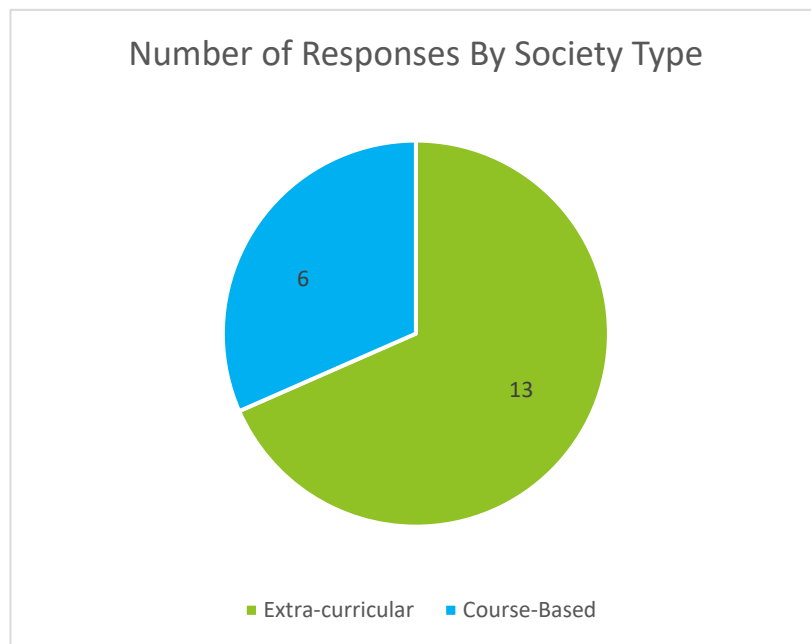


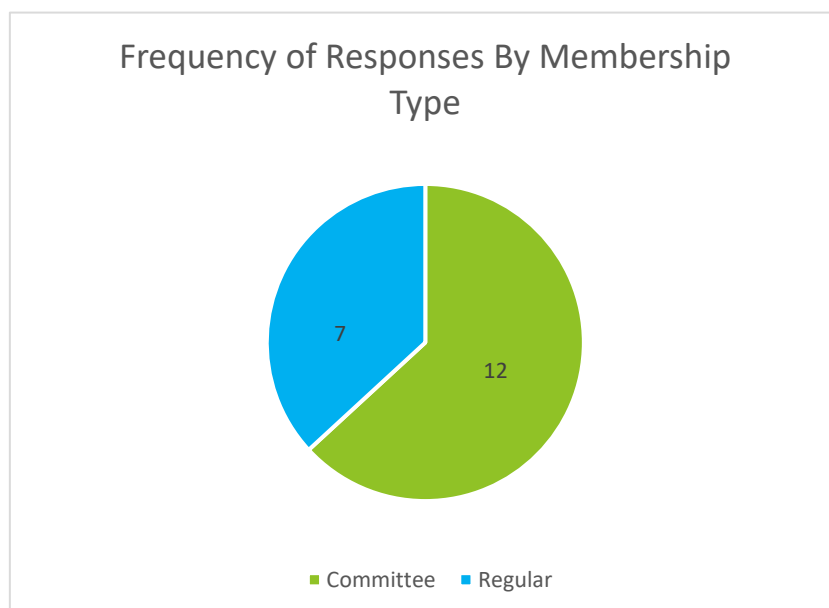
#LoveSocieties Survey Analysis

Overview of Results

There were a total of 19 respondents to the survey. The majority of the respondents were from extra-curricular societies.



The majority of respondents were from society committees, rather than being regular members:



Superficially, this could indicate higher engagement from extra-curricular societies, as both societies had equal opportunity to engage with the survey, and both sets of societies were advertised to approximately equally; however there was low engagement overall and this may not be the case entirely.

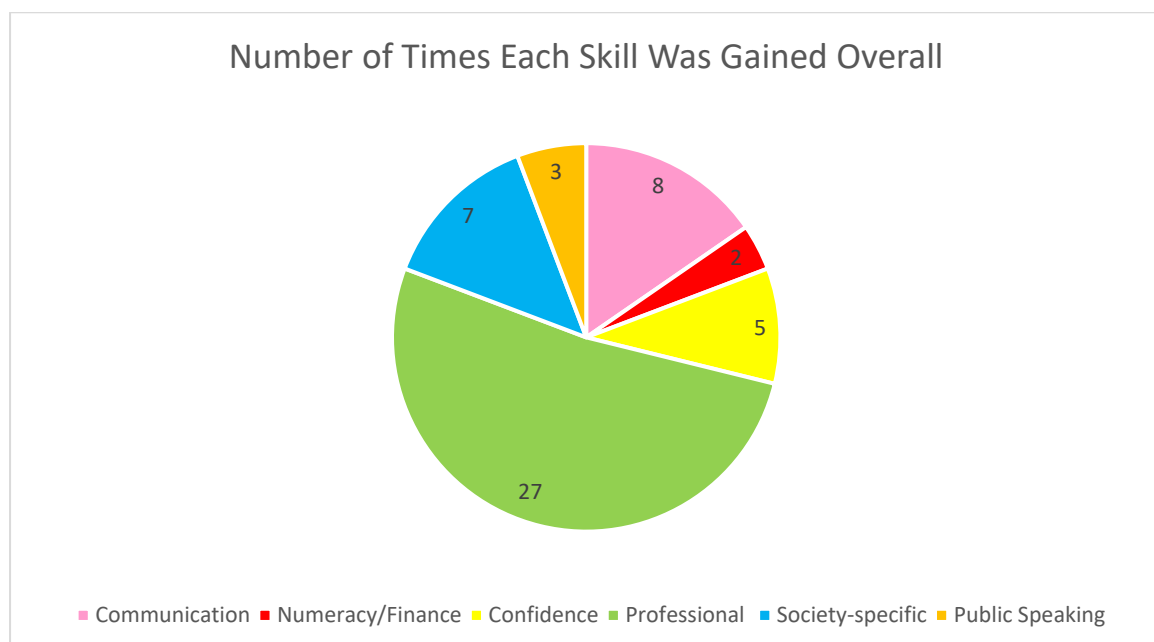
Of the respondents who began answering the survey – 46 – there were 19 who completed the survey. This is disappointing as the survey had only 3 mandatory questions; the name of the society the respondent was talking about, whether they were a committee or regular member, and then why they loved the society. Going forward, the wording of the questions may need to be reviewed.

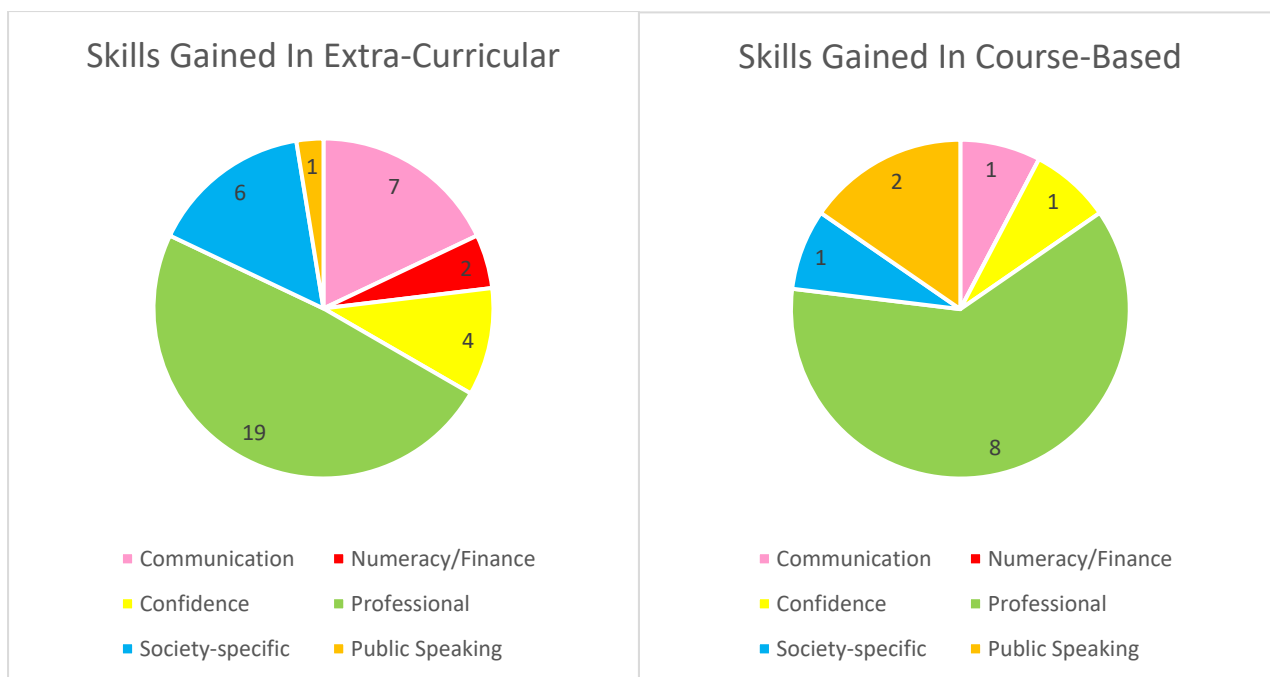
Skill Improvement Data

While looking at the skills gained through society membership, I've split the data in a number of ways. Firstly, the societies are split into course-based and extra-curricular to see which group has the most noticed named improvement overall. Secondly, the skills are sorted by category, namely into the following:

Communication, Numeracy and finance, Confidence, Professional skills (writing papers, organisation, punctuality etc), Society-Specific (ie skills gained that are related to the purpose of the society, eg getting better at using LARP weapons or writing poetry for LASAR and Creative Writing respectively), and Public Speaking (this was pulled aside as a separate category as there are elements of confidence, communication and other professional skills involved here).

The results of skills gained are in the following pie-charts and tables:





Type of Society	Total	Extra-Curricular		Course-Based	
Number/% of societies surveyed	19	13	68%	6	32%
Skills List		Frequency of Skills Gain / % Share of that Skill Gain			
Communication	8	7	88%	1	12%
Numeracy/Finance	2	2	100%	0	0%
Confidence	5	4	80%	1	20%
Professional Skills	27	19	73%	8	27%
Society-Specific	7	6	86%	1	14%
Public Speaking	3	1	33%	2	66%
Total Skills	52	39	75%	13	25%

Public speaking aside, the extra-curricular societies are arguably more important in building skills than course-based. Both types of society have a strong turnout from the professional skills side – organisation, conflict management, punctuality etc., were all included in this.

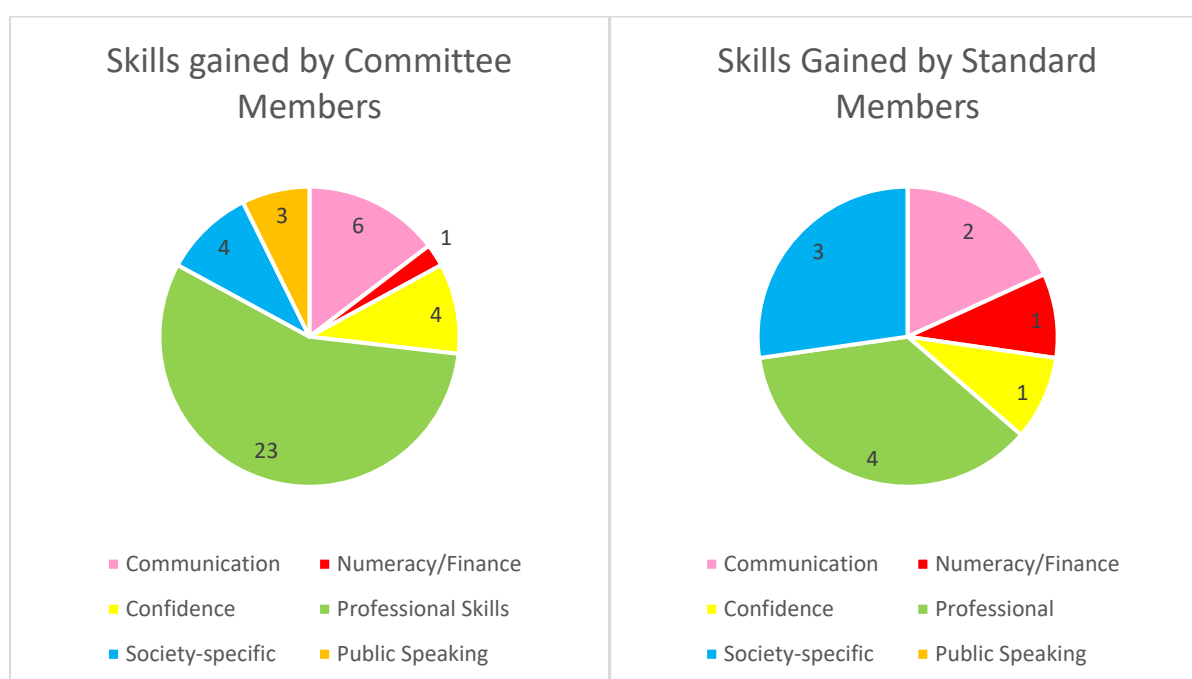
When the data is looked at more closely though, the course-based societies may not be doing as poorly as is indicated on the table. Three separate answers made reference to ‘countless’ or ‘many’ new skills/skill improvements without specifying what those skills were or only naming one as an example, whereas all the extra-curricular based answers who chose to answer the question named at least one specific skill and usually several.

The average number of skills gained in extra-curricular societies is 3, with a low of 0 (question was not answered) and a high of 7 (occurred twice). The average in course-based

societies is 2.2 – however 7 of the skills came from one person, so when these are removed as an outlier response, the average is 1.2. The highest recorded was 7, the lowest was 0 – the person made reference to the society kick-starting their interest in the SU, leading to them running to be an officer, but there was no mention of specific skills.

Going forward, it may be better to have a tickbox of skills gained rather than having it as a free text box, as this has led to multiple people leaving it blank or not being specific in the answers which has made the data hard to analyse.

Next, the results were analysed by type of membership to the society.

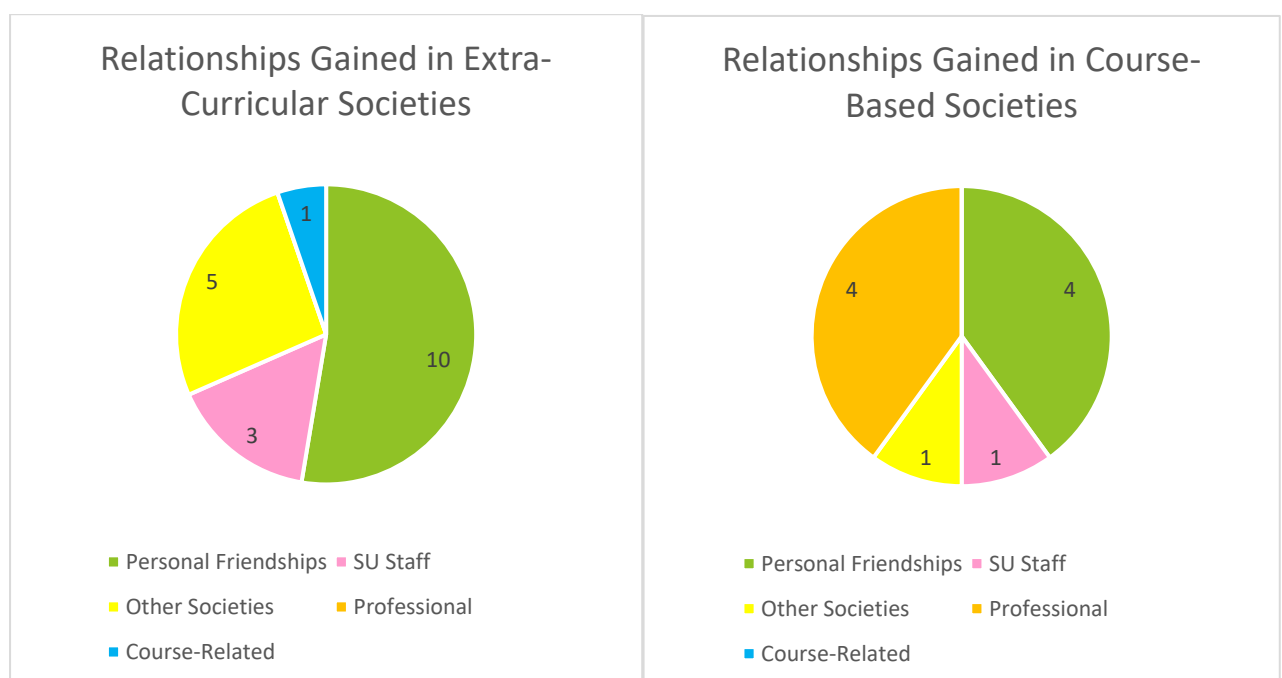


Type of Membership	Total	Committee Member		Standard Member	
		Number	%	Number	%
Number/% of societies surveyed	19	12	68%	7	32%
Skills List		Frequency of Skills Gain / % Share of that Skill Gain			
Communication	8	6	75%	2	25%
Numeracy/Finance	2	1	50%	1	50%
Confidence	5	4	80%	1	20%
Professional Skills	27	23	81%	4	19%
Society-Specific	7	4	57%	3	43%
Public Speaking	3	3	100%	0	0%
Total Skills	52	41	79%	11	21%

This is probably not an unexpected spread of results. Given that society committee members are in a position of leadership, we would hope and expect them to gain significant skills to support their position throughout their time on the committee. With that said, it's still encouraging to see that standard members are also gaining skills; particularly in their communication and professional skills, as these are transferable skills that are needed in the workplace and in a lot of degrees.

Relationships Built

Again, I've split the data in 5 ways that seemed to make the most sense based on what the data was saying.



Type of Society	All	Extra-Curricular		Course-Based	
Number/% of societies surveyed	19	13	68%	6	32%
Types of Relationship		Frequency of Relationships Built / % Share of those Relationships			
Personal Friendships	14	10	71%	4	29%
SU Staff	4	3	75%	1	25%
Other Societies	6	5	83%	1	17%
Professional	4	0	0%	4	100%
Course-related	1	1	100%	0	0%
Total Relationships	29	19	66%	10	34%

Both extra-curricular and course-based societies seemed to perform approximately as they should, based on the number of respondents.

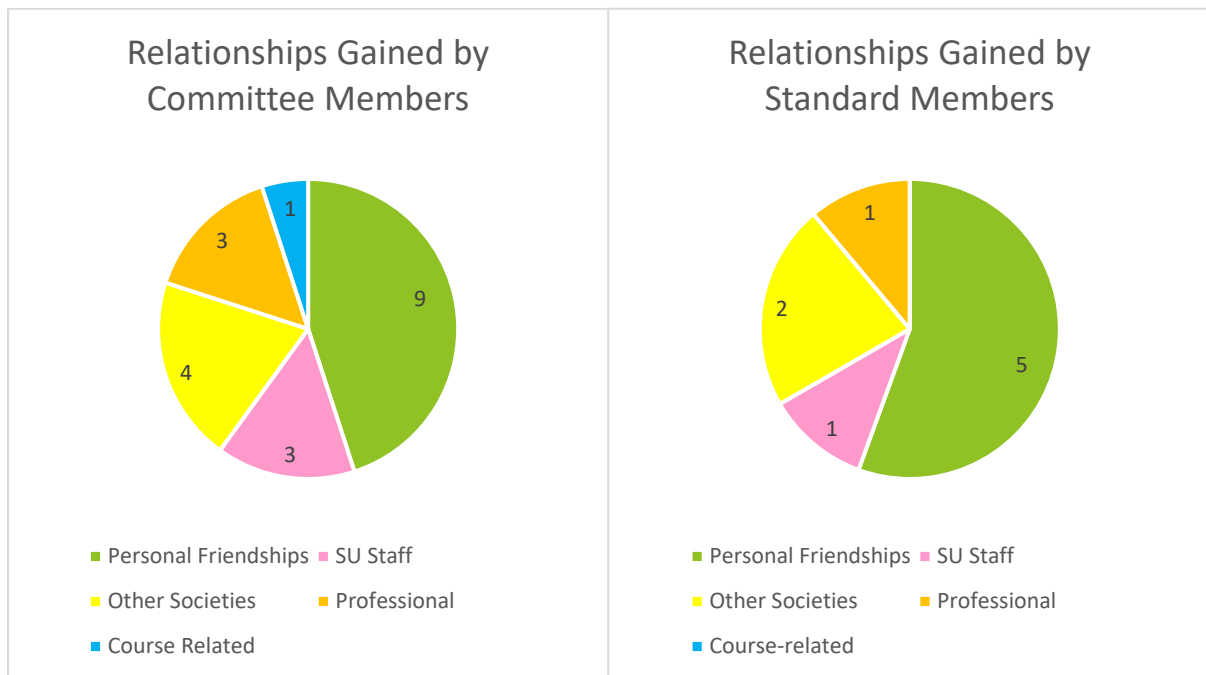
It is interesting though perhaps not surprising to see that extra-curricular societies were more likely to spawn cross-society relationships; we have seen evidence of this throughout the year through events such as Nerds Assemble, multiple collaborative Film Viewing events and the Performing Arts Talent Show where several extra-curricular societies were invited and attended. Some of these events even occurred cross-campus; Nerds Assemble while based in the Cambridge campus – in the Academy – actually had attendees from SASG in Chelmsford, and SASG have been collaborating with LASAR ever since.

It is perhaps not surprising that the extra-curricular societies were more likely to lead to SU Staff relationships being built; these societies are **typically** more likely to run events in the Academy or other SU spaces, and tend to show up to Societies Forum more regularly.

As expected, course-based societies were more likely to lead to professional relationships and contacts being built.

What was perhaps the most puzzling aspect of these results was that only one person noted that they'd gained course-related relationships with their cohort – and it wasn't a student from a course-based society. This is worrying given the nature of the course-based societies, however it could be that the students who responded to the question actually became friends with their class and counted as friendships, or considered them future colleagues and thus considered them as professional contacts.

Next, the data was split via membership type.



Type of Membership	All	Committee Member		Standard Member	
Number/% of people surveyed	19	12	68%	7	32%
Types of Relationship		Frequency of Relationships Built / % Share of those Relationships			
Personal Friendships	14	9	64%	5	36%
SU Staff	4	3	75%	1	25%
Other Societies	6	4	67%	2	33%
Professional	4	3	75%	1	25%
Course-related	1	1	100%	0	0%
Total Relationships	29	20	69%	9	31%

As with the skills split, these results are not unexpected, although it might be nice for standard members to get more professional contacts out of their societies where applicable rather than events potentially only being networking opportunities for committee.

Overall Impact

Two of the questions were very open ended, in an attempt to get respondents to be open and candid about their experiences, asking them why they loved their societies (first question) and if there was anything else they wanted to remark on regarding the society (final question). There is no easy way to compile this data into a table or chart unfortunately!

The data includes a lot of remarks about making friends, and generally loving what the society entails, however I've pulled out what I think are the most interesting remarks or the ones that show the biggest impact on the student in question.

"This society along with others are part of the reason I ended up staying at university, and it had a significant positive impact on my mental health."

"It's a great community for students passionate about design who enjoy sharing this through assisting other people and working together. There are great opportunities to do things you wouldn't have expected, expand your horizons and gain experience that will benefit your CV, portfolio and your future prospects."

"Keeping Film Viewing going was actually part of the reason I came back to ARU to do my Masters after completing my BA; there's no way I would have even finished that BA without FilmSoc."

"I was offered a job with a well-recognised company on the basis of being President one year and Treasurer another."

"I love how supportive the activities team are of them."

“I would like to see the society continue after I leave the university which is **making me consider taking another course.**”

“After running this society and another society I have **decided to give running for VP a go!**”

There are a lot of other remarks that I could have included here but have chosen not to – otherwise it document would span pages and pages! Throughout all of these free-text comments, there were only two comments that could be construed as negative. These are below;

“Give them more money and Lab 028.”

“I believe that if the society met more regularly there would be a higher number of retained members.”

Obviously neither of these comments are about societies as a whole and refer to specific problems within specific societies. It is worth noting that both of these comments came from standard members, not committee members and we can potentially gain a few insights as a result; committee members are talking about room bookings and grant request issues to their members, and that societies that seem to be doing fine may have a number of discontent members.

Final Thoughts

On the whole, it’s fair to say that our engaged students really do care about and benefit from societies; the data makes this very clear. The impact on our students is not to be underestimated; when people actively talk about their mental health, continuing their education or running for paid leadership positions (such as VP in our full-time officer elections), that is an incredibly positive thing, and one that bodes well for societies going forward.

If this survey were to be replicated, there are definitely areas which need to be addressed; these have already been discussed in each individual section.

It may be interesting to look at how many of our previous and current officers came from a society background; the skills students are learning, and the remark about running for VP as a result of the society committee membership have highlighted this as a potential area of interest.

It would be good to see this as a yearly survey to see if opinions change over time.

Going forward, it seems fair to say that societies need more recognition of the impact they have – and we are able to use some of these comments in future advertising if needs be, as permission was sought during the survey process.

Recommendations

- Use the free text data in promotional material (where consent has been given)
- Run the survey again yearly with the amendments recommended throughout the document regarding wording and tickboxes vs free text