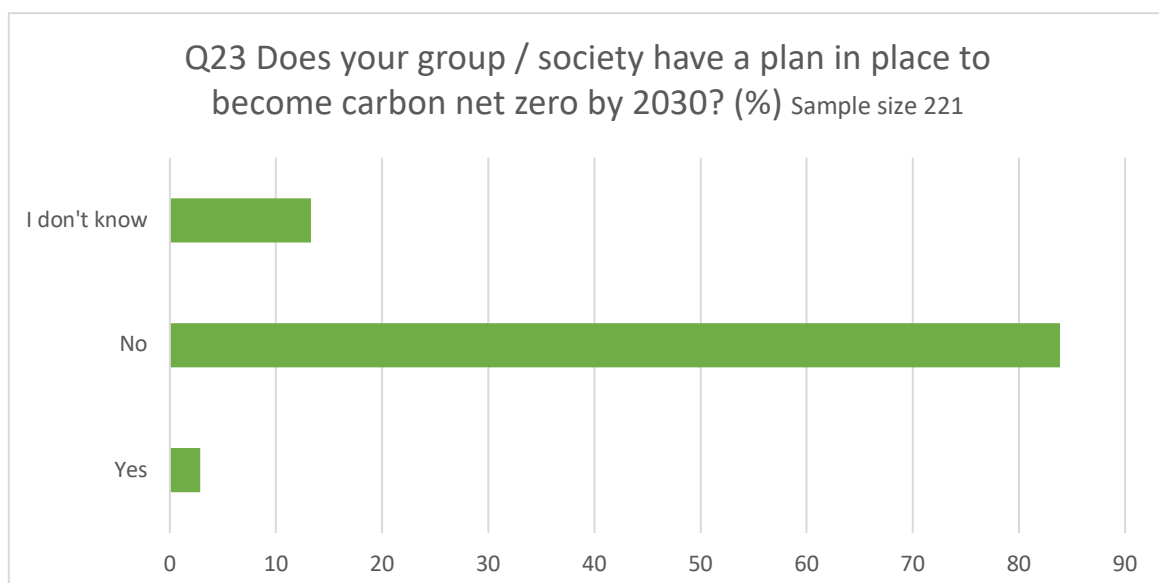


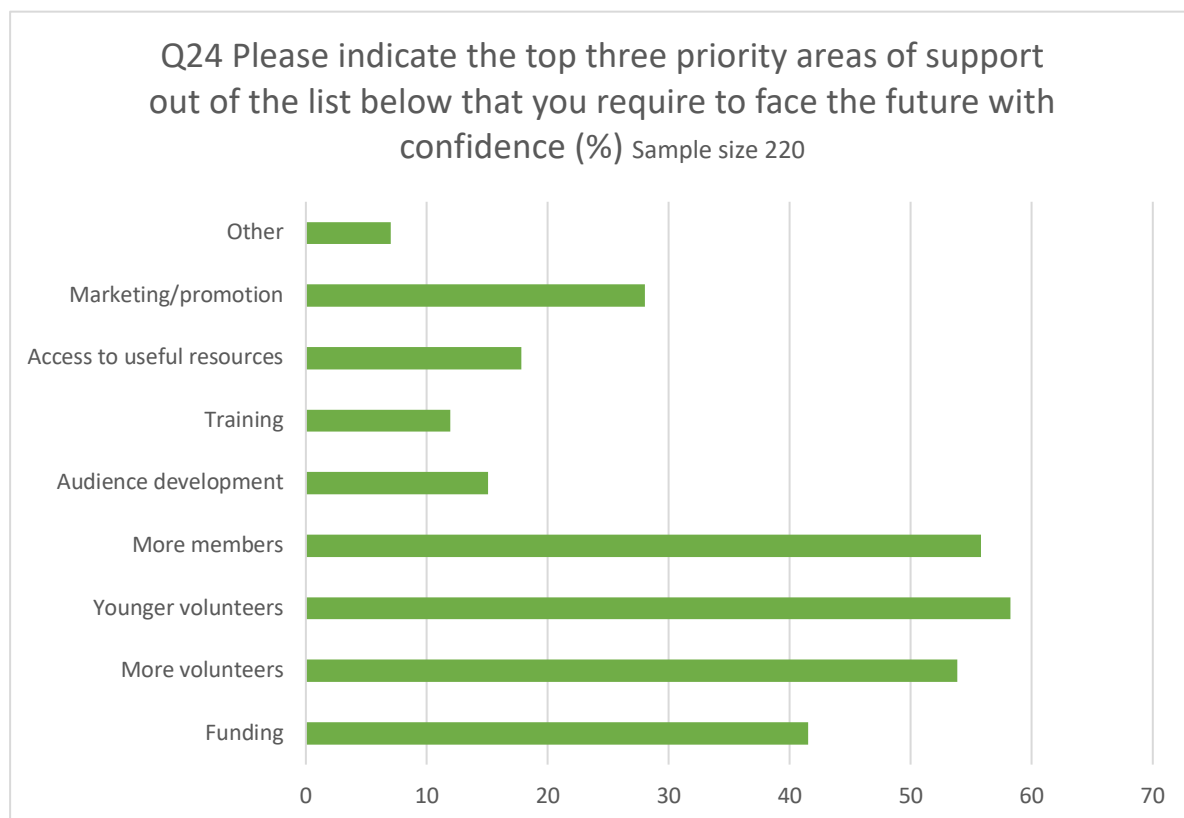
Q19 Please select from the list below the top three challenges that your organisation currently faces (%) Sample size 220



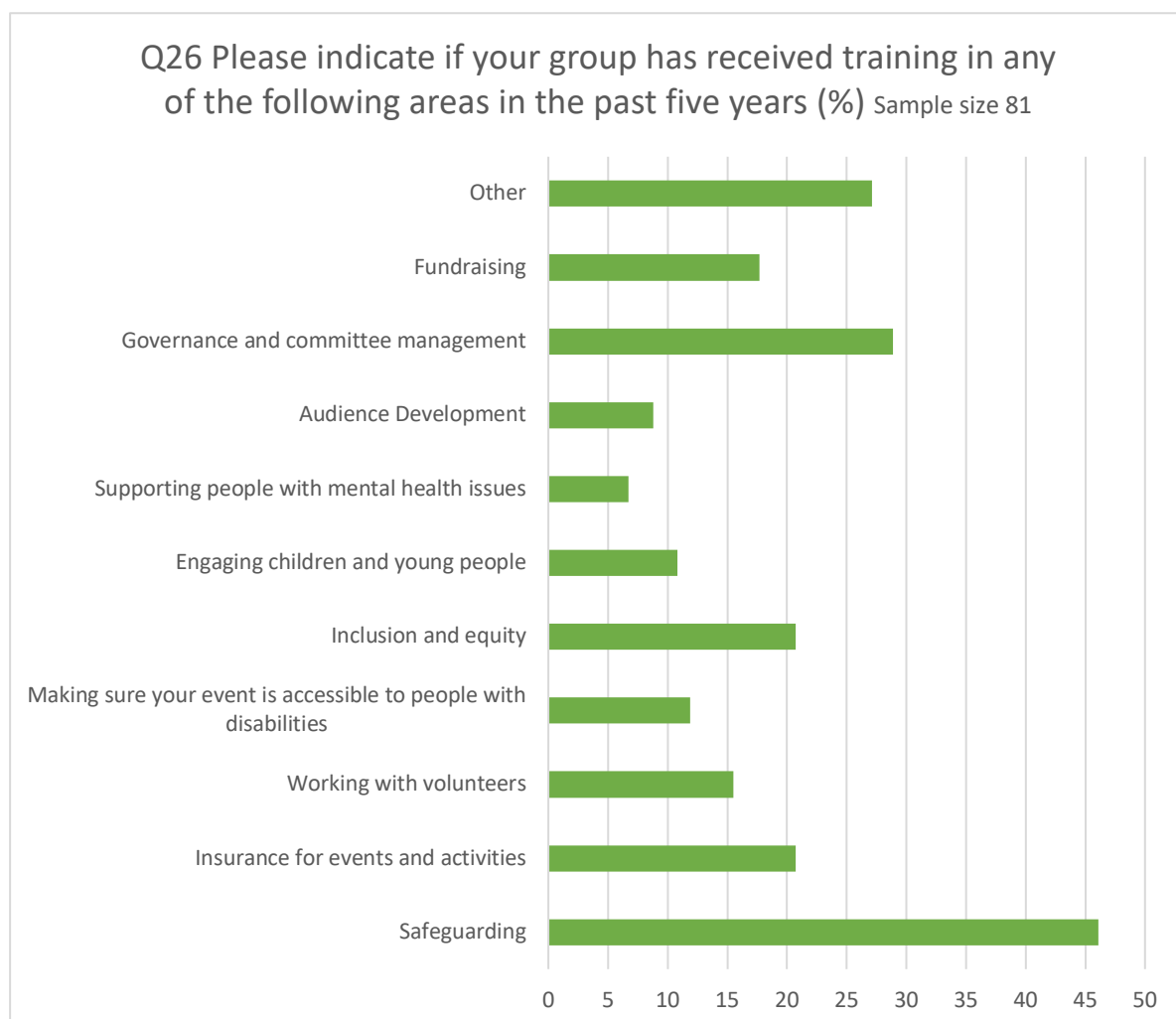


[Q21 What challenges do you experience, or envisage experiencing, in maintaining your current level of digital provision? - Text answer]





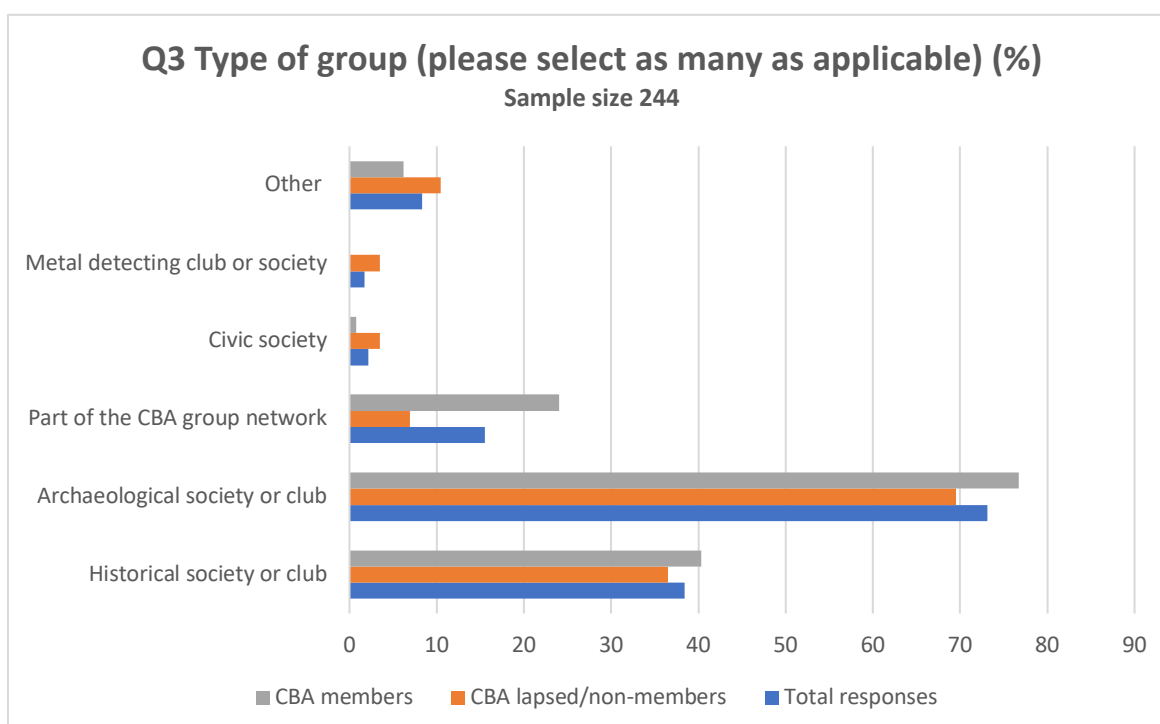
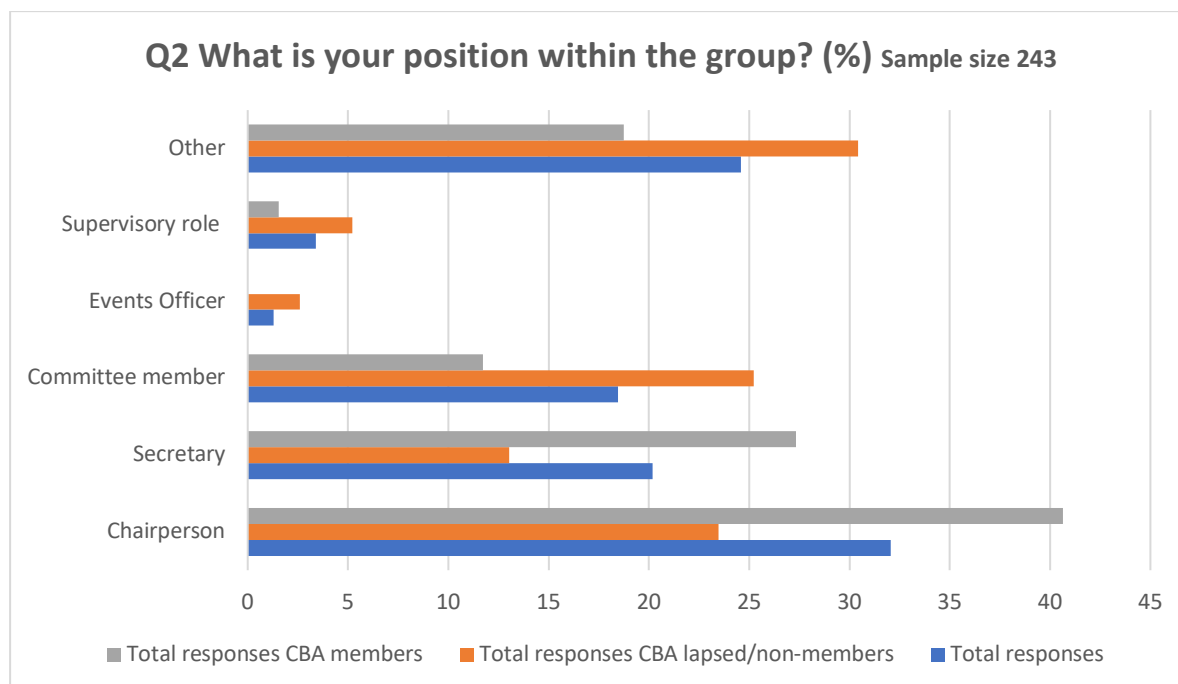
[Q25 If you would like to receive training, please let us know the specific areas of development and support you would be interested in - Text answer]

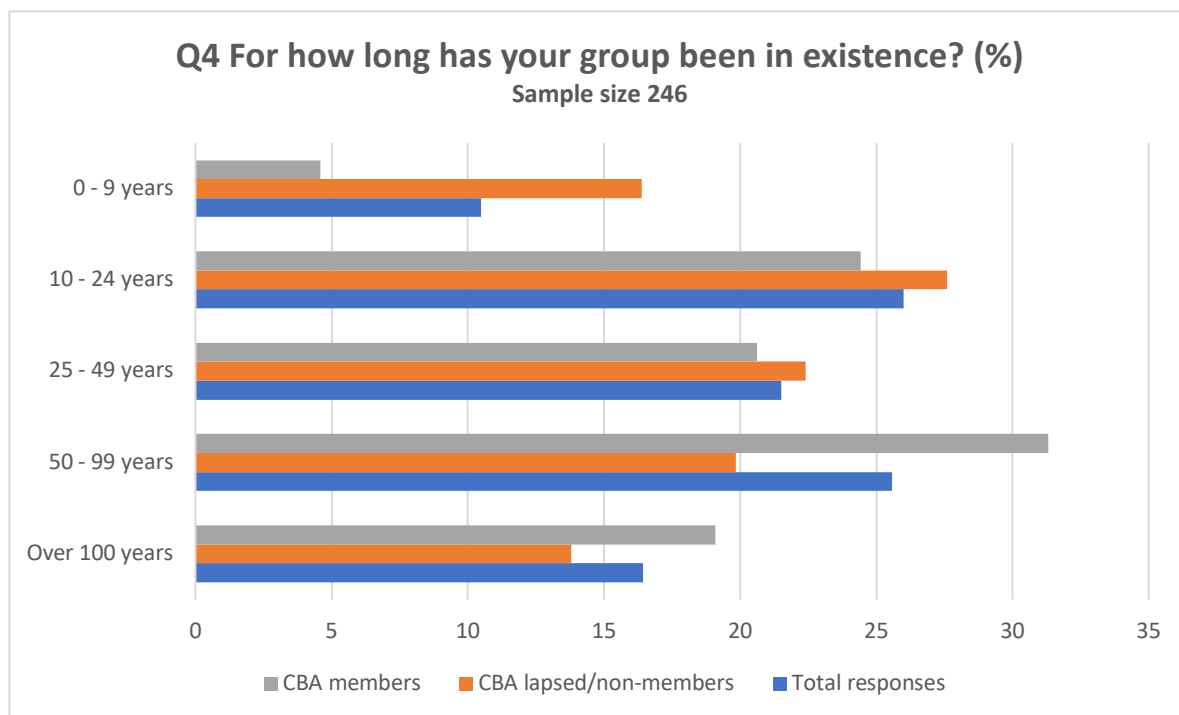


Appendix 2 Comparing CBA member responses and lapsed/non-member responses

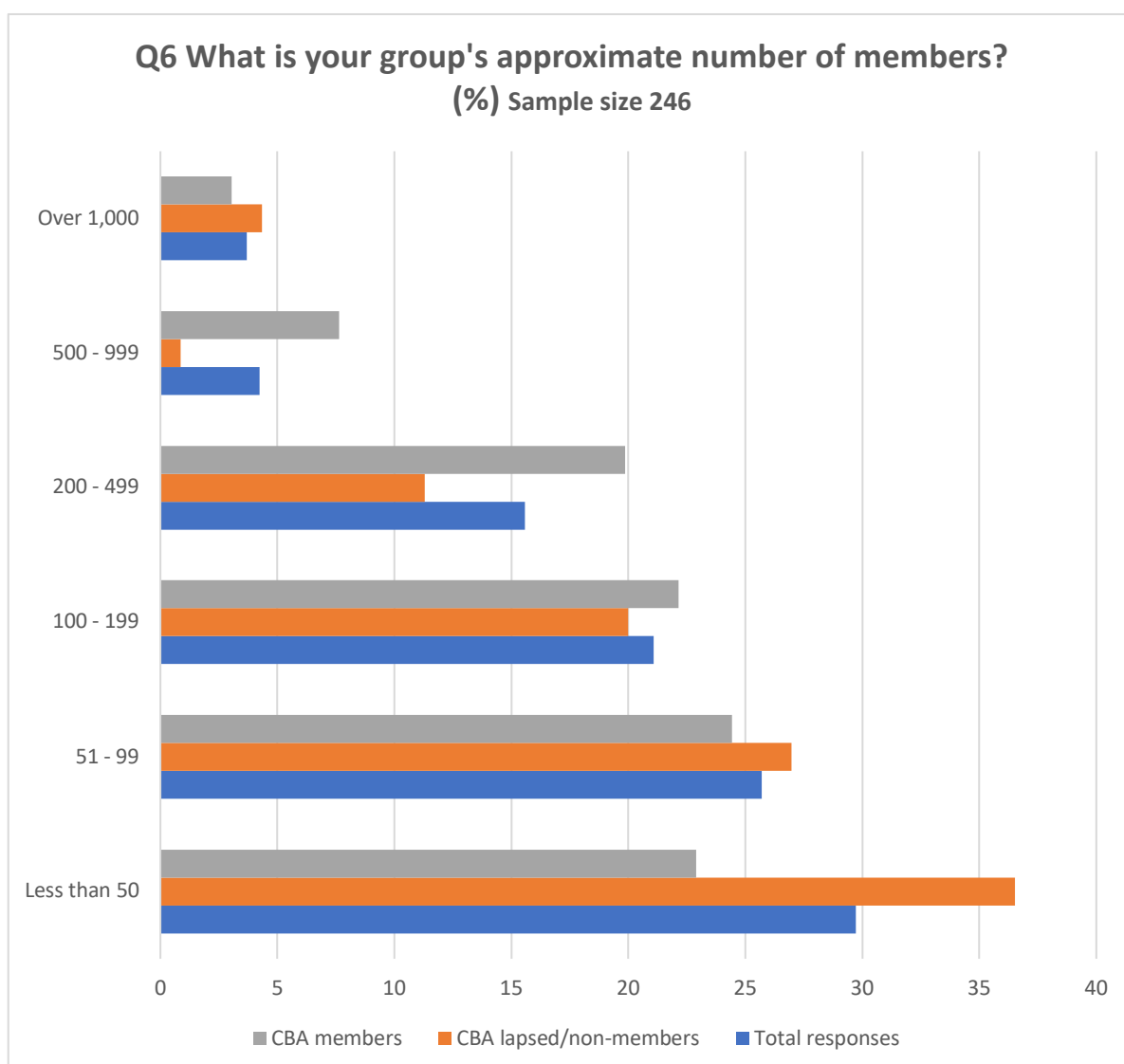
Two different cohorts groups were approached and responded separately to the online survey questions, resulting in two separate but comparable sets of data: current CBA members, and lapsed and non-CBA members. Some interesting conclusions can be drawn when viewing the data sets side by side, as summarised below. The 'Total responses' shown in blue present the average of the two sets of data.

[Question 1: What is the name of your group or Society – Text answer]

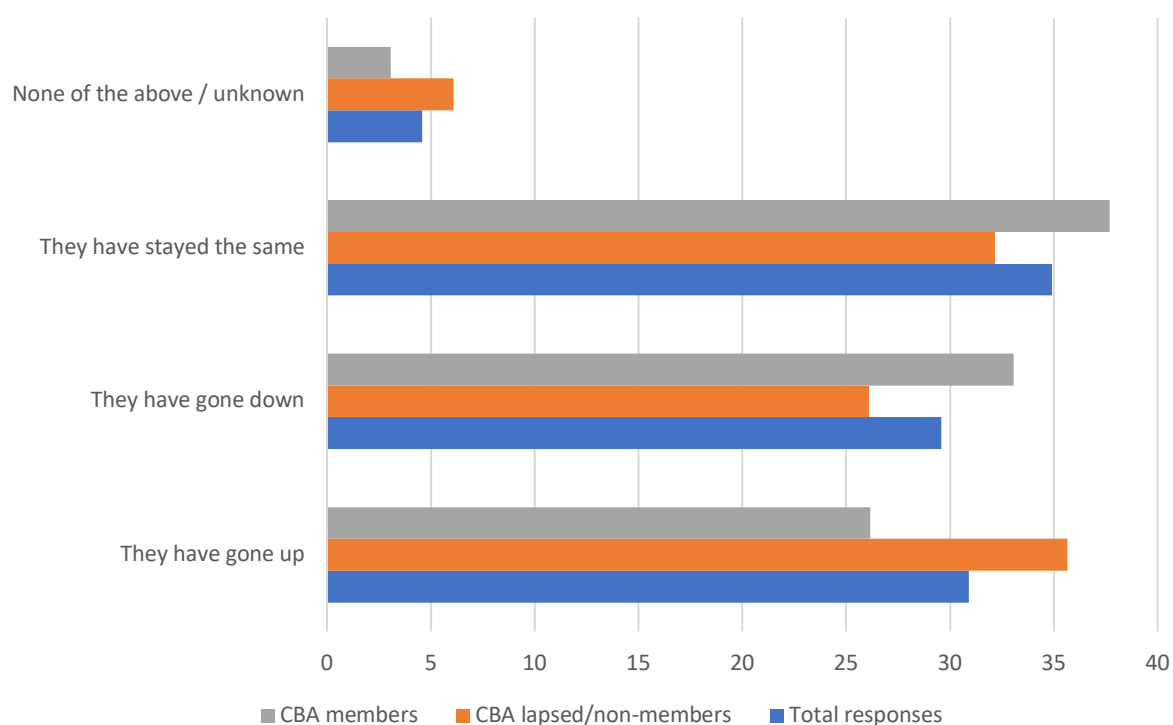




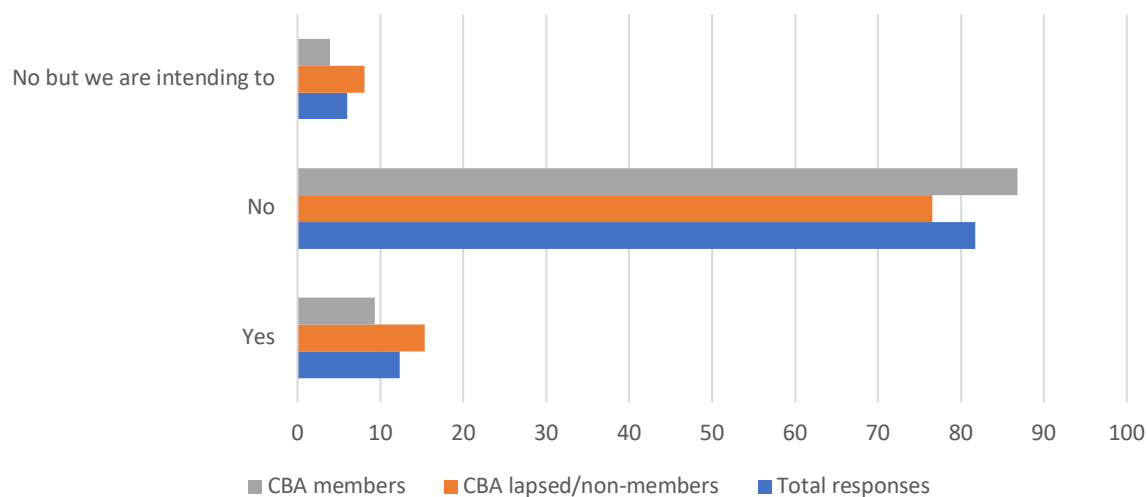
[Question 5: What is the geographical area your group works within? – Text answer]



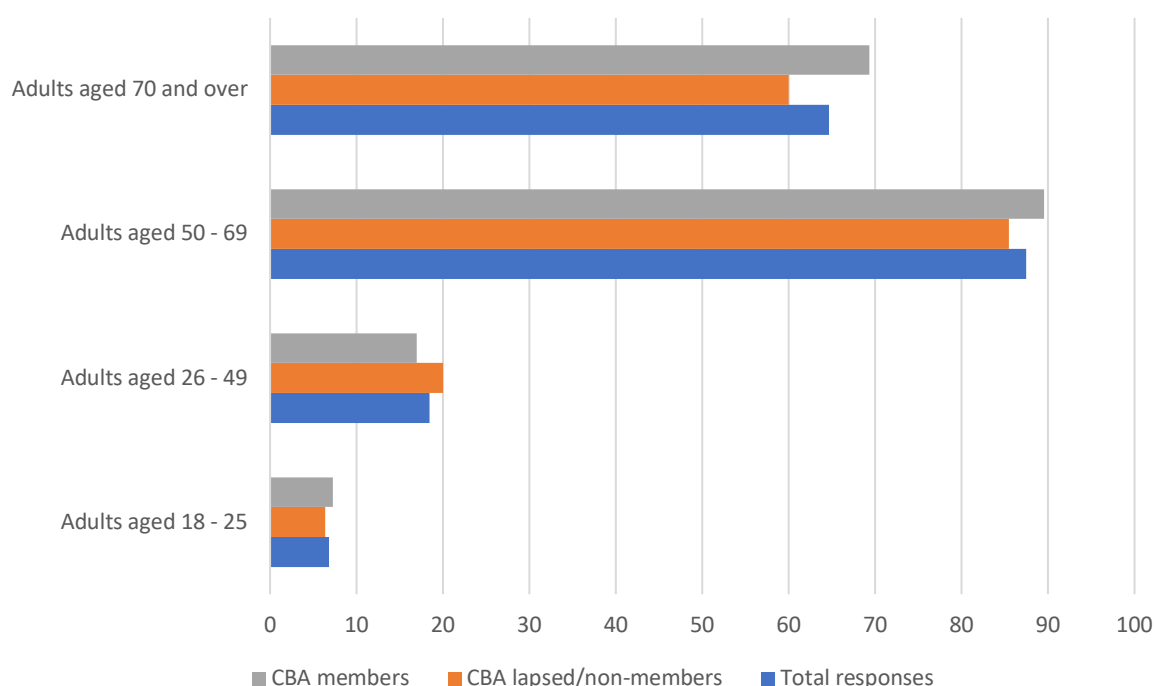
Q7 Please select below which best describes your membership numbers in the last five years (%) Sample size 245



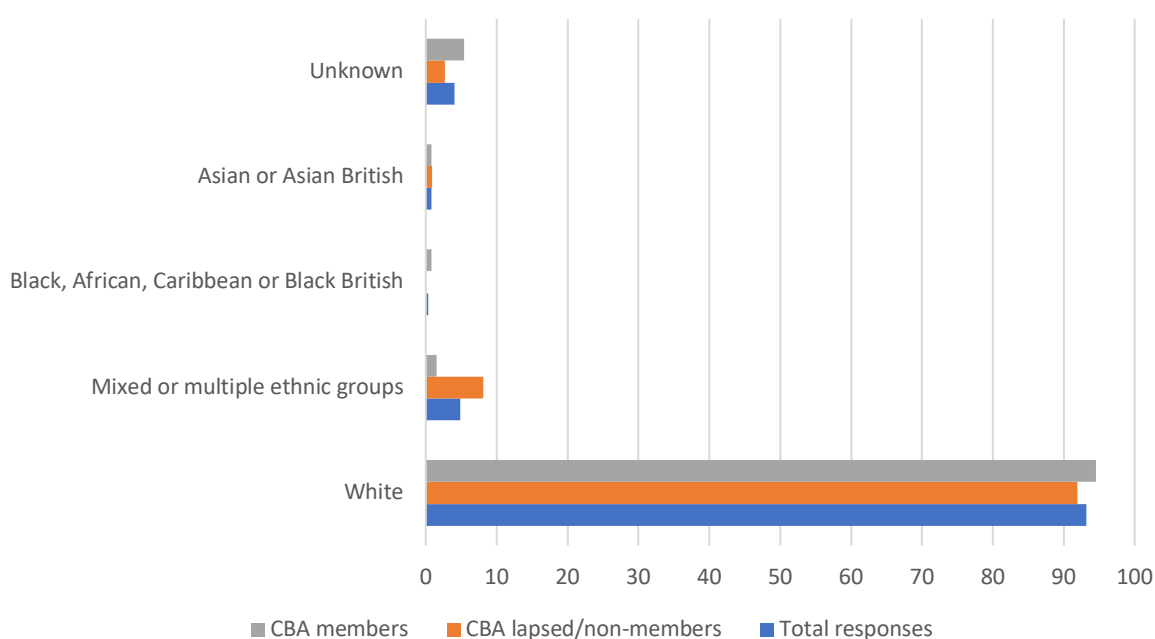
Q8 Do you keep records of the demographics (age, ethnicity, etc.) of your members? (%) Sample size 240



Q9 Please indicate which out of the following list best represents your age profile (you may tick more than one option) (%) Sample size 234

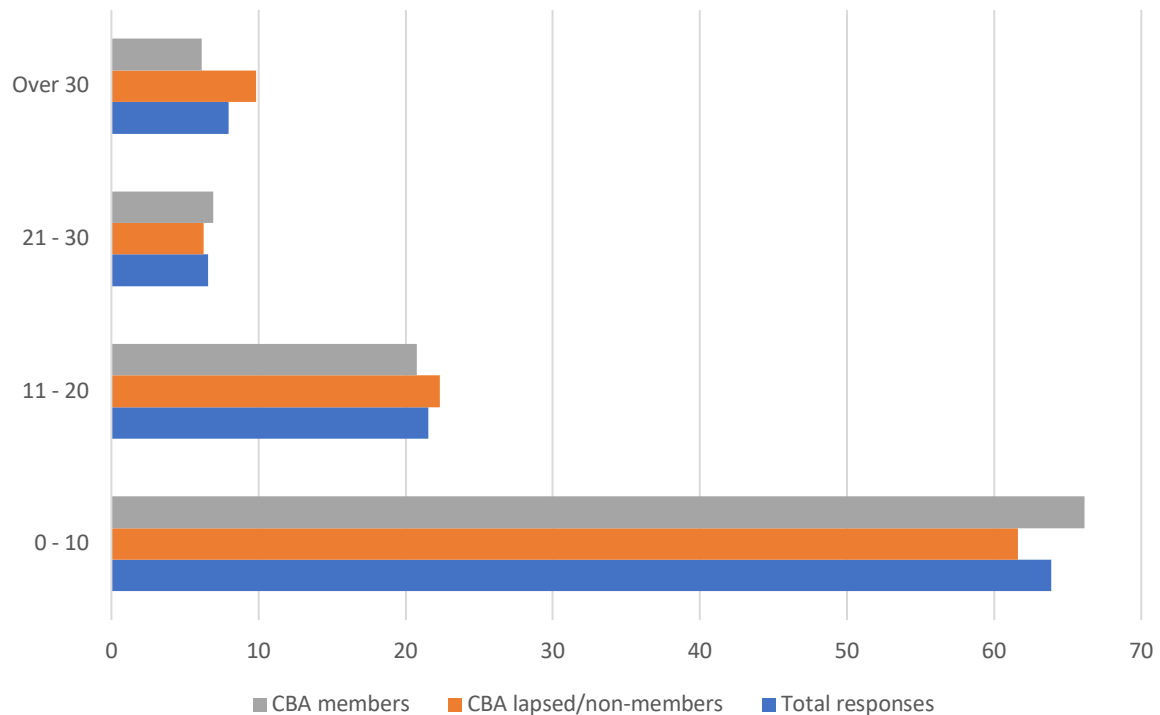


Q10 Please broadly indicate which, out of the following list, best represents the ethnicity of your membership (%) Sample size 240



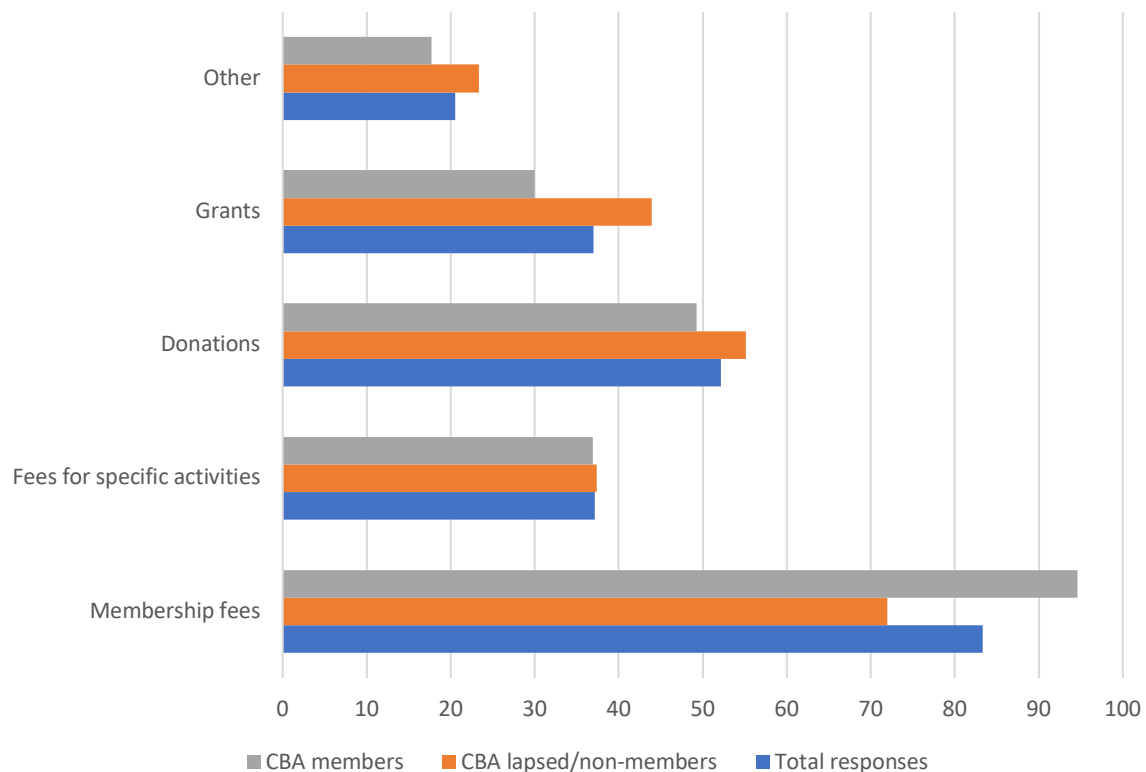
Q11 Approximately how many volunteers are regularly involved in organising your group's activities? (%)

Sample size 242



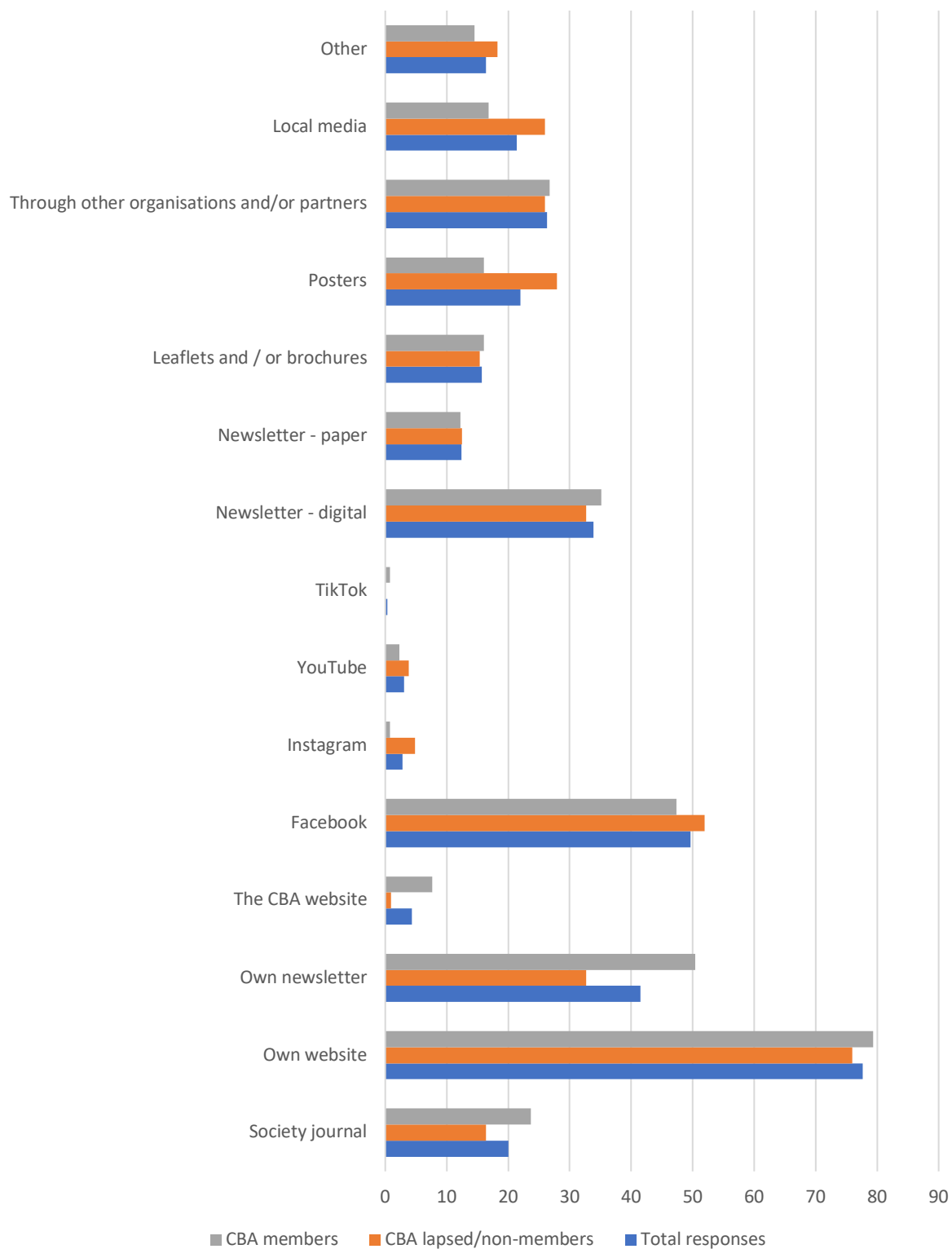
Q12 How does your group fund its activities? (%)

Sample size 237

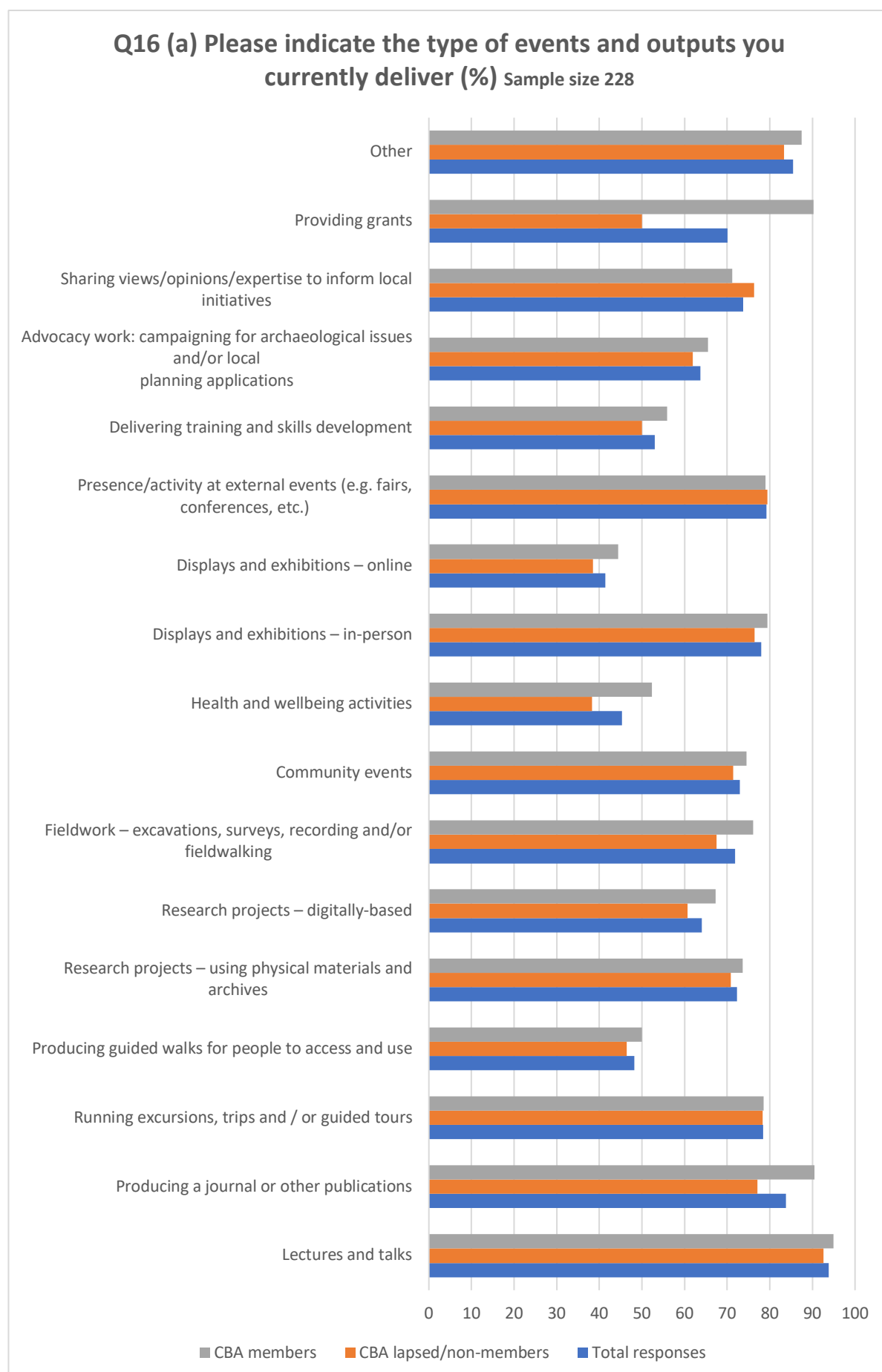


**[Question 13: Are these sources of income stable, or at risk? Please briefly explain
– Text answer]**

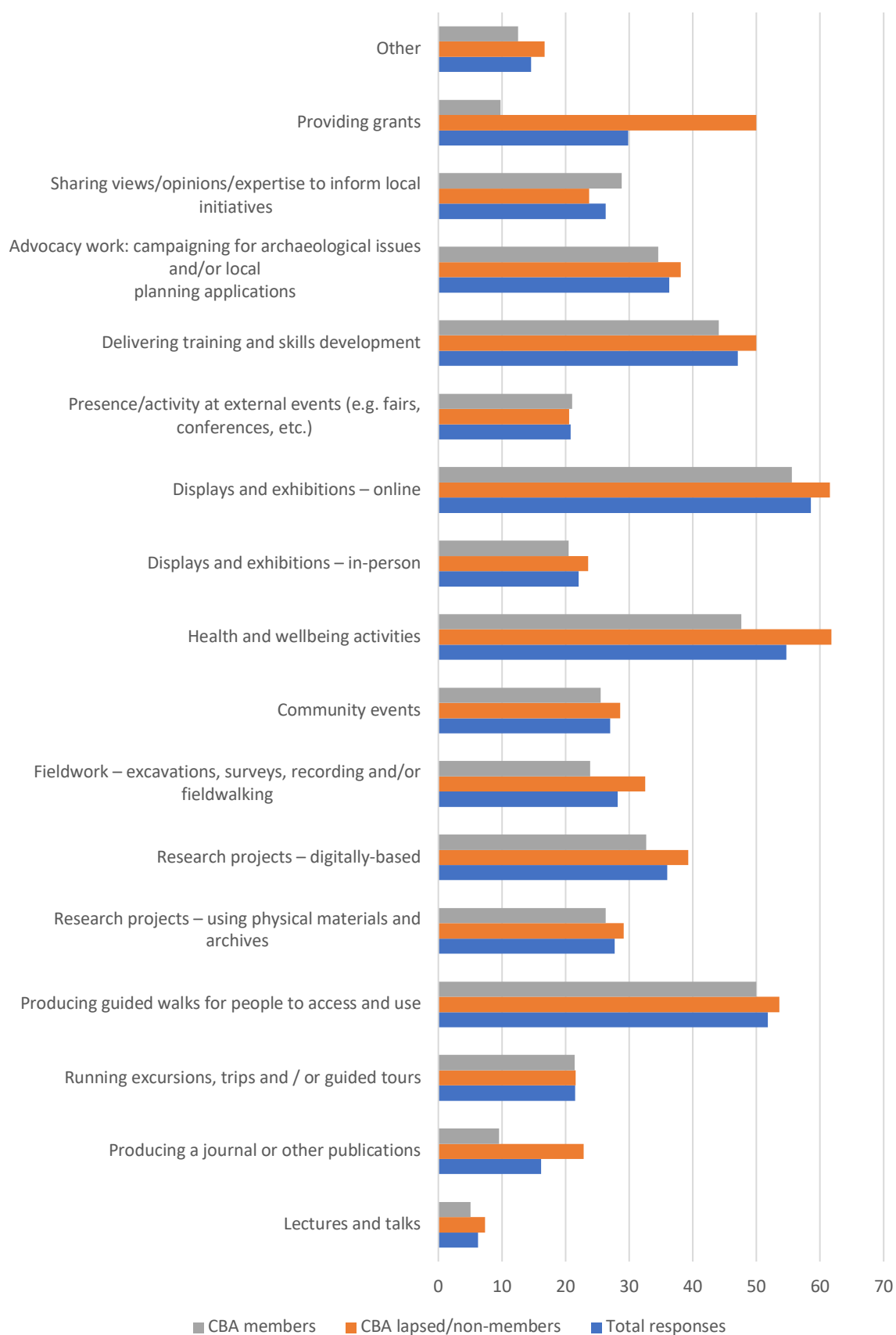
Q14 Please indicate from the list below, the three most important forms of communications that you use to promote your group's activities (%) Sample size 235



[Question 15: What are the three things that you are most proud of your group achieving this year? – Text answer]

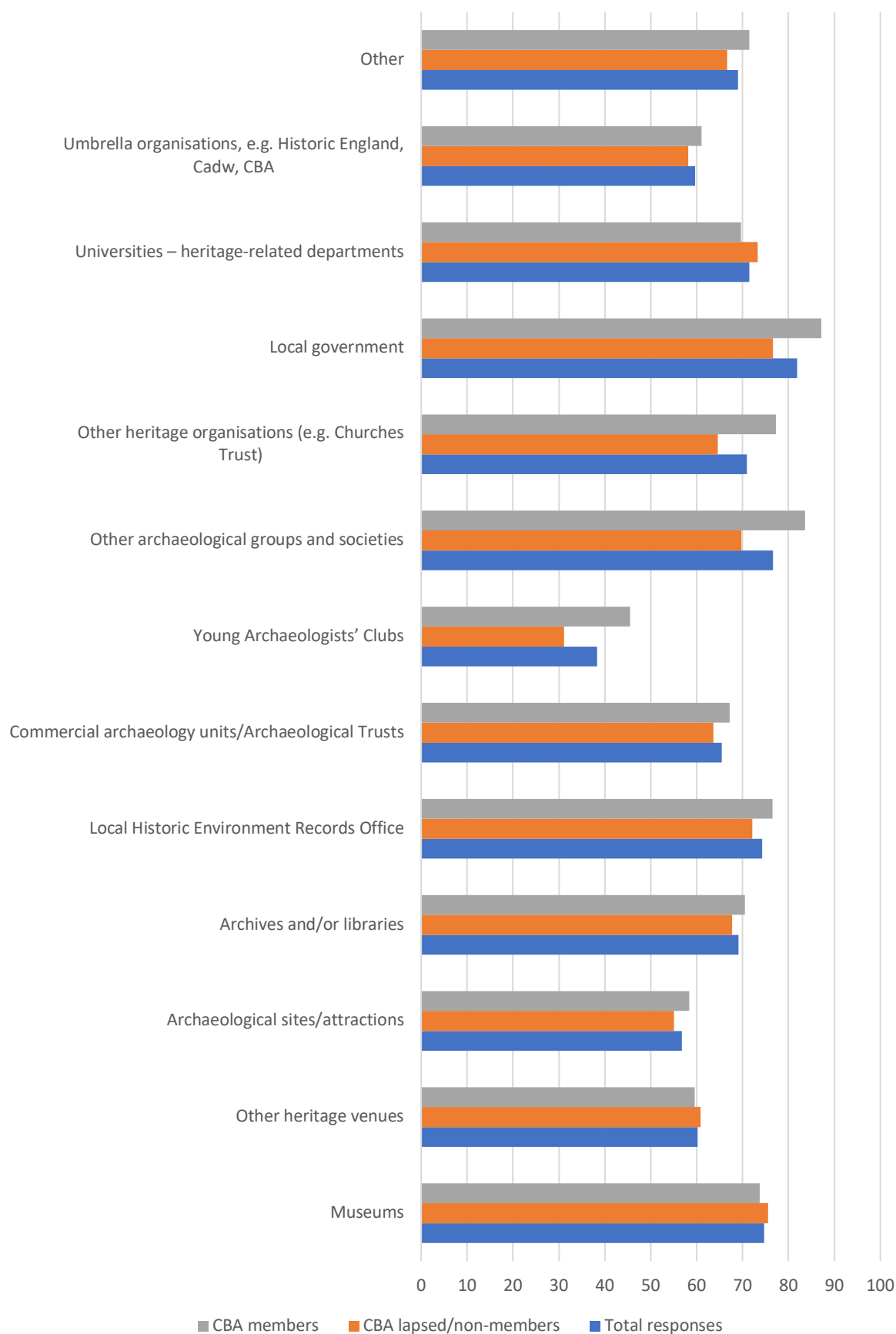


Q16 (b) Please indicate the type of events and outputs you would be interested in delivering (any current barriers aside) (%) Sample size 228

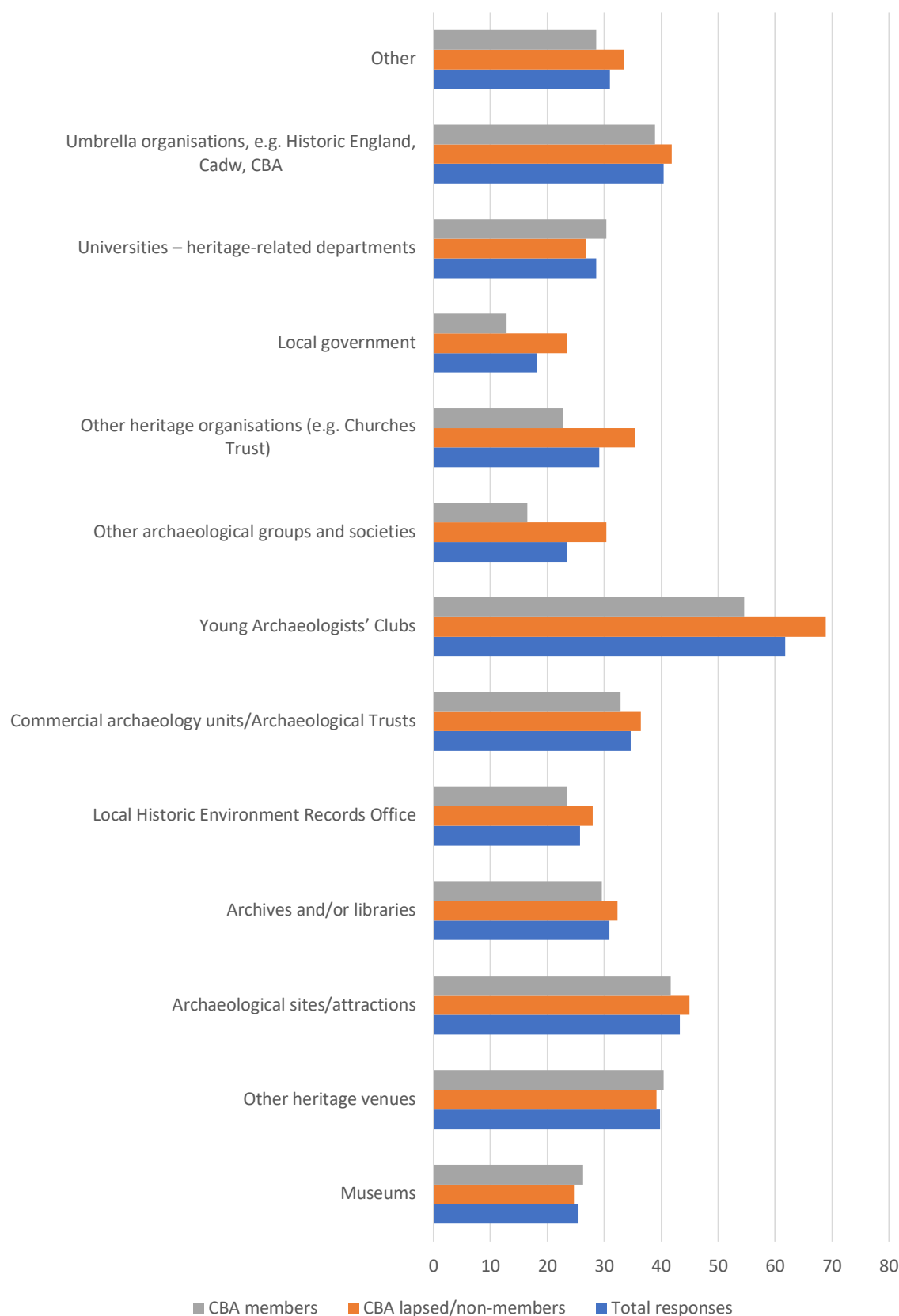


Q17 (a) Please indicate below the archaeological / historical partners you work with currently in any of your activities (%)

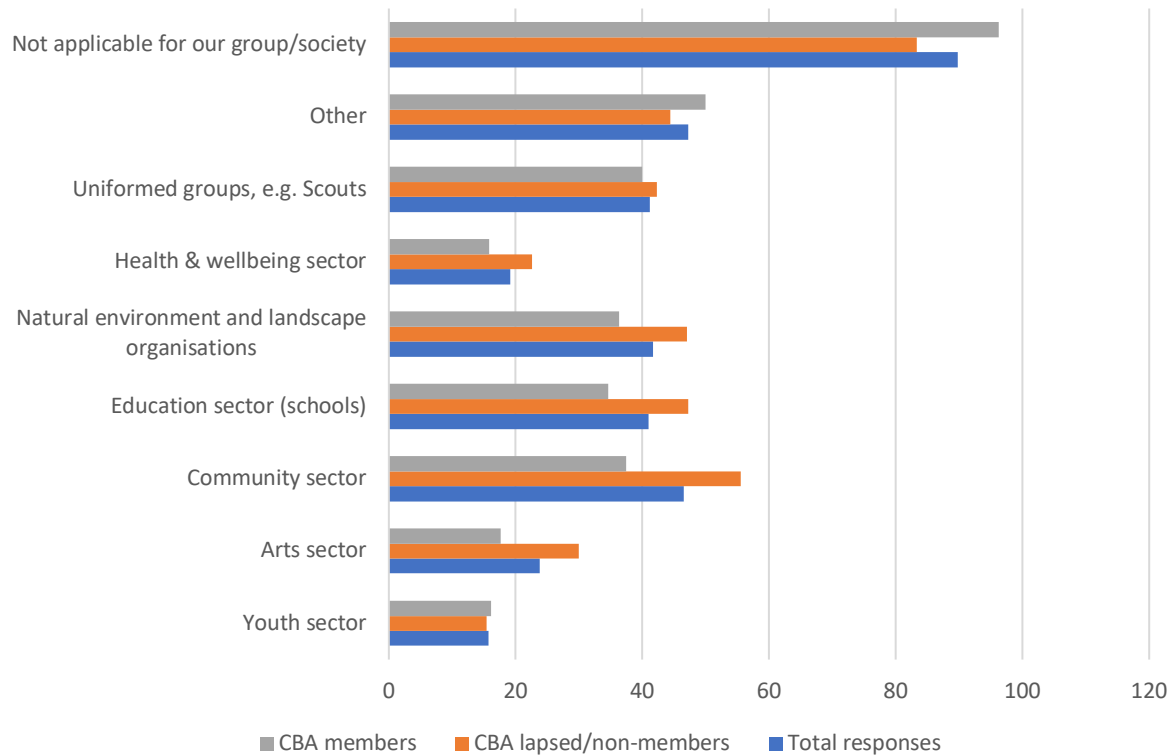
Sample size 217



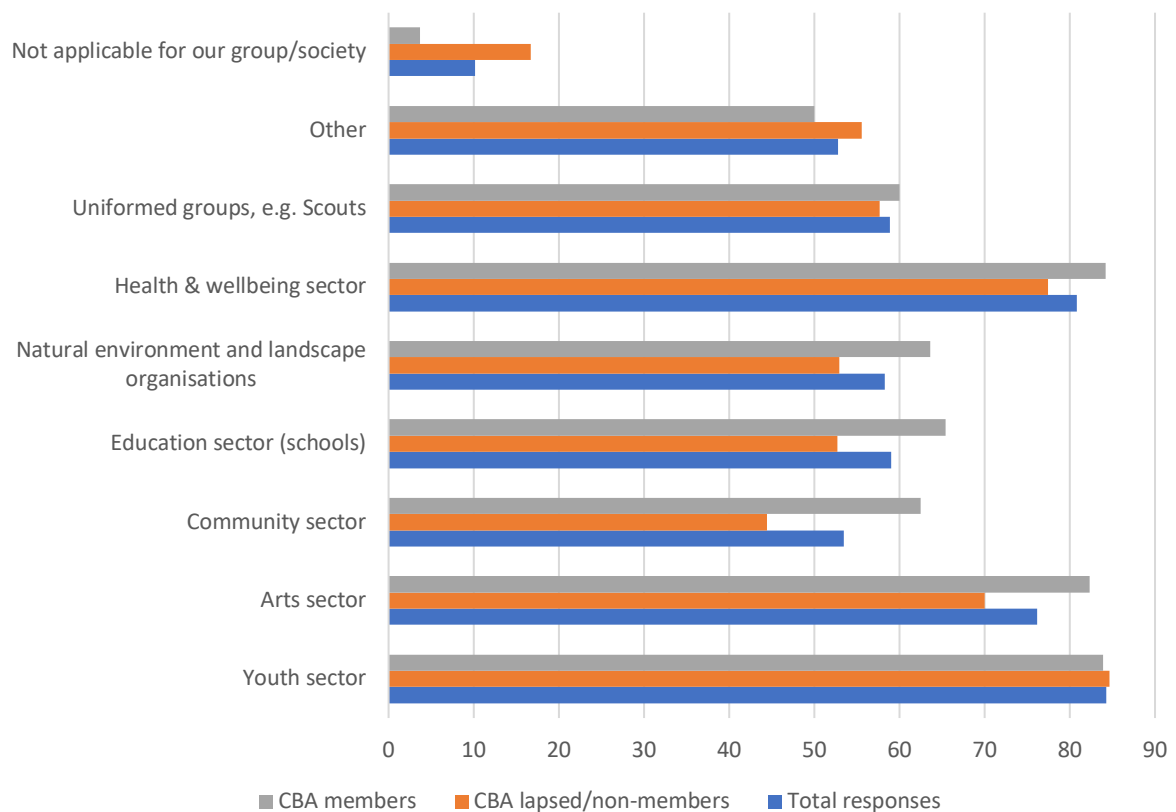
Q17 (b) Please indicate below the archaeological / historical partners that you would like to work with in the future (%) Sample size 217



Q18 (a) If applicable, which of these other, non-heritage partners do you work with currently? (%) Sample size 187



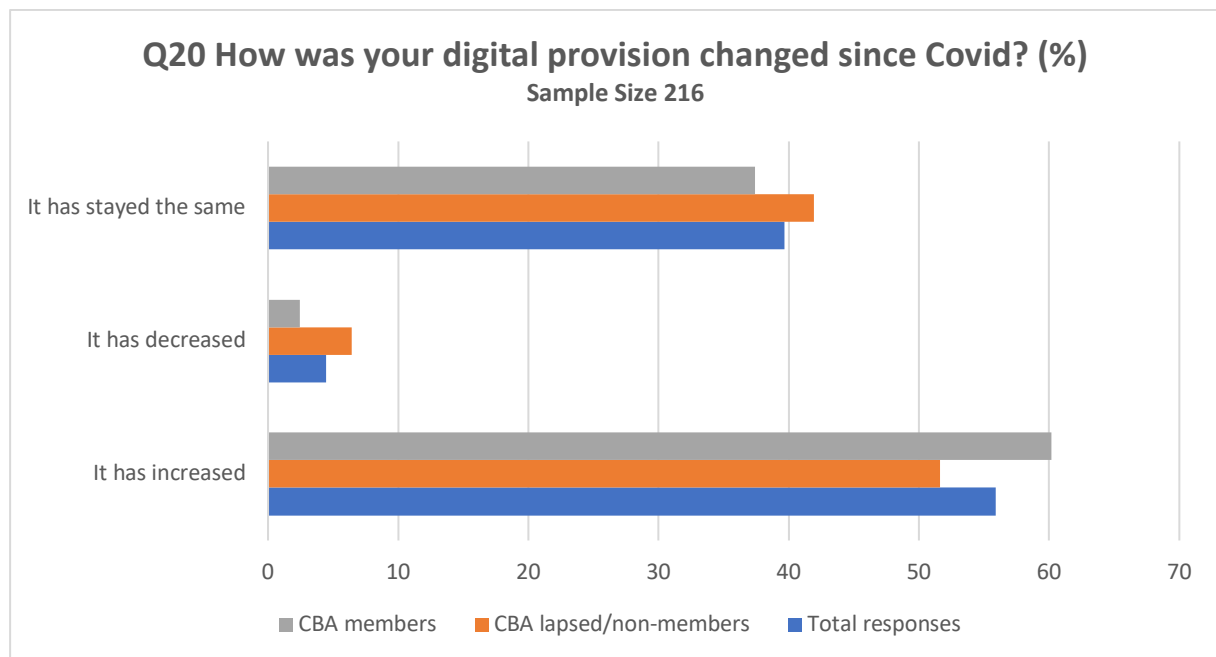
Q18 (b) If applicable, which of these non-heritage sectors would you be interested in working with? (%) Sample size 187



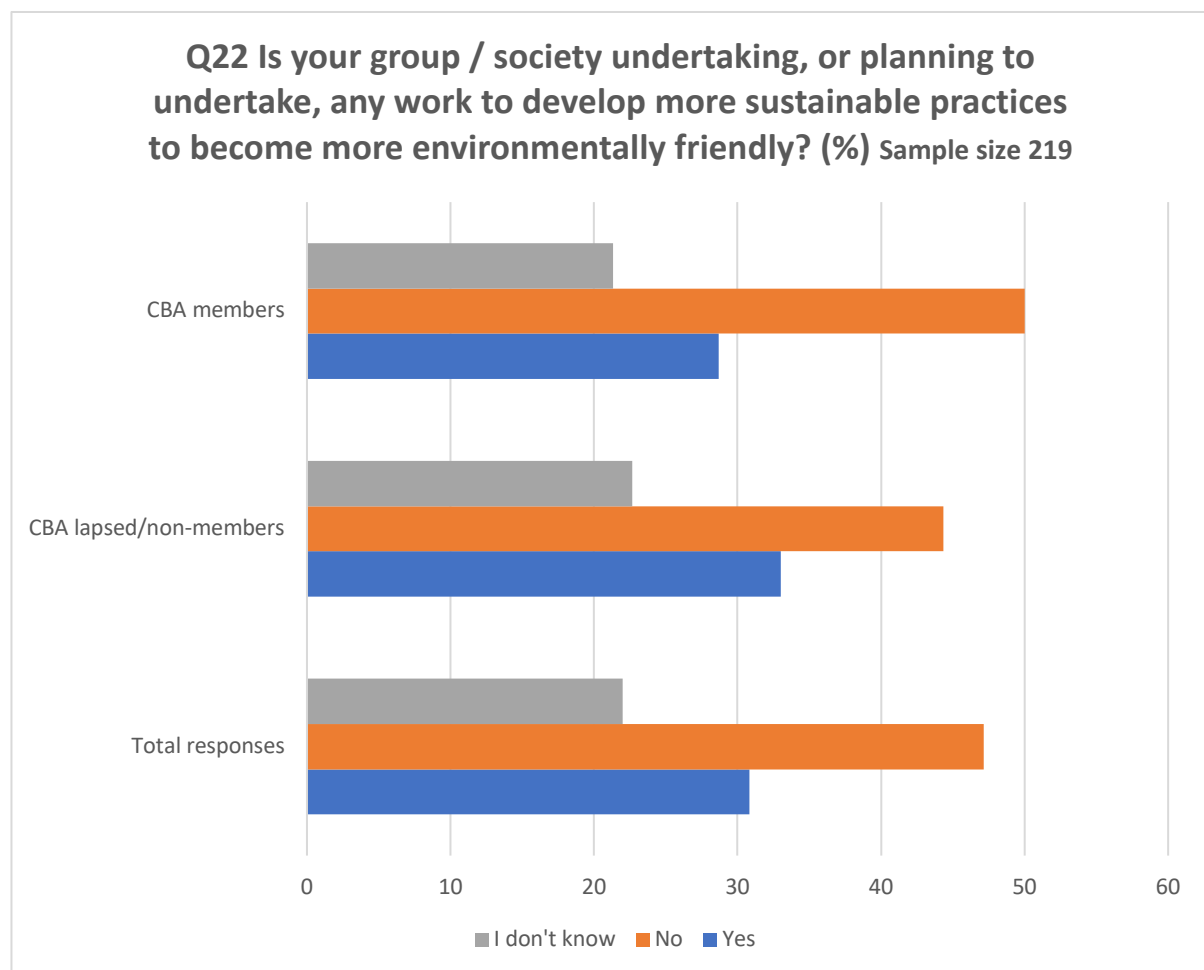
Q19 Please select from the list below the top three challenges that your organisation currently faces (%)

Sample size 220

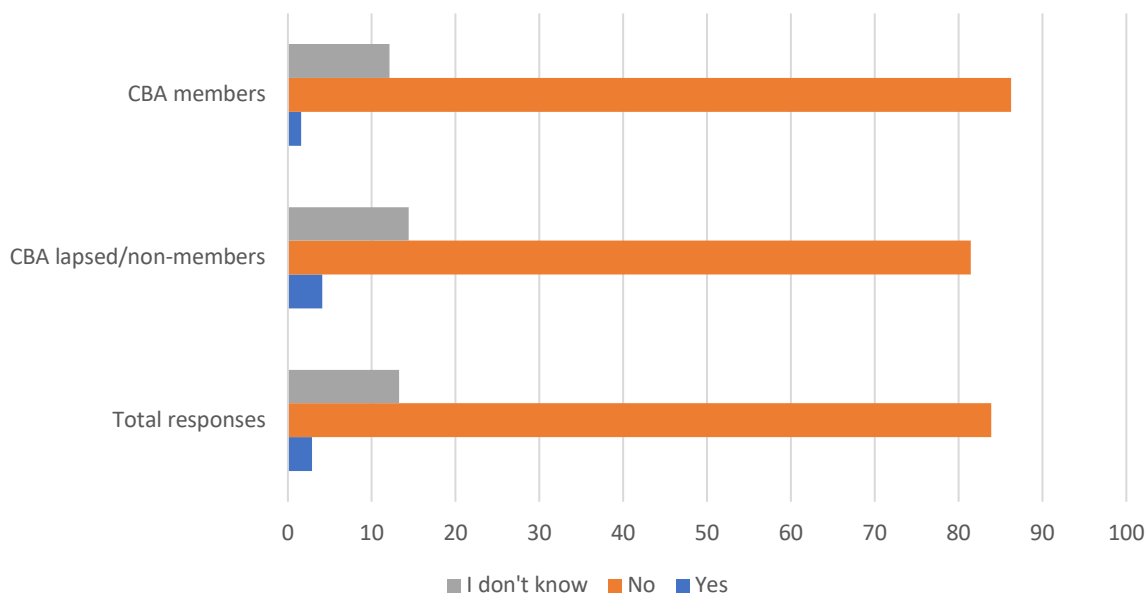




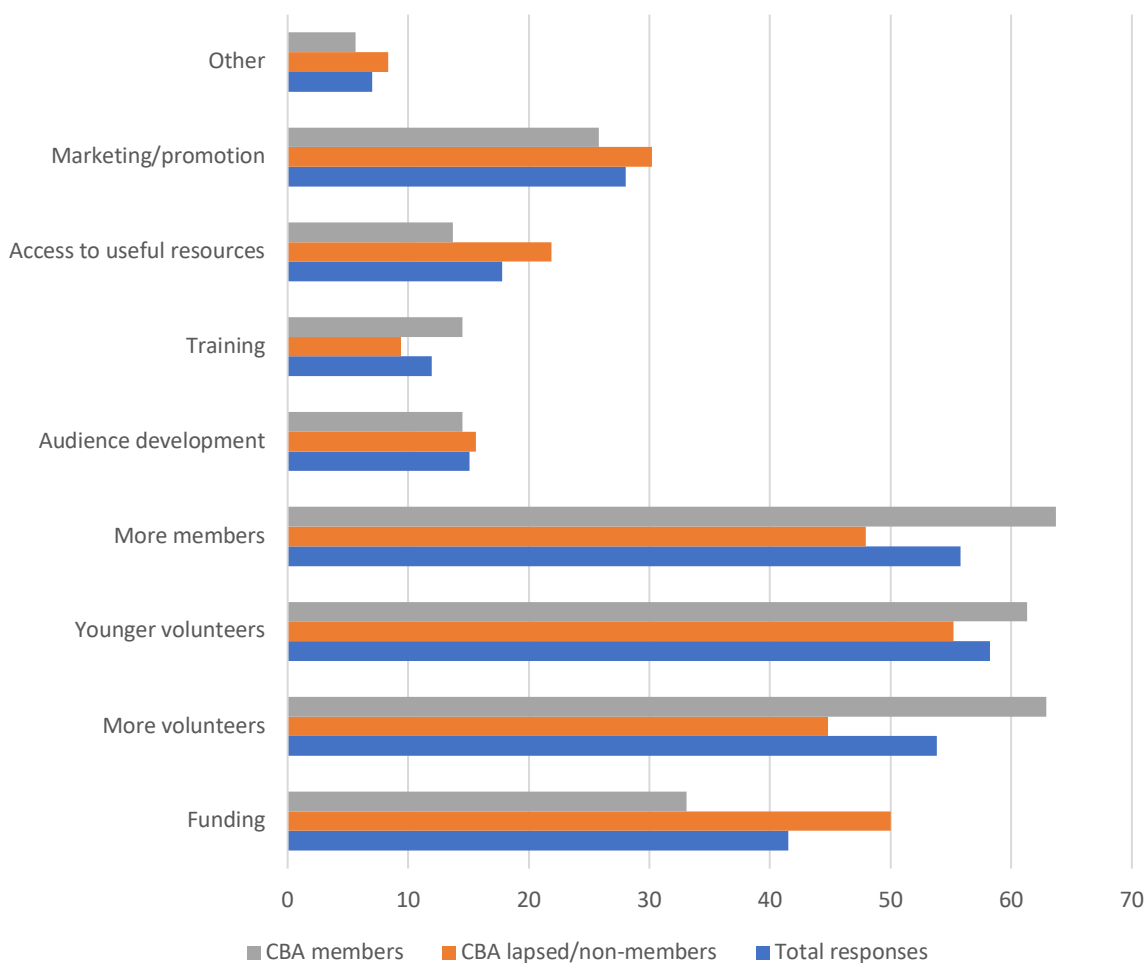
[Question 21: What challenges do you experience, or envisage experiencing, in maintaining your current level of digital provision? – Text answer]



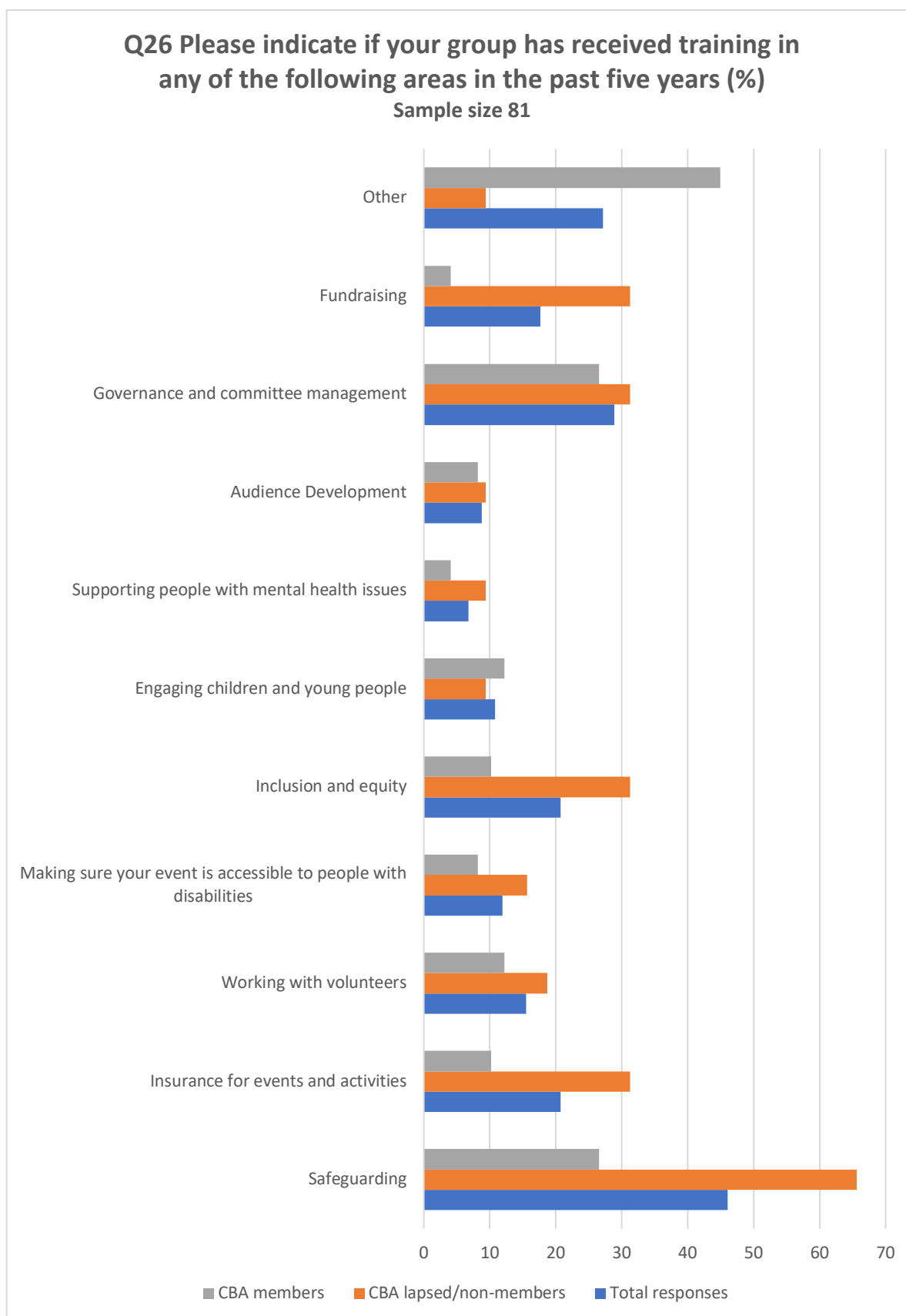
Q23 Does your group / society have a plan in place to become carbon net zero by 2030? (%) Sample size 221



Q24 Please indicate the top three priority areas of support out of the list below that you require to face the future with confidence (%) Sample size 220



[Q25 If you would like to received training, please let us know the specific areas of development and support you would be interested in – Text answer]



Appendix 3: Summarised points from one-to-one discussions – Survey Respondents

The following summarises notes made through the 22 interviews which took place with existing CBA members (groups and affiliates) and lapsed/non-CBA members between November 2023 and January 2024. Their responses are presented together.

These findings have been anonymised, with ‘he’, ‘she’ and ‘they’ below referring in each case to the group representative interviewed.

i. Aspirations and barriers around developing audiences/engagement

- They’ve struggled to engage with their local schools, but we agreed that the barrier could be the exorbitant transport costs (coaches) now charged for visits.
- They are keen to reach young people, and think that this could be done most effectively through schools. Ideally they would welcome support in this area, potentially from the CBA, e.g. through a regional Project Worker and/or through the YAC network.
- They would like to tap into the STEM agenda in schools.
- They are aware of the opportunities that metallurgy offers in the area of health and wellbeing, and have aspirations to tap into these.
- They see reaching a younger and more ethnically diverse membership as ‘tricky’, particularly in such a predominantly mono-ethnic area as Bath. They suggested that they could reach younger people through a strengthened partnership with their local YAC as the latter would know how to manage the safeguarding/organisational protocols around working with children and young people.
- They work with students at the University of Kent and greatly appreciate the mutual benefits and synergies to come from this intergenerational approach.
- They are involved in some cross-sector projects that are making archaeology accessible, engaging and relevant to a wide audience, e.g. live feeds, cartoon artists, spoken word artists, etc. interpreting the work going on.
- Capacity is preventing this group from partnering with non-heritage sector partners.
- Good example of a group that works in partnership.
- They are rejuvenating their relationships with the University of Cambridge so as to attract a younger membership, i.e. students. One way they plan to do this is to invite the students to present their research at CAS’s events – so a win/win.
- The group experiences the same issues as many other groups, and sees the issues as chiefly being: the members being of retirement age; and being able to convert the enthusiasm the general public has for archaeology *per se* into group membership.
- They have implemented some excellent projects with children and young people, including from the South Asian community, introducing children to the woodland environment, which some of them have never been into before. He mentioned that the volunteers were also on a steep learning curve for these projects, having to learn how to manage the young people participating. [Point to note: skills development need for the sector when it comes to cross-sector working.]
- This Trust is doing a lot of work and activity strategically directed at bringing in younger members/participants, and it’s working. This includes recruiting younger members through exhibitions, and 50th anniversary activities. The Chair has also brought younger people on to the Board and is skilling them up, specifically so that

they will have the skills and experience needed when the time comes (i.e. when the older members leave).

- They are also seeking to partner with the Scouts to engage children, and the Health and Wellbeing sector to engage young people.
- This group is under-resourced but has a good reach to young people through its contacts (YAC and schools), and has a H&W grant for people to engage with its environment for their mental health.
- They pointed out that newcomers to archaeology (e.g. enthusiasts of Time Team) think that archaeology can just be 'done', without them realising that there is due diligence required in the research and writing up of any activity. It's a problem for them.

ii. Support for a 'live network'

- She's very enthusiastic about the idea of some kind of network that creates a communicative, sharing community of similar organisations/sites.
- This Society feels quite isolated (given its geographical location and reach) and would welcome multiple opportunities for meeting and sharing.
- The CBA could also 'help us in finding the right format for sharing sessions', like a Heritage Forum that used to operate in their area but no longer does, due to the funding ending. However, it is recognised that there is a resource required for this.
- More opportunities for networking/sharing information/resources/pooling knowledge and equipment would be welcomed. There is an 'Archaeological Forum' in Kent for exactly this, but it has only met once since Covid.
- Greatly supports the idea of sharing information: 'How else do you know what people are doing?'
- Sees the CBA as a 'vital hub to connect groups into a network of activity'
- Supportive of the idea of CBA having a networking role.

iii. Potential roles for the CBA, and support for it generally

- She is really pleased to see this research taking place, and very grateful to the CBA for considering how to support small organisations such as this one.
- She's supportive of the CBA in principle, so happy to pay the membership on that basis alone.
- The consultee expressed a lot of goodwill towards the CBA as an organisation and encouraged the CBA to capitalise on this (e.g. not to be afraid to ask people to fill in long surveys, as they will do it for the CBA).
- They are keen to see CBA's role as a UK-wide advocate, including as a representative to inform and influence government policy. However, they also spoke about other nationwide (Scottish) and UK-wide agencies which they also see as key influencers for the heritage sector, and which the CBA should therefore work together with as part of a wider, integrated strategic framework.
- They suggested that if CBA emphasised supporting/advocating for industrial heritage more than currently, there may then be an incentive to be a member, but the perceived lack of emphasis for tangible, built heritage of this nature doesn't incentivise them to be members (again).
- They would be interested in partnering with CBA members in their region on jointly organised and jointly run events.

- They don't require support from the CBA as their own activity generates volunteers and younger members. If anything, they would require funding.
- He sees the CBA national as potentially offering digital space to hold reports/research by defunct groups so that that information isn't lost.
- He thinks membership to the CBA could be free on one level for groups, just to enable them to be found through the website by anyone looking to join the group.

iv. Assistance with fundraising

- Their fundraising needs are quite specific and transcend being met through training/a resource. Ideally they'd like a bespoke, experienced view/response from someone at the CBA as that last bit of help before they submit the application.

v. Wish for 'How to' resources/tool-kits

- This Society would benefit from tool-kits/resources that ultimately help them save time, and also provide useful guidance in the following suggested areas:
 - Guide to basic data protection
 - Making grant applications
 - How to work with schools / uniformed groups
 - How to conduct a survey with your members
- She also suggested the guides could include links to other sectors' resources, e.g. Kids In Museums Resources for working with children/families.
- They see the CBA as being well-placed to offer resources across a range of subjects.
- They would appreciate guidance and information in the areas of fundraising: funding streams available, different types available.
- Supportive of the idea of CBA providing resources to help support groups and affiliates.

vi. Capacity and volunteers

- This society now just organises and runs talks as the hands-on archaeology practice died with the individuals that organised it.
- Julie does most of the work, and feels she can't leave as it would jeopardise the very existence of the Society.
- Lack of younger volunteers is mainly for reasons that is outside of the CBA's control: work commitments and raising a family take precedence.
- There may be an opportunity for student membership/volunteer participation, if there can be social opportunities for them and if their expectations can be managed. Could the CBA help with this?
- In-person members' meetings are expensive (insurance) and onerous (finding a venue and gathering feedback)
- Computer literacy and digital access would be an issue for their members.
- They want to modernise, e.g. produce digital membership cards, but they lack the ability to reach everyone to communicate/enable this, plus the time to put it into action.
- They run a library, and a journal, and a website but badly lack capacity.
- They rely heavily on community contacts/networks/goodwill of their members to enable things happen.

- One of their issues is that they have a training gap – largely for the volunteers who ‘come off the street who are just interested’ – and lack the capacity/resources to plug this. (However, they are meeting soon with two of their commercial archaeologists volunteers to see if this can be resolved.)
- The two volunteers interviewed work tirelessly to enable people to engage with the heritage – about 6-8 ‘man hours’ a day – and are really feeling the pressure. They recognise that the heritage will cost a great deal to make safe and preserve, and the inference was in our discussion that tackling this is too much for them to take on. They berated the council for not being committed to the extent that it will fund other projects over and above theirs.
- They have received support from the University of Wales, and reported a positive story (that could be a case study) of a mutually beneficial site visit made by a third year Archaeology student coming to help them write up a dig. The student learnt about how community/grassroots archaeology operated, and the group benefitted from his input.

vii. Communications, website and social media

- They have FaceBook followers but these don’t convert into members. The FB followers just like looking at the old photos that are posted.
- They need support on website and social media management, around protocols but also around best ways to manage these areas, including contentious content.
- Point to note: For this group, they get way more traction through Facebook than their website.
- They would appreciate advice and support in social media, as this is not their area of expertise but they realise it’s a key way to reach younger members or prospective members.
- The group has moved from a website to Facebook, specifically to attract a younger membership/participants in their digs.

viii. Membership and membership numbers

- They try quite enterprising ways to convert talks attendees into members, with limited success.
- Their issue of an aging membership also speaks to a kind of stranglehold that these older members have over the organisation, preventing it from being as flexible as it would like to be to serve and retain younger members.
- They have attracted members by being active and showcasing their work (a Roman dig).
- They think there are individual members of the CBA who are not members of their County Society and that this could provide an opportunity for them. E.g. the CBA could promote their Society’s events/help advertise, broker or recruit new trustees, etc., reaching like-minded locally-based individuals who otherwise would not have known about these opportunities.
- They have a ‘20th century’ IT system which they believe is holding them back in engaging new members immediately, or gaining new members from initial their expressing initial interest. Their biggest need is in improving this area.
- One way they grown their membership is by allowing anyone to attend their monthly online events for free. This often converts non-member attendees into new members.

ix. Collections management

- They've just formed an Archives Group in a bid to archive their many photos etc. They have an Agreement in place with The Keep (Suffolk Archives) that will safeguard the preservation of any original material.

x. Assistance with events/speakers/specialist expertise

- Support for the Society would be the recommendation and provision of free speakers, with the Society paying expenses only, though she also said money wasn't really an issue. I think it was more about the effort that goes in to sourcing speakers that are relevant and good.
- They currently require an expert on (Medieval) glass, and can't locate anyone. Again, the CBA could help by providing a signposting or advisory service in directing groups towards certain areas of current available expertise as and when required.
- They have difficulty in sourcing relevant and engaging speakers, to create the varied programme that they'd like. Is this something that the CBA could assist with in time, e.g. a 'directory' or platform that contains a list/description of tried and tested speakers?
- Sees the CBA as providing up-to-date information, and to be a source that can provide it if/when asked.
- He would appreciate a 'help desk' facility as part of his membership with CBA.

xi. Archaeological activity: needs/barriers

- Using the latest surveying techniques and equipment, and understanding all that goes with this – policies/protocol/functionality etc., – is a concern and a need for this Society.
- They suggested there could be a shared system like farmers have to access and use the latest technology they require for their work, as a collective with other archaeological societies and groups, to hire/use/understand the latest geo-mapping equipment.
- They would appreciate guidance and information on equipment and material: how to get hold of it; use it; and report on its findings.
- One issue for them is that they are not allowed to excavate anywhere; the City archaeologist prevents them from doing so as they are 'amateurs'..

xii. CBA support with governance

- Generally, the CBA could support them with Trustee recruitment, e.g. brokering page/advertising/recruitment opportunities.
- Other areas of support could be guidance for Trustees on writing/re-writing constitutions, developing/writing policies, financial protocols and procedures, and running a charity – all within a sector-specific context.

xiii. Areas for support by CBA (summarised/generally)

- They see the CBA as being able to assist through providing space for joint advertising of events and resources; training (e.g. social media protocols) and also as a connecting/brokering organisation, e.g. to run a series of workshops for the sub-sectors to start talking about what they do and how they could benefit each other.

- They are suffering through the recent loss of their County Archaeologist, and no longer have that pipeline to knowing about local opportunities for sites that need work/investigation. They wondered if the CBA could help re-ignite this pipeline somehow, in its national role.
- They would like to see the rebirth of CBA SW, and wonder if this is something that the CBA could help to effect.
- Some clarity on the definition of 'Heritage' would be appreciated, and on contemporary thinking/contexts generally.
- They think County Societies are fascinating and wonder if the CBA might want to highlight and explain their ongoing existence and activities to their wider membership.
- The CBA could play a role in communicating to society about what archaeology is: 'Archaeology is 95% disappointment and 5% excitement, and then it means more when you find something, as a result. Getting that across to people and enthusing people on that basis is difficult. This could be something that the CBA helps with – getting people over that hump.'
- They would appreciate CBA presenting case studies in the areas of digitising membership/membership cards.
- They would welcome 'contact lists' provided by the CBA, e.g. to inform speakers for their programme, or people they can approach for guidance/advice in specific areas.
- One possible area of support for the CBA would therefore be advocacy, which in time might communicate generally the significance of (in this case) industrial archaeology. This point can be substantiated by the fact that the site on which the heritage is located has become demonstrably safer and more used by more people as a result of the efforts of this group to clear, preserve and interpret it.

xiv. Training needs

- Training in surveying/geophysics/drone use would be welcomed, conducted by the CBA with a discount for members. They would happily pay for this.
- Also supports training, including multi-group training at one event (presumably to share out the costs)
- Areas of training they would be interested in include: Safeguarding; insurance; web development; and social media.
- Initially they were suggesting the CBA might look at providing a kind of training for volunteers new to archaeology – perhaps online, as they saw it as relatively straightforward – planning, recording, writing reports, etc. – but subsequently suggested that this might be better provided on a more regional level, e.g. by Archaeology Scotland.

xv. Attitudes to Net Zero

- He doesn't see the Net Zero questions on the survey as relevant to his Society.

xvi. Need for recognition and appreciation

- They feel underappreciated and not fully recognised for the work they and grassroots archaeology generally, is doing and achieving. They feel a recognition and celebration of this work is something that the CBA could do more of.

- They feel they should have more respect and recognition for the work they have done to date, i.e. many excavations of many caves under Nottingham.

xvii. Confusion between regional and national CBA

- There was a confusion between CBA Wales and the CBA (UK). This is also problematic because it sounds like the make-up and strategic operations of CBA Wales is different from the CBA's.
- She mistook CBA East with the national CBA, even though I made it clear from the start that I was calling from the national CBA.
- They feel disconnected to the CBA, to the extent that at a recent committee meeting they couldn't remember what type of membership they have with it.
- They would like to understand the clear difference and different offers between the regional CBA and national CBA.
- There is a misunderstanding as to who 'the CBA' is, mixing it up with the regional CBA. This needs to be clarified through communications.
- Confusion between the regional and national CBA.
- They pay for their CBA membership but are not actually sure what they get for it.
- They would like to know about CBA activities and how members can sign up to this (also their members, who are not directly CBA members)
- They are not sure that the CBA can help or support them. They would be looking for a tangible incentive, therefore, e.g. a discounted rate on insurance.

Appendix 4 Summary findings from CBA webinars

Introduction

Survey respondents were invited to indicate if they would like a 1:1 discussion with the CBA to explore their survey responses in more detail. 14 such discussions took place with CBA members, and another eight discussions with lapsed/non-CBA members. As 64 member groups had indicated this interest, a webinar was run on three separate occasions to enable any of this number to attend and share their thoughts, as well as to learn about the survey findings and CBA's initial response to it. The summary findings and implications of the three webinars are reported here.

A subsequent, similar set of webinars will be offered to the 47 respondents of the lapsed/non-CBA members' survey. These fall beyond the period of the writing of this report, so the responses summarised below constitute the views of current CBA members only.

Discussion points raised

- One group is finding success in raising its membership and attracting younger members through targeting A-level and University students.
- It would be appreciated if British Archaeology magazine was distributed in digital format.
- Older membership is not necessarily seen as a problem as long as it's an ongoing 'churn', and is understandable given that people have more time once they are retired.
- The value of partnerships was recognised, and that the CBA could have a role in helping people to broker them – with the commercial sector, and with the academic sector. E.g. the commercial sector could exercise its charitable status through providing some expertise pro bono – and the CBA could help to advocate for this. Another example is the sharing of GPR resources through the university sector.
- Specific requests for support included the CBA providing or signposting expertise in various areas when required, e.g. subject specialisms.
- There was a request for support in governance.
- There was a request that CBA helps to remove the red tape at central government level, e.g. DEFRA when working on farming land.
- There was strong support for the idea of a network where ideas could be shared and questions/requests for advice sought.
- One group has focussed their energy and resources into their website, and consequently has a very comprehensive record of history and research about their village. This in turn attracts an average of 10,000 visits per year and international enquiries.
- There is a request for support in where to go to find expertise, e.g. reading/interpreting 3D surveys or expertise around a particular archaeological feature such as ditches, to guide non-expert members in their excavations of the features.
- There was spoken endorsement for the regional CBA groups, and how they can often provide the help and expertise being sought.

- One group expressed a need for help with their social media.
- One group representative expressed that they didn't see the need to actively seek out diverse audiences, particularly as their area was predominantly White.
- There was an interest expressed in social prescribing/partnering with the Health sector.
- One group expressed a need to access resources such as guidance on creating websites, insurance policies and case studies – and for the ability to other organisations to add to this repository.
- Other requests for support included: digital resources for activities; help with grant applications; encouraging children's and young people's participation (including help with safeguarding) and networking with other members generally.
- Academic partnerships are seen as an effective way of gaining access to surveying equipment and resources.
- There was a question around whether or not commercial units have a corporate social responsibility that they are required to demonstrate. If so, there is the scope for the CBA to broker the application of this for the benefit of the grassroots archaeology sector, and, depending on the nature of the support, early to mid-careerists in the commercial sector.

Appendix 5 Summary points from CBA Stakeholder consultations

Introduction

The following qualitative data consists of direct quotes from the 10 consultations carried out with representatives from organisations which form the CBA's Stakeholders group in October 2023. This group was convened for its project which at time of writing is being assessed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a potential Resilience Fund grant, and consists of the following organisations:

- CBA East of England
- CBA South East
- CBA North West
- Roman Carlisle Revealed
- Caer Heritage Project Cardiff University
- The Prehistoric Society
- Sussex Archaeological Society
- Scottish Crannog Centre
- Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society
- Ulster Archaeological Society

The headings below reflect the themes which emerged through the discussions, and the data presented here consists entirely of direct quotes provided by the interviewees. A full write-up of each interview is available on request in a separate Research Report.

Quotes from two further interviews are included here, which took place with two of the CBA's Steering Group members representing Environmental Sustainability, and EDIE (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity) across the sector, respectively.

1 Active participation network

- *I think there is a big need to connect across the sector, as opposed to grass roots. We need to get that sorted first before we can enable anything that sits below it.*
- *I need to understand everything that is going on in the academic world and in the field, but that person over that doesn't see that person over there. The CBA role is connecting up that awareness in the sector.*
- *It needs to be active rather than passive. If I got an email saying 'New post on government policy just come in'. then I'd look at it. People are trying to do more in less time, so it needs to be active on the part of the CBA.*
- *Having any sort of platform to share those resources and ideas, there's a real need there. I think there is a significant gap, and [we] would be very interested in looking at how we can support that and amplify that.*
- *I think a bit of research on what's out there and planned would help the CBA think through what sort of platform it's going to create. What's going to be particular to CBA?*
- *...I think it's a good structure having regional and national areas, but over the decades, the idea of the societies talking to each other, that's gone... We'd like to do that – re-engaging people outside of their own bubbles.*

- *I think this is a good idea. There are quite a lot of smaller groups and societies who would want to talk to each other who would benefit and who would engage with something like that.*

2 Cross-sector working

- *Archaeology is not just about archaeology. We have a Roman villa in the middle of a housing estate (which is placed in top 10% most deprived areas of England)... We wanted young people to do the interpretation – it was an NLHF-funded Young Roots project – and there were amazing additional outcomes, which are not archaeological, e.g. young person going to college to do photography and media studies because we'd given him a digital camera to use for the project.*
- *It could be about health and wellbeing, getting out of the house, to potentially progressing to higher education. We've had young people and adult who've done both.*
- *We ran a food parcels project – heritage food parcels. Elements around getting people to thinking about food and culture and providing food parcels that helped to address the horrendous food poverty that was coming out of Covid. Another thing that has enabled us to reach beyond regular people who engage with heritage projects is through things like Social Prescribing. We worked with an organisation who run health teams and we're part of that, so we form a heritage part for people who can find us through things like that. The point here is that what we do here is about engaging with heritage e.g. a litter pick, clearing a path – because you have those different strands.*
- *A lot of the museums are doing good work with audiences, so maybe partnering with them. You may need to start knocking at open doors and extend from there*

3 Marketing/communications of groups/societies

- *We have lots of engagement through FaceBook – we have about 19,000 followers, but only 800-900 members – traditional membership is dying. Participation by social media is on the increase.*

4 Reaching young people

- *Apprenticeships – field archaeologists – Emerging Talents apprenticeships... There are a lot of programmes now appearing. Some are historic advisor assistants. Working out who this group is, is important – students/professionals...*
- *The question is, how do you future-proof a literally antiquarian idea to make it relevant and appeal to younger audiences?*
- *Young people don't join their local Society any more (like I did when I was younger). They're not attracted to what the Society is doing at the moment - they have a digital life. So it was recognised that the Society probably has to go on a journey of change. It is going to go on that journey – though it is slow.*
- *I feel that our regional group doesn't speak to that age-group at all... I would like to find ways of making what we do more relevant to the YACs... But then what would engage them? Lectures are not really ideal for youngsters.*

5 Shifting the perception of archaeology

- *Archaeology is fundamentally a thought process... and not an activity.*
- *We need to enable the groups to see things differently in the first place. They are very entrenched about what straight archaeology is.*
- *We wanted to involve people in discovering and valuing heritage/archaeology on their doorsteps which was significant but completely unexplored – so that involvement/co-creation thing came from our involvement with the community organisation we worked with – they taught us how to involve people and co-create with them.*
- *I think this is a huge opportunity for [the Scottish Crannog Centre] to reconnect to people not doing this work professionally. Having a really porous organisation that really matters to communities – to connect to everyone. Schools, estates...*
- *Reaching previously unengaged audiences: everyone wants to reach hard-to-reach groups and they somehow remain hard to reach. You've got to go through the gate-keepers of those communities and they've almost got to do it themselves. You've got to go to them. It takes time and resources, showing there's a meaningful commitment there. Then it's the follow-through. Consistent programming, consistently reaching out and working with them. Otherwise it's just a flash in the pan. With some of these groups, you're looking at a commitment of years. And being focussed – you can't reach everyone... That takes trust and time. I think sometimes people underestimate that.*
- *New audiences: for me there is always a mismatch between the media interest/TV programmes and the numbers of those who engage with archaeology at a deeper level. So how do you capture that initial enthusiasm to actually getting people engaged? There must be a piece of research on how best to position the offer. What is it that appeals to people? What could we also link it to, to broaden the appeal?*
- *Political buy-in has helped with Hadrian's Wall as well. We have a political sub-group and an all-party parliamentary group for Hadrian's Wall– that's a first, I think.*
- *There is whole audience with the metal detectorists but there is a historic mistrust between the MDs and the archaeologists.*

6 Membership and membership models

- *As long as people can see the value, people will choose to spend the money, but it is hard. We have to acknowledge there may not be a path forward for the old membership model. I do think the membership model can work, but I think we need to radically think, what does it mean to be a membership organisation and what do people get for that?*
- *the old antiquarian societies that are just withering on the vine, as for most of them are just not relevant anymore. There's been nothing between the Carlisle group and us with this project. I think some individual members have volunteered, and I am presenting a piece for that group... I have got a soft spot for these groups, but they need to be more relevant.*
- *I don't know what our membership is. I don't know what our membership really want and what they are after.*

7 Need for training (Governance; EDI; Net Zero, best practice)

- *Re Net Zero: You need to get your house in order and then take the lead for your members.*
- *It would be really helpful if the CBA was looking at this to set the standard for similar organisations. If the CBA was able to work in those sorts of areas – producing documents, advice, guidance – it would be hugely helpful. Particularly EDI – even the CBA is tackling this explicitly. That tells me a lot about this sector. Grab it by its horns.*
- *How the hell do you tackle Net Zero? [The CBA] is well positioned to be a leading light here. They could leverage their position to set up the relevant networks to bring together the organisations nationally. Maybe the convening power they can bring... maybe they can help signpost to experts in some way, or at least provide direction or support.*
- *I think the CBA could do some useful work in guiding and supporting other organisations in terms of helping them on what they need to achieve. And the CBA could model best practice. I'm really interested in seeing where your Youth Advisory Board goes and how it develops.*

8 Role of the CBA

- *The CBA can, potentially, fill that void for the 'one voice' that is needed, but speaking as a collective voice in conjunction with the sector, to enable the sector to be better together.*
- *As the CBA you are in a unique position as you have a lot of partnership across the UK and you know a lot of people in grass roots archaeology, linking up communities that live in the shadow of important archaeology, who have similar or different challenges who can share their ways of doing things*
- *If the CBA is driving a programme, or a campaign, then that makes it a lot easier for the Prehistoric Society.*
- *I think it's about unity, it's about finding organisations that share that aim, about connecting those organisations. If the CBA could be a catalyst and a place of thought and thinking, and create those spaces for those organisations that do want to shift and change and create, there's something in there, if they can be given the capacity... The CBA has got a real opportunity to become a people-led, storytelling organisation, a 'canopy' to hold together quite disparate voices – create a 'choir' or movement that could really shape and shift the sector... both for individuals and organisations. It really needs shifting and shaping. Some of these hierarchies need to be reimaged, reflecting on what has worked before.*
- *It's right for CBA not to rest on its laurels and this research is really important and really broaden the sector. Organisations like mine can really take these learnings and it can help to reshape the sector. I think it's the sensible thing to do if you're thinking about resilience, the old way doesn't work anymore. It's a digital age, and there is more uncertainty, particularly for young people.*
- *How can I best exploit the CBA in terms of what we should be doing as a regional group? EDI and Net Zero especially.... As an old boy looking in, some of these terms are so fluid and change so quickly, that this is an area where we'd like CBA to support us.*

- *One of the areas I'm most ardent about is advocacy. Some members in our area are concerned about development through heritage and what the impact is. A voice... Not to campaign necessarily against that proposal, but at least to say, we are a power, a body, that has that view that is represented by the local community. CBA has vastly more experience than us in these areas.*
- *We get reams of advice from the Charity Commission, but specialised support would be really helpful. You mentioned EDI. There are lots of issues for us around that. But where can you get examples on how an organisation coped with some of these issues? I think that would be really helpful.*
- *(Re Northern Ireland:) I love the ideas CBA is coming up with... but it's just making it work with us which is problematic... The difference in legislation is significant. There has been a reluctance over the years to join the CBA, as so much of what it sends out to its membership isn't relevant for us, and therefore can also be misleading.*

Appendix 6 Summarised findings from groups no longer operating

Introduction:

The data for groups that have ceased to operate is limited to three one-to-one discussions which took place in January 2024. However, they unearthed useful data which could be seen to be representative, and which could be explored through further research. The discussions centred around three main subject areas, namely:

- *Describe your group – area, size, remit/interests, membership numbers, age of membership, how long had it been in existence*
- *What challenges did the group face before it ceases operating?*
- *What help would you have like to receive to help address these challenges?*

Key findings:

- Key issues for one group were: access to sites; the group's relationship to professional archaeologists, a lack of confidence, and too much responsibility being placed on too few individuals.
- Re the latter point: There were too few volunteers involved in the work required to keep the group going, and so when the Chair moved away, the group folded.
- There was a general lack of expertise. Writing up field work took years.

We can undertake the fieldwork but then making sense of it and writing it up in a way that is valuable and helpful is where a lot of these groups really struggle.

- The group's ex-Chair is now chairing another group, and linked this to the new group's lack of confidence:

I'm now chairing a group down here, because no-body else was confident enough to do it

- The lack of involvement by younger people was seen as a generation-related attitude:

There is a younger person's issue here, where there is a sense of entitlement amongst a certain generation, and a lot of them are much happier to pay considerable sums of money to have an archaeological field work experience that fits in with their lifestyle. It's a very different approach to becoming involved in fieldwork archaeology. One of our members do this. She's prepared to pay hundreds of pounds a week to do a dig in different parts of the country. We charge £10 a year!

- Another group folded due mostly to their grant being ceased by a larger heritage body, which in turn was compounded by Covid and the larger body's shift in strategic

direction. Therefore, the issue really lay in the organisation working within a 'host body', as the representative termed it, and to that host body's changing priorities.

- The changing priorities of the host body was around broadening appeal and providing more access to the heritage, whereas the ceased group's focus was around researching and cataloguing Roman pottery.

Different priorities and access requirements.

- The third group described itself as 'moribund' rather than 'closed'. Covid provided a downward step-change, with monthly meetings suspended.
- Again, there was pressure on too few people having too many roles and responsibilities. When the Chair's partner became ill, he had to care for her and this had a significant impact on the running of the group.

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A sense of 'lone wolf' operations.

- The group would have welcomed CBA's help in making stronger connections with the local museum.
- They would also have welcomed advice around planning and local activism.

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