

The Public Benefits of Angling Research

Canal & River Trust

22nd November 2017

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Substance

Aims

To better understand:

- Range of activities undertaken
- Scale and value of 'public benefits' arising from activities
- Factors that help deliver these
- Provide recommendations to measure impacts across the Trust network

Scope

- South East
- Clubs only
- One interviewee per club

Key Research Questions

Scale:

- How to categorise activities?
- What activities by each club?
- How much is done across the network?

Delivery:

- How are they delivered?
- What helps / what are the barriers?

Value of Impacts:

- How can we value the work done?

The Future:

- How can we increase activities?
- How can we better measure impact?

Methods and Limitations

Data collection:

- In depth **interviews** with one contact at each club (20)
- **Focus groups** with two selected clubs

Mixed methods:

- *Qualitative* – What undertaken; how; and what issues?
- *Quantitative* - Range, scale and effort

Limitations:

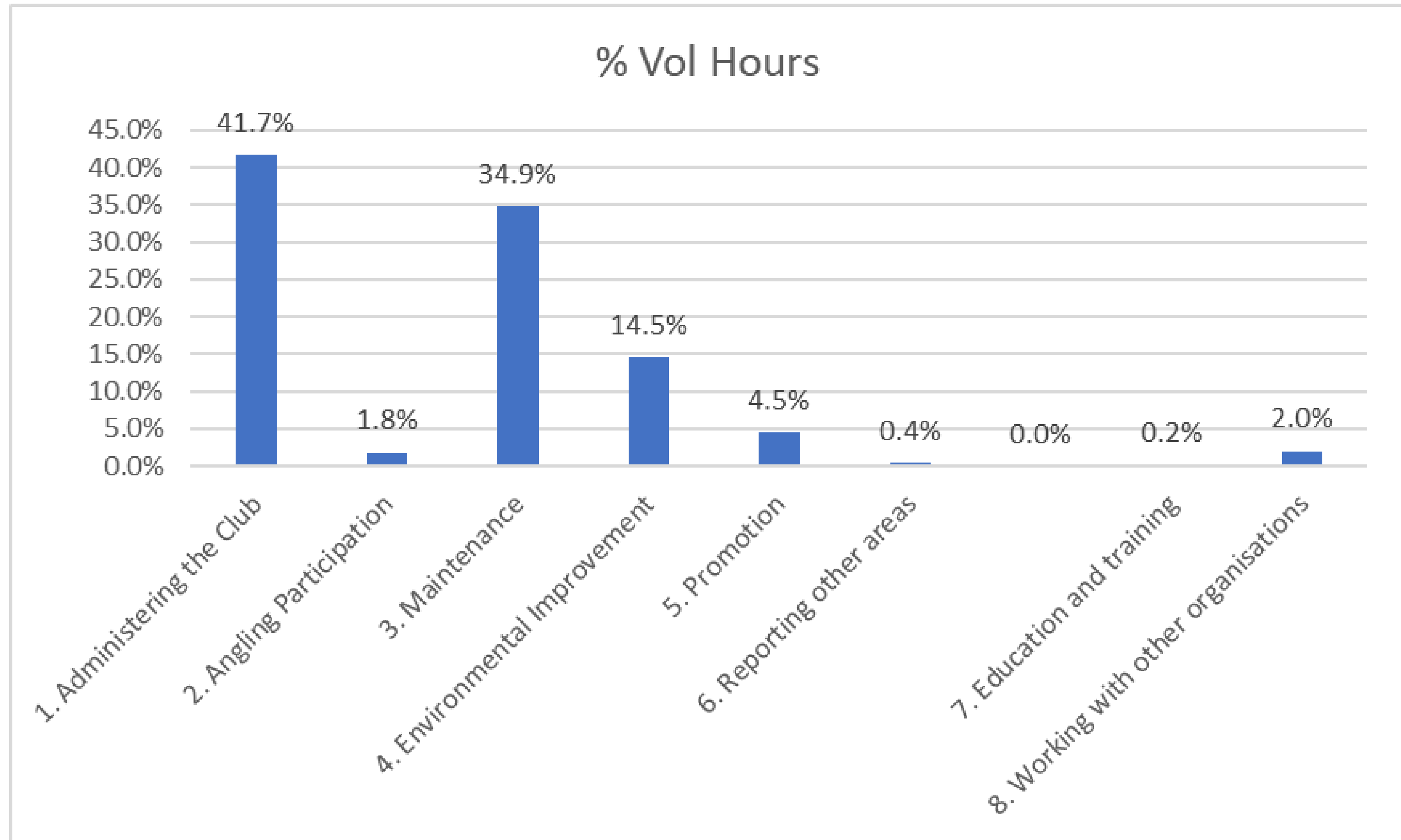
- A LOT of information asked for
- Difficult for Interviewees to quantify
- Vast amounts of qualitative data
- Clubs not able to identify wider impacts

Club Activities (Range)

Categories	% of Clubs Undertaking Activities	Activities
1. Administering the Club	100%	Meetings; Accounting and Finance Recruiting Members & Volunteers ; Competitions Applications for Grants
2. Angling Participation	60%	Coaches; Training Sessions; Taster Days School Work & Other Group Work
3. Maintenance	100%	Fish Stocking; Pegs, Paths, Platforms; Car Parks, Roadways, Access Tracks Weed Clearance, Branch Trimming, Signage Work, Toilet Facilities
4. Environmental	100%	Predation and Invasive Species; Removal of Litter Report Fish in Distress, Deal With/Report Fish Carcasses Illegal Fishing; Water Quality Checks
5. Promotion	40%	Promotion Social Media; Promotion for the Trust Reporting Match Results Contributing to Trust Activities/Committees
6. Reporting	80%	Unauthorised Work; Unauthorised Boat Moorings; Lobbying on Water Standards; Unauthorised Events
7. Education and Training	30%	Work With Young People ; Education Projects; Health Work
8. Other Organisations	80%	Angling Trust; Consultative Groups; National Fishing Month; Non-Angling Organisations; Other Non-Angling Bodies

Club Activities (Volume by hours)

- 'Administering' - 41.7%
- 'Maintenance' - 34.9%
- 'Environmental improvement' - 14.5%
- Angling participation and education together = 2%



Impacts/Outcomes (1) - Health, Wellbeing and Happiness

Interviewees referred to **benefits:**

- Social aspects
 - Volunteering
 - Connections like-minded people
- Ability to enjoy their hobby
- Difficult to demonstrate robustly without primary research with anglers
- **Possible area for future research**

'half a dozen old guys that I know who wanted to get back into fishing, and get into the social side of fishing... they're now part of our match fishing team and seem to have benefitted greatly by it.' (Lure Anglers' Canal Club)

'We feel like a friendly club and everyone knows everybody. Club members just want to help out. There's a social aspect to it.' (Old Kings Head AC)

(2) – Engaged people and cohesive communities

- Angling participation
 - c.6,000 members engaged in clubs
 - Also day tickets
- Volunteering
 - 24,000 volunteer hours annually
 - Value: £170,000)
 - Dual benefit of volunteering:
 - Personal benefit and satisfaction
 - Wider benefit
 - Includes 'expenses' and material benefits

'[Volunteers] can see a benefit for the club, you know. They don't just want to go fishing, they want to make things better.'
(Watford Piscators)

'If any of the other anglers do help then this is normally to aid their fishing in some way or they know it helps the club which ultimately helps themselves.' (Tring Anglers)

Impacts/Outcomes (3) – Learning and Enhancing Skills

- Very low reporting of education activities
 - 6 clubs taster sessions
 - 3 training sessions
 - 2 schools
 - One health event.
 - Just 40 hours per year (all clubs)
- Why?
 - Not a club priority?
 - Lack of awareness interviewee?
 - Low interest from schools?
- Need for development esp if need wider support

‘Schools did not want to take part’.
(Northampton Nene)

‘Now [we’re] involved with the Rickmansworth Festival, I’m hoping it will lead to other things like working in schools... It’s a question of working toward this at a pace that members are happy with’
(West Hampstead AS).

Impacts/Outcomes (4) – Cultural and Environmental Assets

- A lot of work on natural environment
- CRT aims:
 - Improving biodiversity
 - Providing environmental stewardship
- Maintenance work:
 - 8,053 hours
 - £57,982
- Environmental Stewardship :
 - 3,359 hours
 - £24,185
- Benefits to angling and other users
- ‘Eyes and ears’ of the environment

‘If anything was wrong or there were any issues then chances are it would be an angler who was reporting this, not other canal users.’ (Tring Anglers)

‘The footpaths would be inaccessible otherwise. We tend to get a lot of praise from local people who walk past when we’re doing these jobs..’ (Blenheim AA)

Impacts/Outcomes (5) – Wider Community impacts

- Low level of knowledge / awareness of wider benefits
- Some activities recognised as benefitting others:
 - Environmental / maintenance
 - Support of local businesses (esp. tackle shops)
 - Outreach work (schools, young people, offenders, the disabled, etc) though limited

I don't think our **activities are particularly important to non-club members. The social club gets a bit of business... but.. there isn't a specific body of people that benefit from our existence.**
(Kidlington AS)

'Even people who **never go anywhere near a river. It's important to keep water quality, habitat and the environment clean and healthy so that everybody benefits.**'
(Kidlington AS).

Impacts/Outcomes (6) – Negative Impacts

- Some recognition that fishing can conflict with other activities (esp. cyclists)
- Occasional complaints (one club) – litter, car parking
- Sanctions for members improve behaviour
- Most think there are very few negative impacts
- Need to assess this with other waterway users

‘We are to some extent **obstructing users on the canal...** If you ask **the same question to cyclists I can imagine they will ask why we have to have gear laid out on the bank.**’
(Wigston AS)

‘People on the **fisheries are behaving themselves a lot better. They are told about these things...** **People get brought before the committee if its serious**’. (London AA)

Volunteer Value

- Based on estimate of volunteer hours
- National Living Wage (£7.20) proxy for equivalent labour value
- Total value = £166,233 / £11,768 per club per year
- Wide variance between activity type
- Includes those getting expenses/benefits

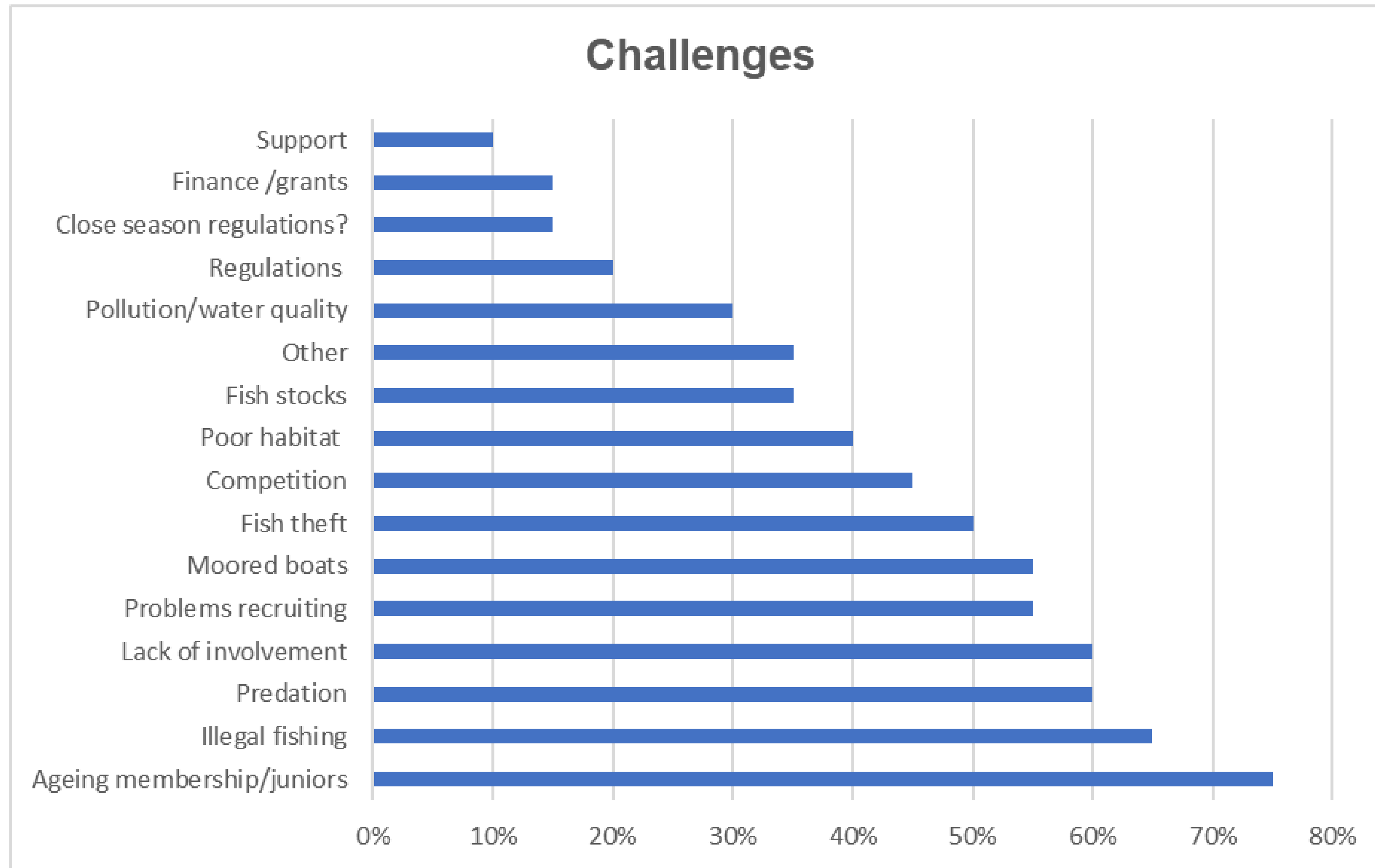
Activity	Total (all)		Average per club	
	Hours	Value	Hours	Value
1. Administering	9,624	£69,292.8	687	£4,946.4
2. Participation	414	£2,980.8	69	£496.8
3. Maintenance	8,053	£57,981.6	537	£3,866.4
4. Environmental	3,359	£24,184.8	187	£1,346.4
5. Promotion	1,034	£7,444.8	128	£921.6
6. Reporting (other)	95	£684.0	6	£43.2
7. Education/training	40	£288.00	20	£122.40
8. Work other orgs.	469	£3,376.8	39	£280.80
TOTAL	23,088	£166,233.6	1,441	£11,768

Volunteer Value

- VERY wide variances between clubs
- 1: 10 ratio

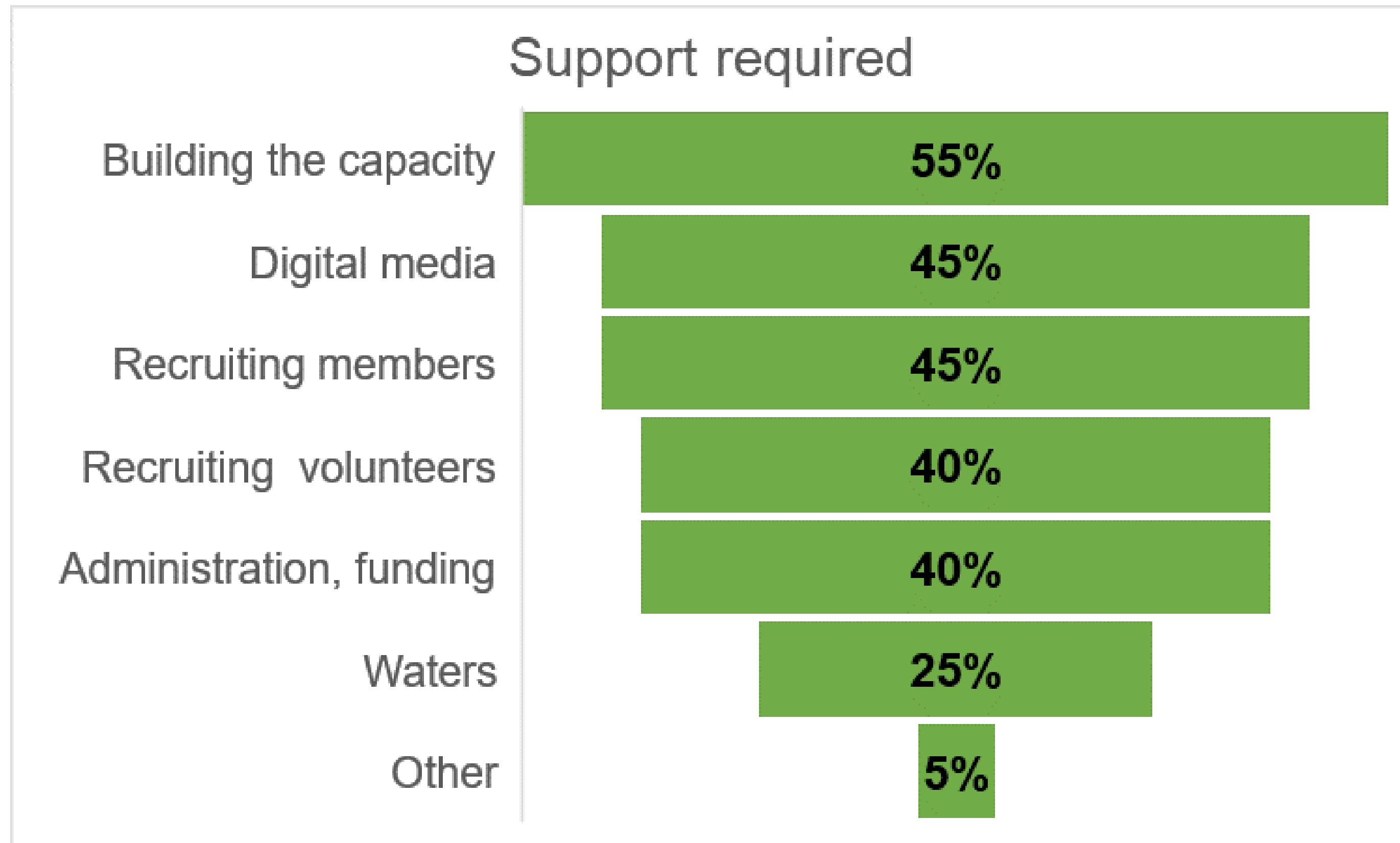
Activity	Min example		Max example	
	Hours	Value (£)	Hours	Value (£)
1. Administering	72	£518.4	3,000	£21,600.0
2. Participation	3	£21.60	150	£1,080.0
3. Maintenance	8	£57.6	5,220	£37,584.0
4. Environmental	2	£14.40	1,000	£7,200.0
5. Promotion	2	£14.40	500	£3,600.0
6. Reporting (other)	2	£14.40	20	£144.0
7. Education/training	10	£72.00	30	£216.00
8. Work other orgs.	2	£14.40	144	£1,036.8
TOTAL	101	£727.20	10,034	£72,460.80

Sustainability Issues



**‘Angling associations have had their day now, commercial fisheries are taking over. They have cafes, toilets, proper pegs which has meant that anglers have stopped fishing waters they used to fish on.’
(Banbury & District)**

Support



'We know how to use social media on a basic level, somebody with additional experience could potentially grow membership/volunteer base.' (Milton Keynes AA).

Focus group ideas

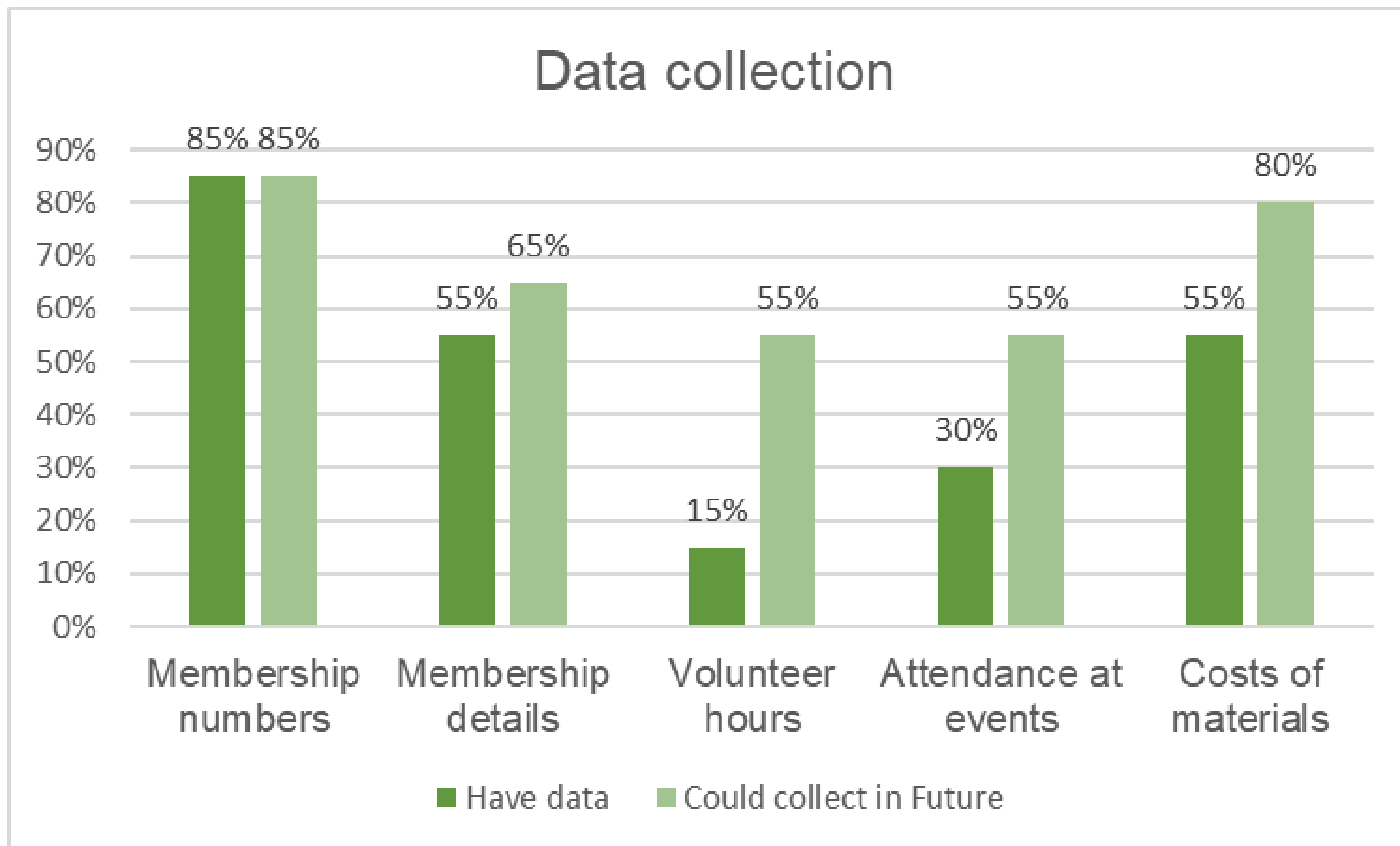
'We need someone to help us find a way to reach other people. The waterside festivals.. kids, mothers, fathers, grandparents...We need to find a way of reaching the wider public and showing them there's a facility there.'

'I think more could be made of angling opportunities on the Trust's website and Facebook pages. We need to try and promote angling on the front end – so that it tells people it's great fishing canals and there are all these opportunities for free'

'We are trying to find a way to connect with the mainland European local population to try and encourage them to adopt the UK angling culture.'

Issues / Recommendations

- Clubs need to have better records if value is to be understood
- Very varied record keeping
- Some potential to improve data



‘[Recording volunteer hours] might help someone statistically, but for us, this is a pointless exercise. The more you make people think about the hours they put in, the more they will think “I will cut that back a bit”.’

Future Evaluation – Structure / evidence

Outcome Area	Indicators / Evidence	How recorded?
Health and well being	Angler 'happiness' Self-reported well being	Angler testimony Survey of members
Engaged people and cohesive communities	Participation: - Anglers/club members numbers - Profile (age, gender, ethnicity, disability) Volunteering: - Volunteer numbers - Volunteer profile (age, gender, ethnicity, disability) - Volunteer hours - Monetary value	Membership records Membership forms Volunteer personnel details Recoding of volunteer activity (e.g. sampled) Calculation based on a per hour figure
Learning and enhancing skills	Hours spent delivering Coaching events Schools worked with (number and frequency) Training delivered	Event records Attendance numbers Coaches' records
Environmental assets	Hours spent delivering Numbers of incidents reported Asset improvements made	Reports Maintenance records

Future Evaluation – How to do it options

A clear rationale

- Benefits to clubs and the waterways

Incentives to clubs

- To collect and provide data

An annual survey

- Trust administered

A sampling approach

- Not all clubs all the time

Simple, easy to use, reporting tools

- Online to record basic information

Resources for evaluative work

- External or volunteer programmes