

# Questionnaire Responses

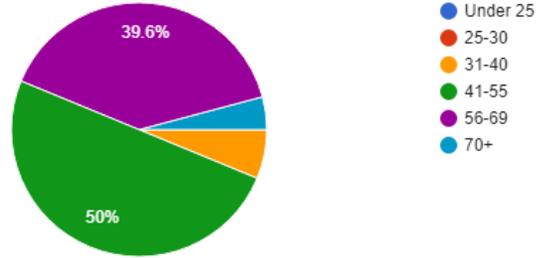
48 Responders (8<sup>th</sup> October 2018)

# Summary of Key Points

- Most people want to develop their rowing skills and are prepared to pay to do so
- Rowing could be better structured to aid development and allow people to row at a level they are happy with
- There is scope to increase membership fees further
- Most people have brought friends along to try rowing
- Most people are open to the idea of sharing the facility with others including Junior rowing, but they need to understand the impact more fully
- There is not a huge interest in corporate rowing
- There is a lot of willingness to volunteer but it's not for everyone
- Communication with members could be better with more solicitation of members views and feedback

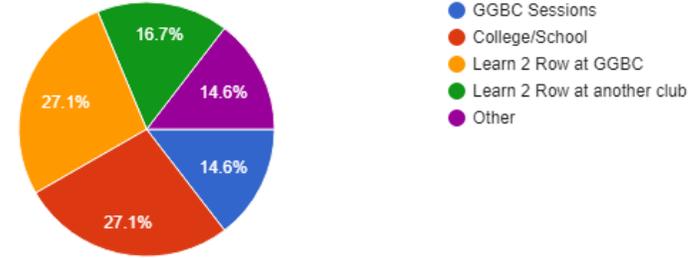
### How old are you?

48 responses



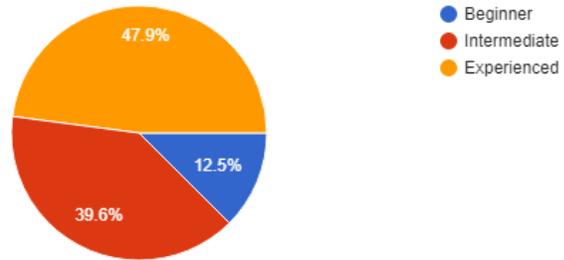
### Where did you learn to row?

48 responses



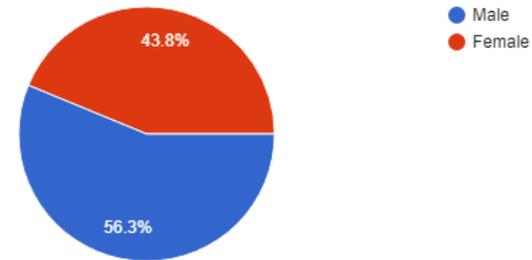
### What level of rower are you?

48 responses



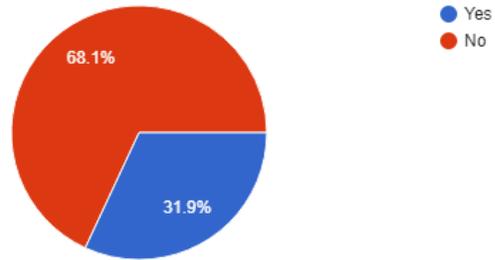
### Gender

48 responses



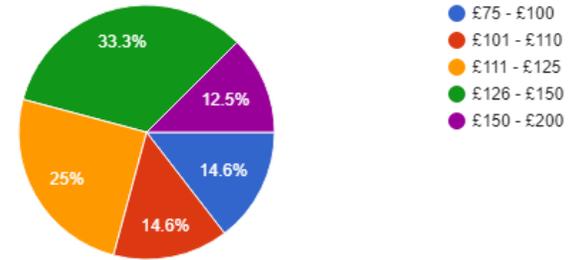
### Would you like to be able to pay monthly in advance?

47 responses



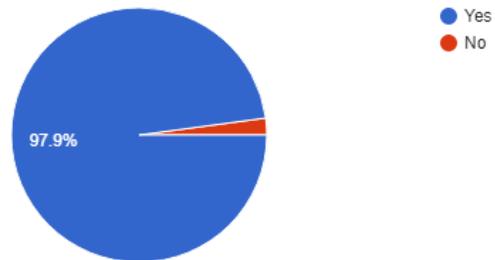
### What do you think is a fair membership fee (full adult)?

48 responses



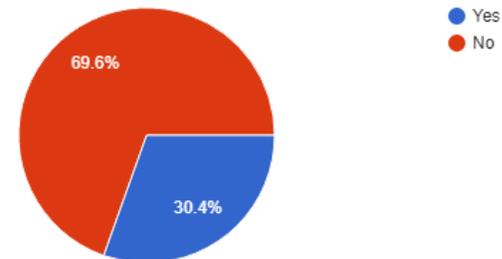
### Do you feel that GGBC is inclusive and open to all?

47 responses



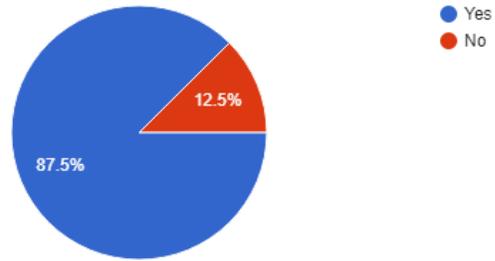
### Do you think there should be a small joining fee which would be payable again if there was a lapse in payment?

46 responses



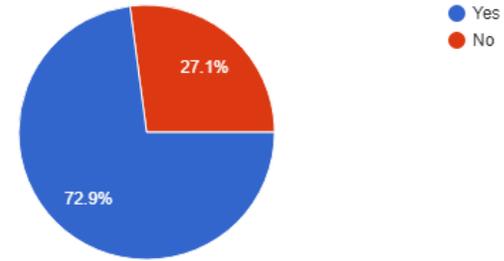
### Do you feel fully aware of the safety issues around rowing?

48 responses



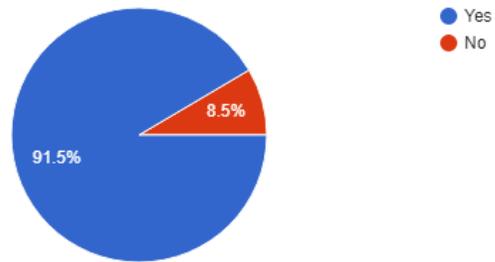
### Do you think we run enough sessions?

48 responses



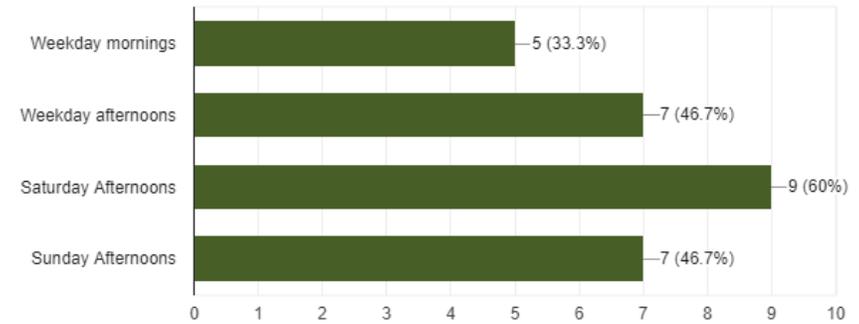
### Do you think that GGBC should remain primarily a recreational rowing club?

47 responses



### If not, what other times would you like to row?

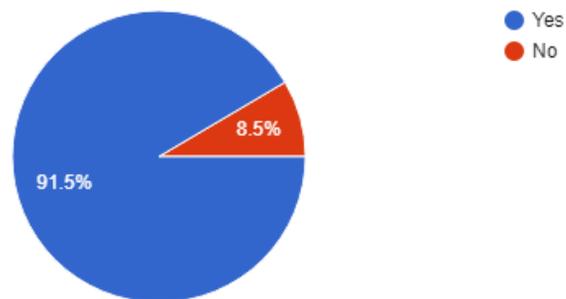
15 responses



# **Developing Your Rowing**

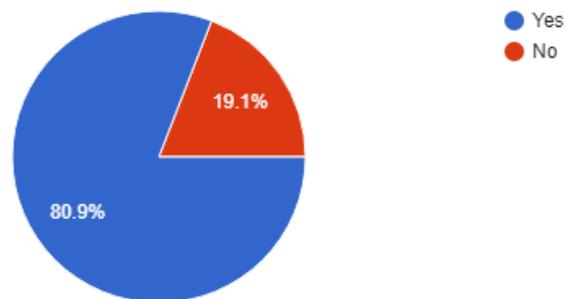
### Does GGBC offer you the kind of rowing you want?

47 responses



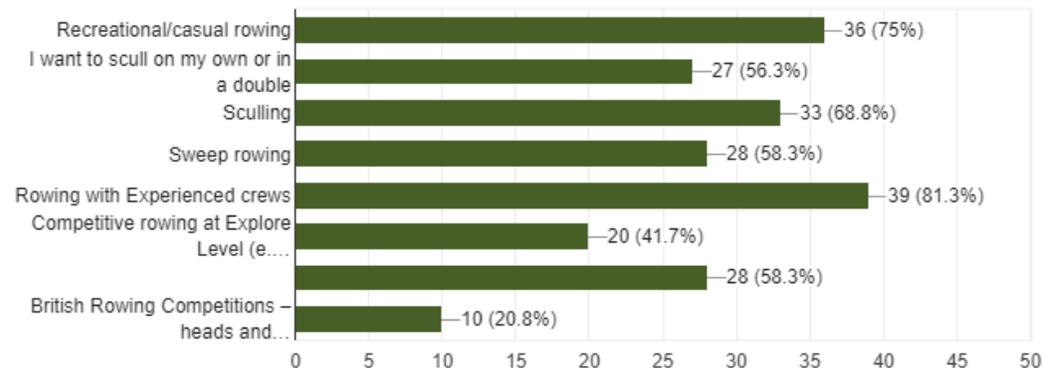
### Would you like more coaching?

47 responses



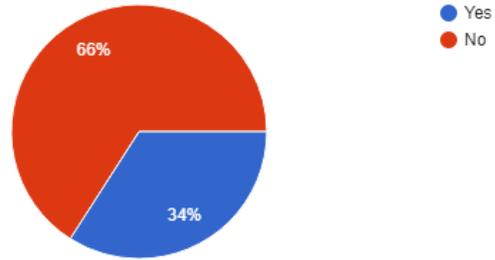
### What kind of rowing are you looking for at GGBC? (check all that apply)

48 responses



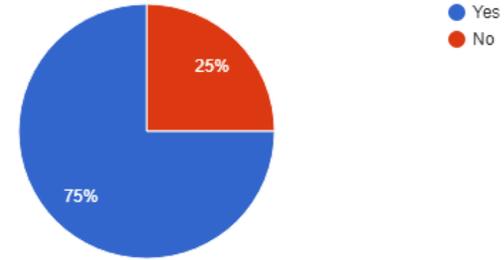
Would you be interested in general fitness/nutrition advice and support?

47 responses



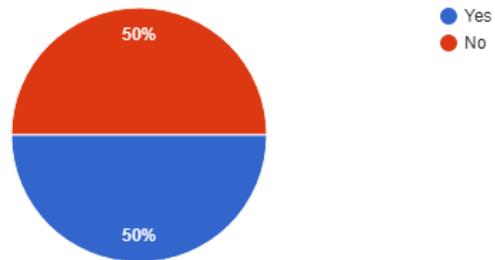
If you don't single scull currently would you like to learn?

24 responses



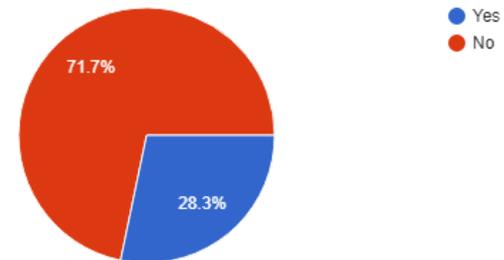
If you don't cox currently would you like to learn to cox?

24 responses



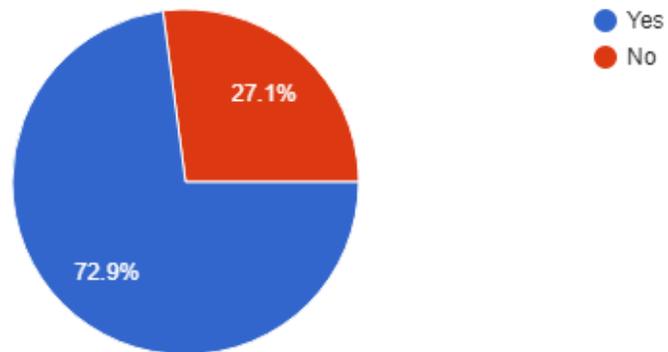
Would you be interested in an intensive week-long coached Summer school to improve your rowing and/or coxing skills? Cost approx. £300

46 responses



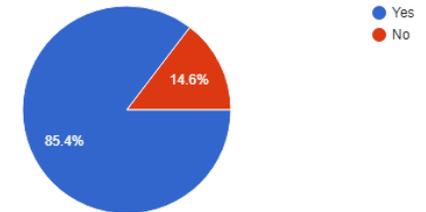
Would you attend an advanced rowing course if it was offered (usually 6 sessions over a few weeks)?

48 responses



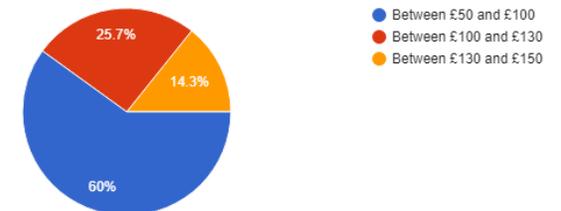
Would you be prepared to pay for this course?

41 responses



If so, how much would you be prepared to pay?

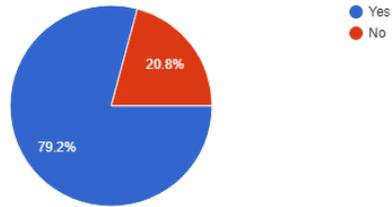
35 responses



# **Recruiting New Members**

# Recruiting New Members

Have you ever brought a friend along to GGBC to try rowing?  
48 responses

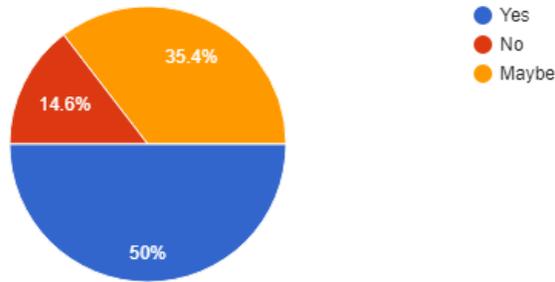


- the Go row days worked - i don't know if monthly sessions were that well used, but i think some were - maybe hold them every 3 months?
- Need some leaflets to hand out
- Let them see what's happening on the river - take them out in launch. Offer (paid for) extras at 1st Sunday session such as Danish pastries or bacon butties.
- Think you do very well. Maybe more local ads eg in caversham?
- A social area and a few more low key social activities. Now we have the Explore Boats, the occasional trip beyond the Thames Valley. Provide something for non-rowing 'other halves' so they not just left out minding the kids.
- Weekend afternoon sessions
- The club offers enough incentive to try rowing at the club
- Don't think so. Club is so welcoming and accommodating already.
- The club is very inclusive. Everyone is made welcome and that is hugely attractive.
- Be in a less remote place!!
- The club atmosphere and rowers are really friendly and good people. I am trying to bring my friends to such a setting, but I need some discipline for rowing. I'll bring my friends if I can get through this.
- Yes. If there was a pathway for fit, healthy atheletic types who are maybe time-poor but don't mind spending money to learn to scull in singles & doubles early mornings in the week . . . Without being made to feel like they are breaking the rules or being anti-social . . . That would make it easier.
- More structured GoRow sessions
- No, I think the GoRow Sundays and L2R offer an entre for those interested.
- book mark promotional items to hand out
- Consider more serious racing crews
- Put experienced, younger, athletic rowers into crews of similar ability.
- Nothing I can think of.
- The current evolution is working very well focusing on inclusion and encouraging more member participation. A lot depends on the 5-year plan so we can launch various initiatives in the Spring. Eg reach out to other sports clubs, eg Pangbourne & Goring tennis, Scout & school (summer) groups, etc. The Regatta next year gives us a great platform. So many opportunities but which to do 1st? More events in the Thames Valley and more exposure to BR tours, UK and International.

# **Developing the Club**

## Junior Rowing - would you be happy if GGBC ran a Competitive Junior Rowing Section that did not conflict with other Club activities?

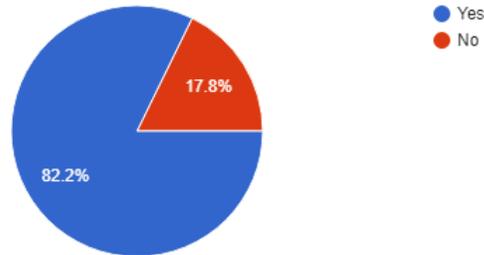
48 responses



- Needs full time staff to manage this (2)
- I am concerned that it will take up more time and resource than our small club can provide.
- really good idea but will take lots of dedicated work from DBS approved members (which means only a small number) and it's only workable if there are a few members who want to provide that
- Fine as long as they come in separate sessions and not in adult sessions
- Not a good use of club resources. Refine other provisions first.
- Best run by other competitive clubs. Far too much "school gate" chatting/politics by parents. Could end up splitting the club.
- Good idea, provided the parents don't make a pain of themselves - which can be a risk for such things. Ideally parents would turn up, drop off kids and go.
- It would be sad if our new reach was turned into what we saw at Reading. I did not join GGBC to row in those conditions.
- should maybe tempt the parents to also join GGBC and outside of Junior training families could row together in club sessions
- Great idea as long as it doesn't cut across current sessions as I have limited leisure time and current session times work well for me.
- Great idea but very admin intensive
- Valuable for juniors and adults wanting to help
- trouble
- A good thing
- No preference
- In general I am supportive of the concept of junior rowing however after the recent email from the Wallingford parent who complained about GGBC poaching the WRC juniors I now find myself asking what it would be like having a junior section in reality. I think it could be a new revenue stream but it could start to change our ethos and what the club is about - which for me is the main thing I think we should maintain. I think this is definitely worth investigating further - both pros and cons.
- Don't know anything about it but young members would be great. Would need to create a critical mass so they feel comfortable amongst the oldies!
- Good idea
- Good idea to encourage younger rowers and bring funds into the club
- I am interested in getting my kids to row
- Junior Rowing bring to us new hope.
- I'd love my teenage children to scull at the club and I'd be happy to contribute my time as a coach & organiser for juniors to scull. However, there are significant barriers to having juniors as you know - CRB etc. - what is the cost / benefit?
- A good thing provided it does not undermine or compete with senior recreational Rowing.
- With the new boathouse, we need more members, activity and income. We would just have to be careful that a junior section didn't adversely affect the existing recreational rowing activity and atmosphere.
- as long as it's self sufficient it might be OK
- Having belonged to a club dominated completely by juniors then I think equality is important to get the balance right. You need a broad section of people
- I think it would be good for the club, but we need to be ready for it and for the young people
- Good idea.
- Great in principle but events need to be calendarised to avoid too much conflict. For sure summer events can be arranged. Of course all priorities must factor in the potential income, ie more chickens for more eggs..
- ALWAYS TO BE ENCOURAGED....PROBLEM AS EVER IS WHAT USED TO BE CALLED CRB.
- it could potentially change the ethos of the club and is therefore risky. It could take up a lot of time for club members who get involved in the junior section to the detriment of the rest of the club
- Modern day nonsense presents too many challenges and so called safeguarding issues. Who will clean the loos? Repair equipment they break? Will they contribute to the running of the club and literally building it? Happy to have junior members such as Zac, Peter, Oscar. We are a middle aged club who focus on recreational rowing. Members were never consulted about the 4th bay which we can't afford. We are being driven by financial pressure, not what the members want.
- Good to encourage youngsters

Do you think GGBC should open its facilities to other non-profit community ventures that did not conflict with other; scout groups, open water swimmers.

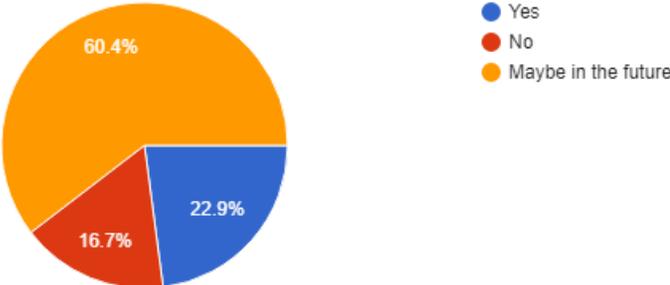
45 responses



- I would guess more negative than positive outcomes (2)
- the main thing would be getting others to respect the site and our property, so I'd suggest a signed agreement between them and us that we enforce either getting payment or ending the agreement if they don't comply. could also be the source of small amount of income?
- As for junior rowers
- Our new boathouse should be accessible to wider community.
- We should make a modest charge for use of the facilities so GGBC remains in profit.
- If it raised an income but danger is it ultimately restricts GGBC flexibility.
- Good idea. I doubt that these groups would cause us much conflict.
- We clearly have to balance the books, we also have a very beautiful site and it would seem selfish not to share it. We are supposed to be a 'community' club. So the problem is how do we let others in without destroying the very things they have come for. If we have a social space on the mezzanine, I don't see a problem letting it out for groups to meet in, e.g. to an art club at times we don't use it. Likewise occasional scout camps. Less keen on open water swimmers because mixing swimming and rowing on the same stretch is inviting a serious accident.
- Others should pay a fair market fee to use our (expensively built) facilities
- Great idea but I think a contribution to running costs should be mandatory
- Paying visitors for events only
- OK, Provided a full risk assessment is carried out
- Depends a lot on what the club gets in return
- Careful consideration
- A good idea
- Sounds nice. Might attract more new people
- Only if the admin, insurance, responsibility is manageable given hardworking volunteers and committee already do a great deal.
- I think we should mature our own brand before opening up our facility. Unless it were a way to fund raise that did not regularly conflict with planned sessions.
- Occasionally
- If it doesn't conflict that's fine, should be rowing based. Out of hours rowers should still have access though.
- may be later
- If well managed and controlled could provide increased revenue and raise the profile and reputation of the club further in the community.
- no problem with open water swimmers. Paddle boarders. In theory. However, need to balance cost / benefit: cost is car parking and inconvenience of having the pontoon blocked with too many people. The benefit would need to be loads of money coming in. We are a club, not a charity.
- I think as long as it does not change the ethos of the club and disrupt club sessions it is fine
- While I recognise that this may help us demonstrate community involvement, I am quite nervous of the club ceasing to be a focused rowing club and losing a club atmosphere.
- would be helpful to secure more funding if we needed it.
- Again, I. Eli fed to Thanos Tradesman who decided to share with a hockey club and it was disastrous. Choose complimentary partners with care to avoid conflict
- As long as it didn't affect our sessions
- While we're a predominantly social rowing club, I think this is a great idea. It would raise the profile of the club.
- Yes, especially if the non-profit can include funds towards the boathouse. The National Trust, Basildon Park, may wish to offer or advertise activities. Eg punting with afternoon tea.
- EACH ON MERIT
- as long as it does not interfere with the core purpose of GGBC - recreational rowing
- In practice they will conflict with our activities, and we are down to 2.5 bays for our own use. No objection to users who pay their way and are 'invisible'. Who will let them in? Maintain the facilities they use etc? Same goes for all the other activities which can never totally not conflict.
- Takes a lot of organisation need to look after our boat

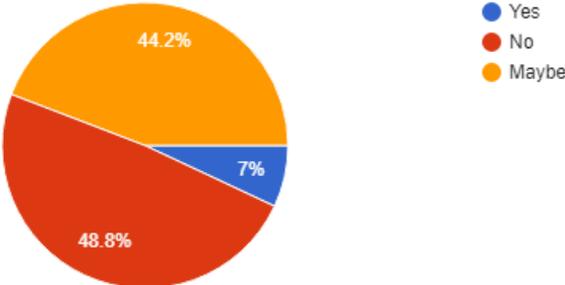
Do you think GGBC should offer other water-based sports that did not conflict with other Club activities?

48 responses



Do you think your employer would be interested in a Corporate Rowing Day as a team building experience?

43 responses



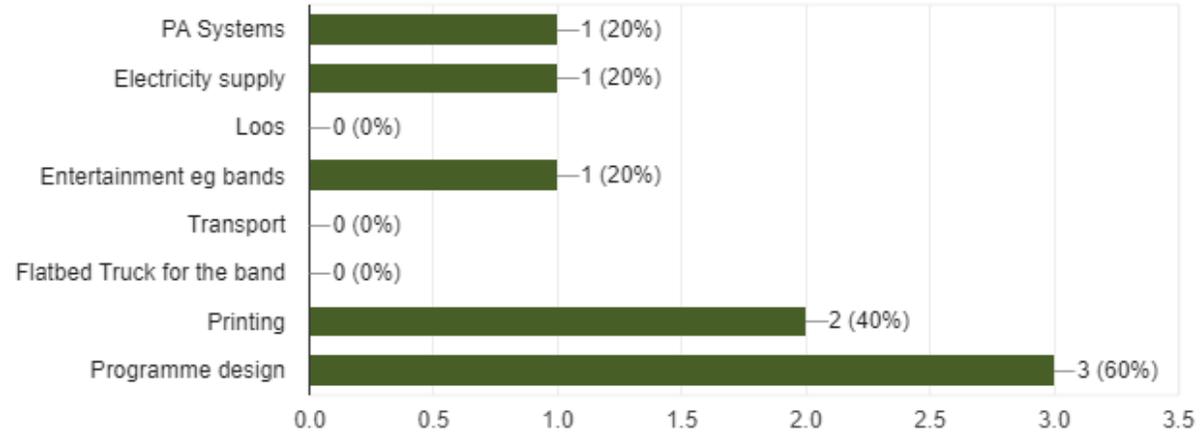
# **Goring Streatley Regatta**

## Ideas for Developing the regatta

- I don't think we should hold a big regatta. Instead we should hold more mini ones at the site
- All in one cost- at moment you have to pay for crew and entry for family and gazebo and parking
- Friday night barn dance in marquee - organised by others who pay GGBC for use of the facilities including the bar.
- Use gift aid, more local sponsorship and localish food producers
- Yes but too detailed to put here.
- More dry side activities
- Making use of the marquee and venue not just on the day. How about live music the night before to bring in ticket revenue
- increase entry fee for competitors / charge for training by session
- we need more good boats
- Have events on Friday and Saturday evening, possibly have other events on over the weekend to make use of the facilities and generate more income
- Could we encourage more reasonably experienced crews from other clubs to compete?
- Yay make sure you have enough events. If there is eights racing then there will be profit
- Reduce the number of beginner crews to reduce the effort.
- Yes too many to list. I will be happy to help in the planning & execution. So many things have been tried and tested so let's review these for fun vs profit.
- Basic stuff like the Apprentice on TV. Reduce overheads in the light of reducing profits. Conduct market research, and never allow children in for free. Children cost money, and parents are used to paying. I said all this stuff last Regatta and it fell upon deaf ears. We made little profit.

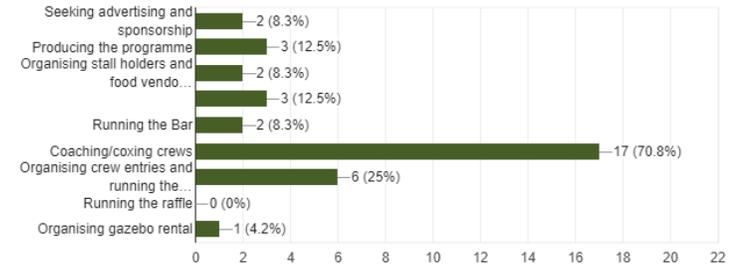
## Do you have any contacts that might be useful?

5 responses



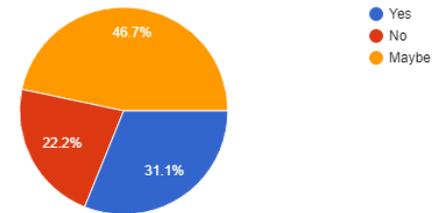
## Are there any particular skills you could bring?

24 responses



## Would you be interested in helping to organise the regatta this year?

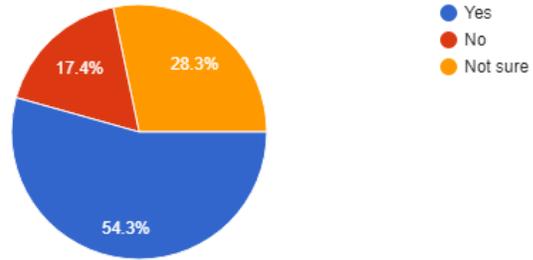
45 responses



# **Roles within the Club**

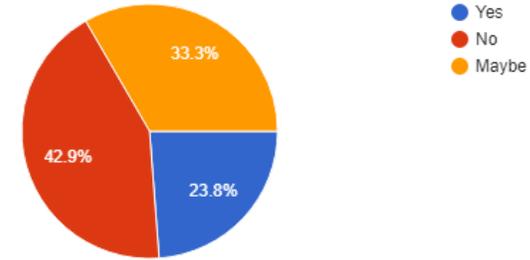
Do you feel like you are kept adequately informed of decisions being made by the committee?

46 responses



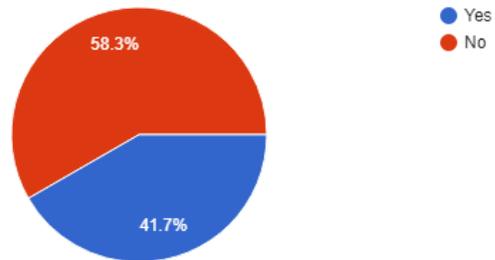
Are you interested in joining the committee in any capacity?

42 responses



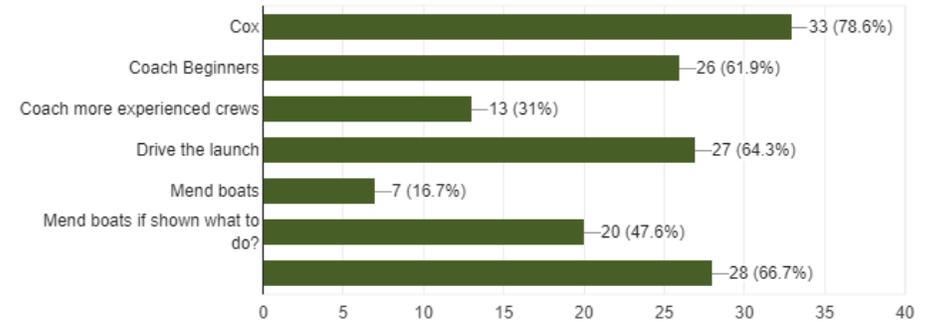
If you are not a session manager, would you feel happy to be one with a little training?

24 responses



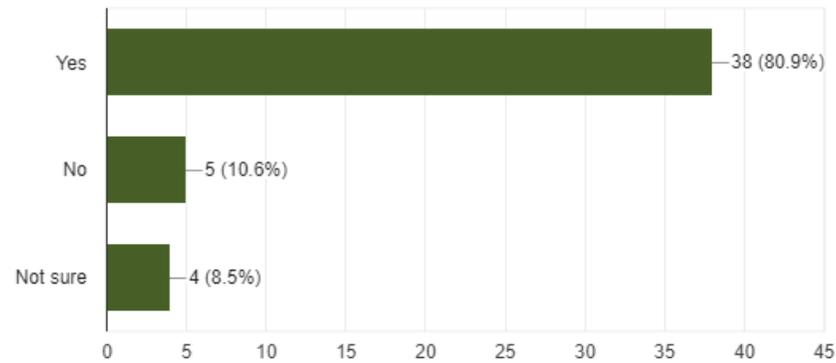
Are you able and willing to do any of the following? (tick all that apply)

42 responses



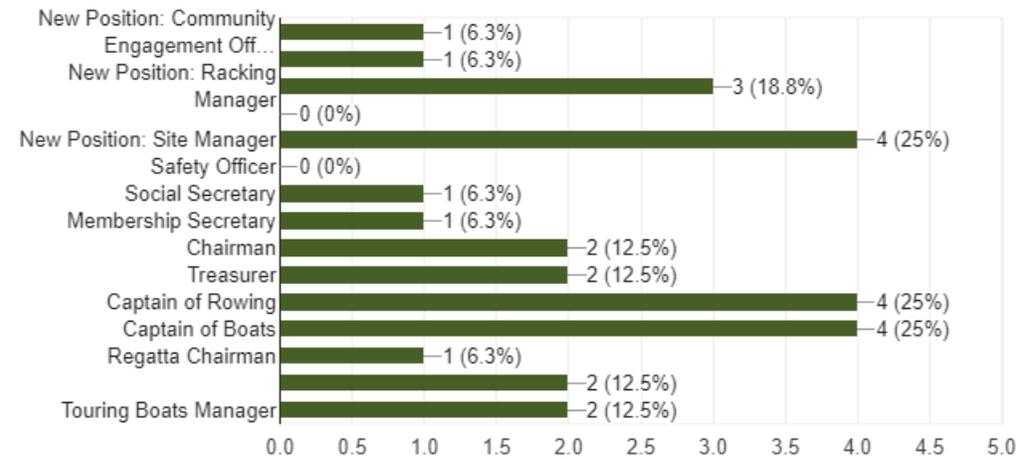
Some of our committee roles are shared. Do you think that shared committee roles are a good idea?

47 responses



If so, do any of the following roles appeal? (tick any that do, not all are committee roles)

16 responses



## How could we make being a member of GGBC better for you?

Each response from a different member

1. I'm afraid I'm not a very active member and know it's unrealistic to commit to things because of my time constraints. I think it's a brilliant club - very friendly and informality love the sessions I make. Thank you.
2. Decent loos. Pleasant area for coffee after rowing. A well maintained site that is simply a nice place to be in. Workshop facilities that will enable us to our fleet in good condition.
3. If the club owned a paddle board or two at the new site once it begins being used and/or a canadian canoe. Also looking forward to more social activities at the new boathouse including family events e.g. BBQs / Family camps etc
4. Improvement of my sculling!!!!
5. A better way of matching up sweep rowers of similar ability, and encouraging a few more competition entries, without becoming too serious. A junior section could be a good way to get more coxes
6. Can't think of anything at the moment
7. a new boathouse would be nice
8. I would like to have another go in the tank. I think it would help me improve my technique. Evening sessions in winter? Would be willing to pay
9. Note - some of my answers are blank or No because (a) I am new and not ready yet, (b) I live in Newbury so travel time adds a couple of hours to any session or meeting and (c) I am a carer for my partner and so there are these constraints on being able to do more to help this fabulous club. Any other thoughts are already covered in the questionnaire. Thank you, as ever, to the committee and volunteers.
10. Continuing along towards our new boathouse. Thanks
11. Friends and rowing
12. Developing coaching and encouraging members to improve their rowing. Making sure that opportunities for more experienced / skilled crew are developed. It's more fun if the boat is well balanced (and the crew together like a well oiled machine!!), but this only happens with coaching, regular outings and consistency of crew make-up. The fortnightly sweep squad outing partly addresses this but more regular rowing in an established / consistent squad (sweep or sculls, e.g. fours or quads) would be good. However this may be easier said than done, given everyone's differing time commitments. On the other side of the coin, we also need more experienced rowers and scullers to do their bit by rowing with the less accomplished in the regular Saturday and Sunday sessions.
13. More information on how to join Explore crews. Information on any regattas that the club is entering.
14. Personally I am 99% happy with the direction we are heading. Continue to keep inclusivity & communication high on the agenda. Emails are great and very well written but often get lost. Recent reminders are good with key points each week whether club or boathouse stuff. More use of notice boards, WhatsApp, website and chats over a coffee / beer, ideally on our new balcony!!! Great set of questions. I could have given more "no" answers but I am confident that we are getting there and can expect better survey results next year. Adding the new committee roles is great and we should always encourage new members to join. The AGM needs to be well attended. Focus on 5-year plan which will lead to more participation in key areas. Progress reporting is good but many will criticize. Better to include forward plans more so we can discuss more fruitfully and members will take more ownership of decisions.
15. NO...A VERY SPECIAL CLUB.
16. No all doing a great job

## How could we make being a member of GGBC better for you?

17. (from one member)

- So many closed questions above, and the response should be anonymous. Why not a list of open statements by the member saying what they want, what could be improved, and what they can offer the club?
- How much we are prepared to pay should be linked to what we expect in return and the facilities currently on offer. A 'glorified cow shed' with no mezzanine, services or a loo does not justify a high membership fee.
- The long term sustainability plan needs to be developed with member input / feedback and is an iterative process. Hopefully not simply a one-off questionnaire with mainly closed questions fed into a committee process without further refinement / approval of members.
- We need a new committee position of 5 yr plan officer, and that officer needs to be good at strategy and keep members informed. Once the Q has been analysed and some ideas worked through by committee, we need a meeting so that members can be involved in the discussion / decision making in an interactive manner.
- The new site is a game changer. Significant assets, risks, financial responsibilities. We have a 4th bay that must earn its keep without losing sight of the fact that our USP is a recreational rowing club and our ethos is 'affordable'.
- All members should have a pathway for progression / improvement. We should not simply be known as, and behave as, a 'wobbly boat club'.
- Some members row as a closed group. I can understand this, and sympathise, but if the whole club were to adopt this approach, the club couldn't function and bring on new members. We need open discussion here and offer more options: fixed crews, seats etc.
- Our churn rate is too high. We need to understand this and attempt to retain members better. New members should be allocated a 'mentor'.
- I have only ever seen one good cox at the club; Adam. We need training from an experienced cox like him to extend coxing into the coaching arena.
- The access road at the new site is poor and needs improving, especially the sharp bend.
- Our desperation for funds to complete the BH should not be the driving force and override what members want from the club. We need a visible plan to complete the BH without years of pain and ruining club atmosphere. We're all in it together, and simply turning up to row whilst not contributing should not be an option.
- We could offer new activities, and access to our site, but they will all impact the club to a degree. There is no such thing as zero impact.
- We need to carefully consider the implications and work out who will have to deliver the packages. For example we currently rely on 2 members towing the explore boats.
- Juniors are a nightmare in a zero risk culture and probably bring more problems than benefits.
- We need to improve the governance, and move the mindset from a field with assets of a few thousand, to a business with significant assets, run in an honest and business-like manner, thinking outside of the box, and prepared to change. Members must approve the rules and rule changes, and the committee must obey them and behave in a more professional and transparent manner. What you know / what is best for the club, not who you know, or who your friends are.
- All members should know where to find committee minutes and the latest copy displayed on a noticeboard like other clubs. In theory members have a say in the running of the club and are protected by the rules. In practice the club is run by an all powerful committee who are extremely poor at communication. Minutes are hidden away on the website and are often months out of date. The rules are changed without a vote of members and the winding up clause was side-stepped. The minutes talk about seeking member approval which rarely happens. To cap it all, the committee have made decisions when not quorate. It would appear that some committee members are assuming executive powers that are not listed under their job description. Committee roles should not be shared, aiding accountability, and decision making. We should not confuse accountability / responsibility with the manpower needed to carry out a task.
- The boathouse committee was too small and previous committees failed to monitor progress, resulting in a project that was out of control, and as a result, the club has had to borrow funds to move into an incomplete building without basic services. We must learn from these mistakes and ensure it can never happen again. The BHCG needs sufficient members to take collective decisions that are minuted, and the minutes need to be available to all. We should be transparent about loans, and the detail of where funds are being spent. Members need to see that there is a plan, and be able to monitor its implementation. The club is reliant on members contributing money and time to finish the BH, and as such, needs to 'take the members with them'. The all powerful, secretive committee, cannot expect members to bale them out or work as slaves. All committee members should set an example by helping at the new site.
- The BHCG works well by breaking things down into tasks which are the responsibility of one person, without micro-management or design by committee. It provides a forum for discussion if needed, and the means to monitor progress and expenditure. The BHCG should be responsible for finishing the build, and should not be subservient to the rowing committee. We need to develop a protocol for decision making and be transparent to members.

## How could we make being a member of GGBC better for you?

18. (from one member)

Yes. There are three main areas.

- First is about single & double sculling out of hours, which seems to be regarded as a bad thing (or tolerated as vaguely anti-social and a bit suspect) by the committee. Can we either ban it or embrace it? Some people want to row early in the morning when the water is flat and before they start work. A very few scullers should probably not be allowed out on their own because they have not passed the basic tests set by the club and don't follow the basic safety procedures. Get them off the water! Enforce the rules! Set high standards and enforce them.
- Second thing is about developing competence. Not everyone wants to improve, but some do and they should be helped. It makes sense that, if they want more out of the club they should probably pay more, and I bet some people would be willing to pay more to get more. At the moment there is almost no way to get coaching (except informally from peers in the club sometimes). If we invest in coaching (and it's mainly sculling I'm after, I admit) that will build up a strong base of competency in the club. In time we will be able to call on a pool of qualified coaches within the membership (not just the usual one or two overstretched people) and we can reward them by supporting their continuing development. By the way, this would not result in the club being (shock, horror) competitive. Don't worry!
- Third thing is about the way the club is run, so it is not really to do with rowing, but ultimately affects everything we do. This is just the impression I get, having joined in the last year: it feels like the club is being run by the inner circle of a secret squirrel resistance group! Most of this is probably just perception, but some of the comments and questions I've heard about and from the committee tell me there is probably some truth as well. The club will change a bit, gradually, if we move to a permanent home and grow a bit. Maybe it's time to shift from resistance to shaping the club for the future.

Can I also humbly suggest that closed questions on a form like this is probably a first step to getting some input? Nothing beats asking people what they think and then involving them in the solution.