



Golf Clubs 2012

Survey of Proprietary and Members Clubs across the UK

By Hillier Hopkins LLP
Specialist Golf Club
Advisers

In association with
The Golf Club Secretary



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Welcome

to the 2012 Hillier Hopkins LLP Golf Survey Report for Members Clubs and Proprietary Clubs. We are very grateful to all of you that have taken part in this survey which, without your participation, would not be possible. Many of you have also provided valuable comments and suggestions which have helped to improve this study over the years.

We are greatly encouraged by your feedback and that you consider this to be a valuable, informative and interesting document. We hope that this will continue to provide information to Clubs, to assist in making strategic decisions, for benchmarking purposes, and as a source of information.

As in previous years, we have split the results by Club type. The results from Proprietary and Members Clubs have been analysed separately, enabling you to compare like for like. We had hoped to provide some regional information but overall the results were actually markedly consistent in all areas. Income from members did of course vary from area to area but costs seemed to vary in the same proportions.

Overall the results of this year's survey are somewhat surprising, with increased membership levels and less concerns about income going forward. Clubs still seem to be willing to invest in their future and overall financial performance has continued to improve despite the current economic climate. This appears to suggest that overall clubs are becoming better organised and financially fitter and more focused.

There will always be scope for improvement, however, recent investment in the course rather than the clubhouse seems to be paying dividends and members are playing more often.

The recession has weeded out the part time golfer who can no longer justify high membership charges only to play a few rounds of golf. Whilst for some clubs these were the ideal member, they contributed very little to the club's income other than their annual subscription.

Regular playing members will invariably generate more income for the club. Many clubs have managed to retain these part time players as social members which in turn has actually helped the club's overall performance.

I have visited many clubs over the past two months and have been impressed by the variety of activities they are undertaking to attract new members. Group lessons for all ages have been particularly successful in bringing in new members.

Many clubs are introducing flexible joining fees to provide lower cost options for new joiners and reduced fees for junior categories to encourage other family members to join.

As a result of the increased levels of competition, the survey clearly shows that golf has become relatively cheap over recent years. In my view there is some scope to return to more exclusivity and prestige for golf clubs, without significant detriment to income and results.

Bar and catering income has, in real terms, fallen over recent years and this is an area where clubs need to focus their attention going forward. This will ensure that these activities become an income generator for the club, rather than a financial cost.

Thank you once again for your time and effort in responding to our enquiries. We hope that you find this report of interest and use in your Club activities.

As always, please do get in touch with questions, feedback and suggestions.



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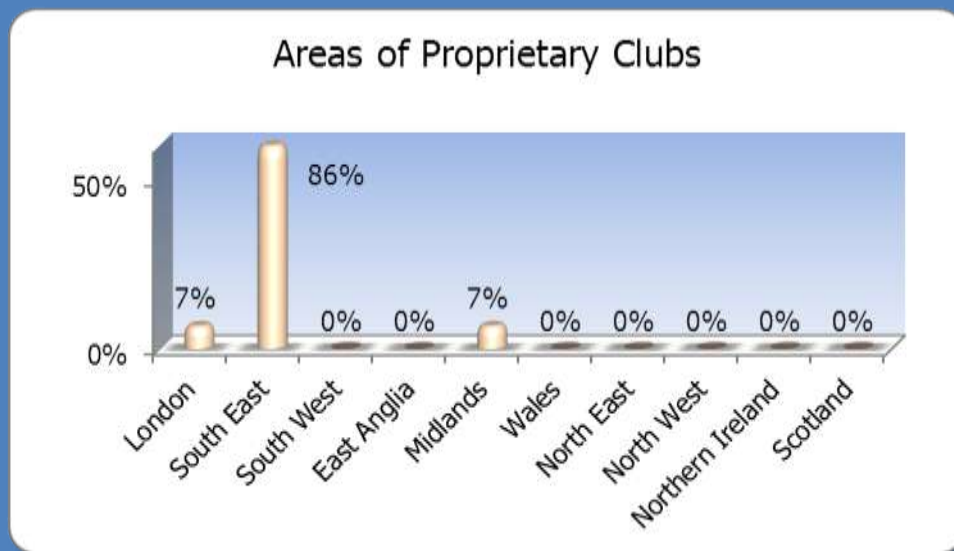


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Proprietary Clubs Results 2012

15 Clubs, Typically with 18-hole Courses

This year we bring you data from 15 Proprietary Clubs from across the South East and London (93%) with one club from the Midlands who also participated.



Most of these clubs had 18-hole courses but a few had 9 or 27-hole courses

Few Honorary Positions

The vast majority of survey respondents – mainly managers and secretaries - were paid employees of their Club, with just one honorary position.



7% honorary

93% paid



Staffing

A Typical Remuneration Package of £40,000+ for Secretaries & Managers; Generally Higher than in Members Clubs

Our results showed that the typical remuneration package was in excess of £40,000 (62%) – generally higher than in Members Clubs.

The Head Green Keeper remuneration package was in most cases slightly lower at £30,000-£40,000 (67%), whilst Steward remuneration packages were lower still at £20,000-£30,000 (45%).



PGA Professionals

All bar 1 of the Proprietary Clubs indicated that they had a PGA professional, in line with most Members Clubs. Among those who pay a retainer, this is typically £1,000 - £1,500 per month. 20% of Clubs pays in excess of £2,500.

Proprietary Clubs pay a typical PGA professional monthly wage of £1,000-£1,500.

Fewer Clubs Pay Commission to their Professionals

Only a small percentage of Proprietary Clubs pay commission to their professional.



In addition, less Proprietary Clubs (40% compared to 50% in 2011) appear to now provide free premises as part of their package and some are considering whether or not they should provide a retainer.

PGA Duties Which Focus on Tuition, Green Fees & the Pro-Shop

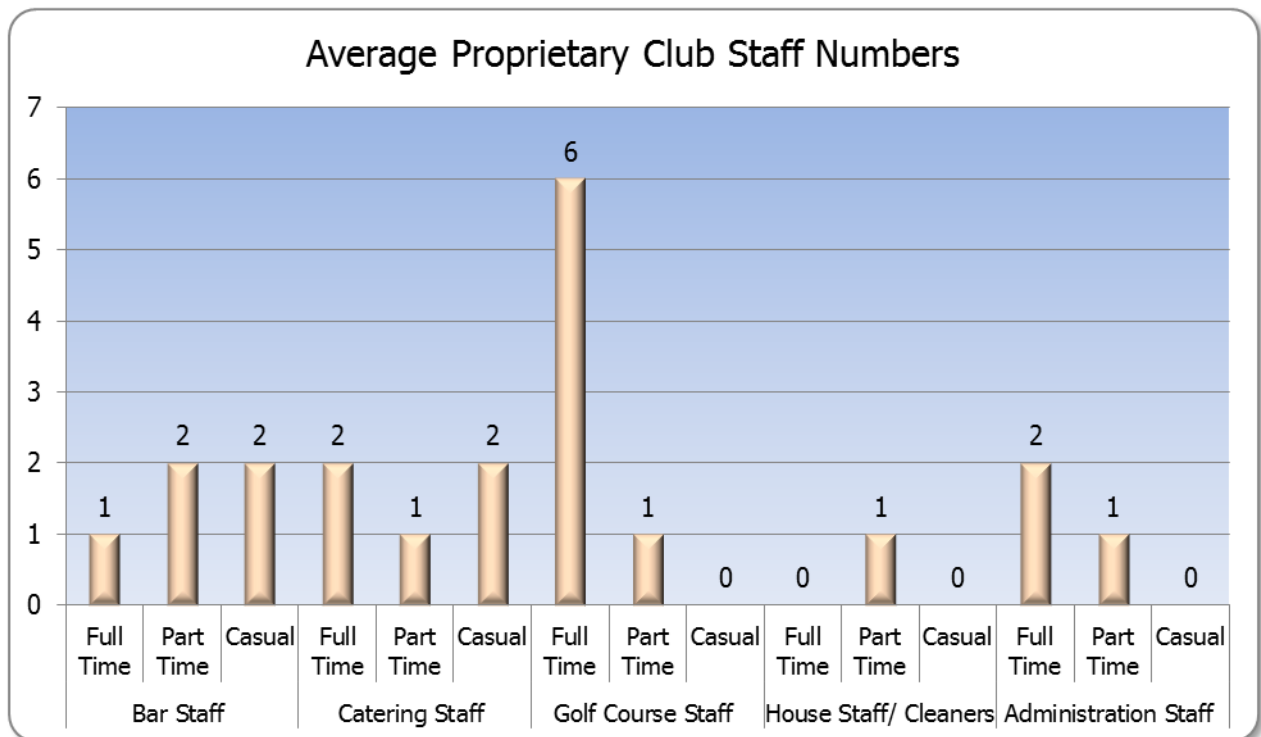
PGA professionals undertake a number of duties for Proprietary Clubs, with the four main duties being: a tuition provider; green fee collector; pro-shop manager; and bookings arranger.



An Average of 21 Staff at Proprietary Clubs

Always highly variable and dependent on the size and needs of each Club in question, staffing figures range from 10 to 45 across Proprietary Clubs, with an average total staffing number of 21.

Average numbers across staff roles are broken down as follows, revealing few notable differences compared to 2011, other than a slight increase in the average number of catering staff.



Members

Proprietary Clubs Typically have (100-500) Playing Members

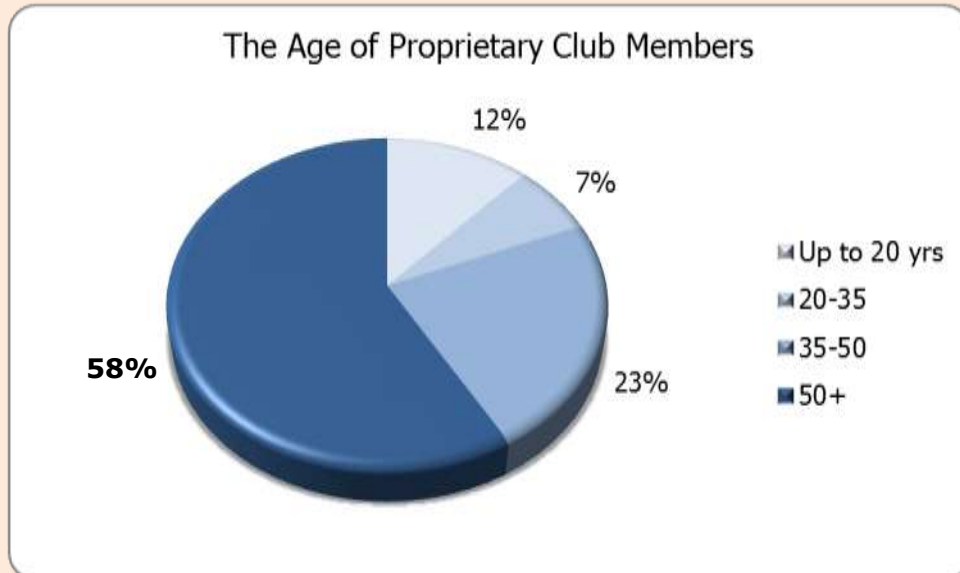
Between 100 and 500 members proves typical for around 60% of Proprietary Clubs. A further 27% have 500-600 members, whilst the remainder (13%) have 600+ members. These figures show a decrease in the number of members compared to 2011, when 33% had 600+ members.

Limiting Membership

Interestingly, close to 90% of Proprietary Clubs suggest a cap on their number of playing members. Suggestions for this limit vary significantly. However, a limit of **500-700** featured most frequently.

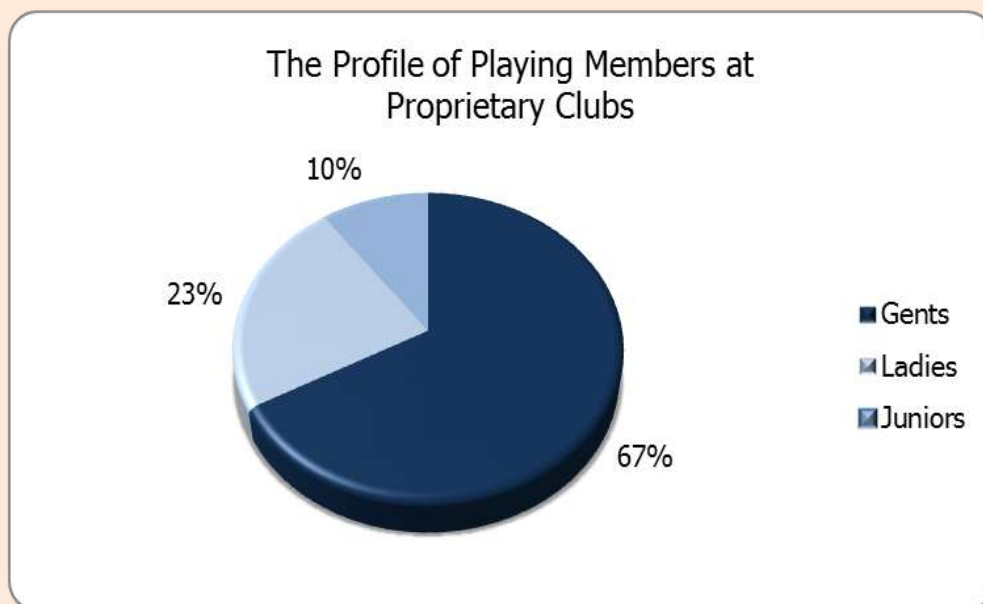
Member Ages Heavily Distributed Towards the 50+ Age Group

14 of the 15 Proprietary Clubs indicated membership numbers within each age range. As shown in the following chart, and paralleling the findings of 2011, the age distribution of Proprietary Club members shows lower numbers of younger members (in lighter shades), and a greater number of older members – aged 50+ (darker shades).



A Continuing Higher Gentlemen to Lady Member Ratio

As shown in the following chart, and again aligned to the findings of 2011, the gender distribution of Proprietary Club members shows lower numbers of lady members and junior members, and more gentlemen members.



Three-Quarters of Proprietary Clubs say that their Female Membership is Increasing

This increasing lady membership is influenced by the fact that in Proprietary clubs, only 1 Club restricted lady member usage, with few instances of category, day and time restrictions.

Few Discounted Rates for Lady Members

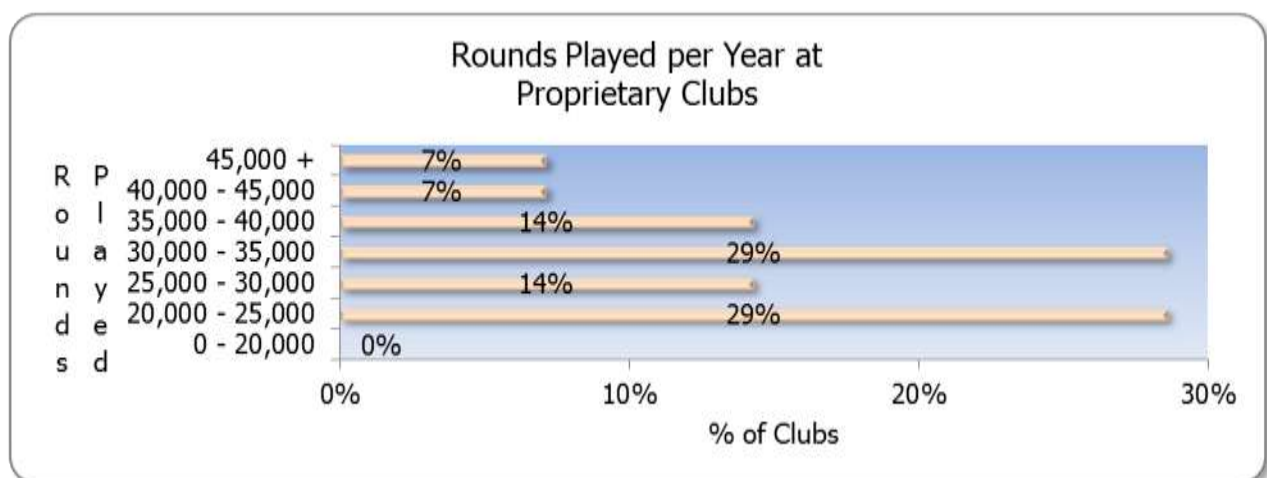
However, just 1 Club reported having reduced rates for lady members.

Increasing Numbers of Social Members at Proprietary Clubs

In 2011, just 20% of Clubs had a social membership which exceeded 25. This was surprisingly low considering Proprietary Clubs undoubtedly benefit from increasing social membership levels, with a positive impact on revenue. In 2012 the survey has shown a considerable increase with double the number of Proprietary Clubs (40%) now indicating a social membership of 25+.

A Large Variation in Rounds Played at Proprietary Clubs

A large variation in the number of rounds played annually at Proprietary Clubs was evident.



Society Rounds

Rounds played by societies range from 100 to 35,000. Excluding this latter figure, the typical number of rounds played by societies is around 1,600 annually. Just over half (54%) of all Clubs report an increase in the number of rounds played by societies in the last year.

Increased Waiting Lists

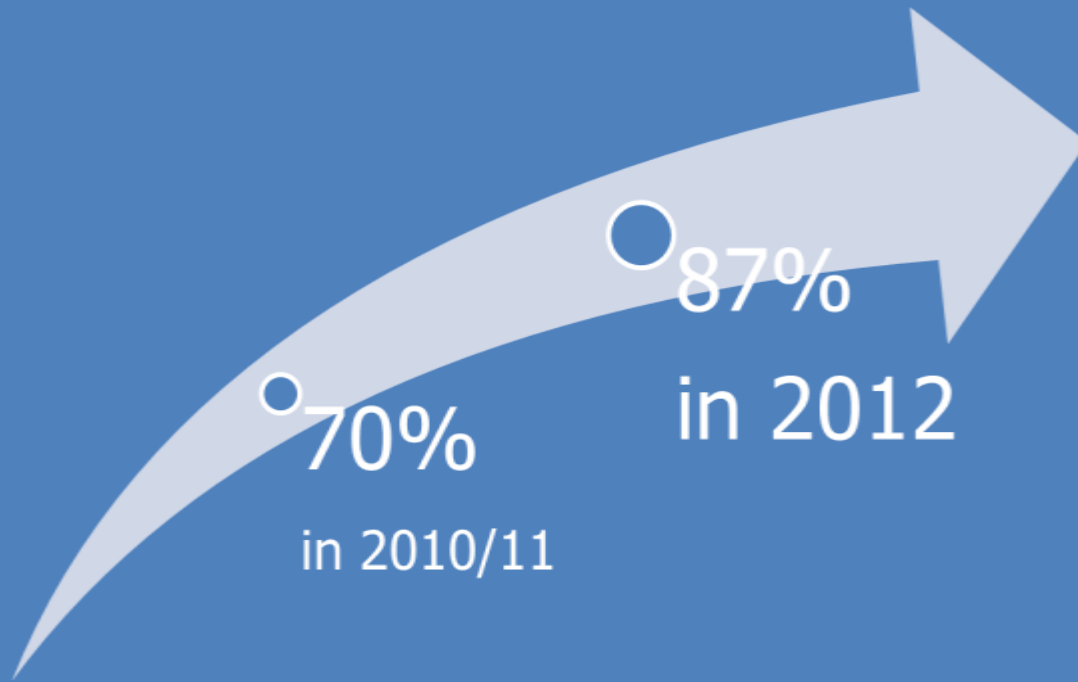
Compared to the zero percentage recorded in 2011, two Clubs in 2012 now have a waiting list of 100 plus, who wait for between 12 and 18 months.

Facilities

An Increasing Proportion of Proprietary Clubs Have a Driving Range

Our previous 2010 and 2011 research showed that around 70% of Proprietary Clubs had a driving range. In 2012, this percentage has risen to 87%, with differing driving range incomes of between zero and in excess of £25,000.

Driving Range Growth



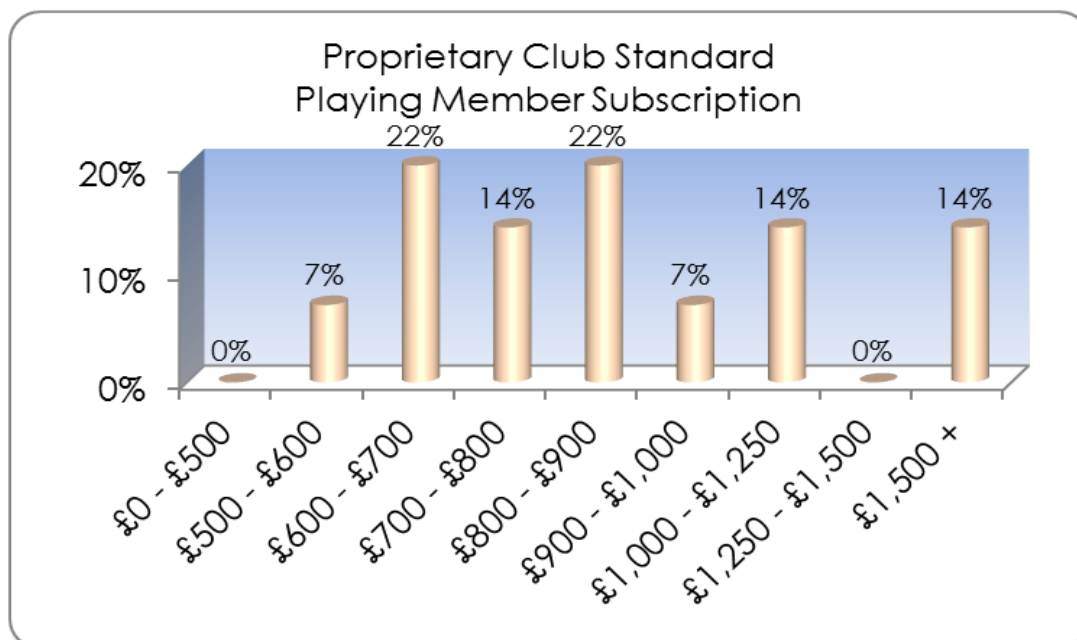
Around Half of Proprietary Clubs Have an Academy Area

This represents a rise from around one-third in 2011.

Fees & Charges

Subscriptions

As in 2011, membership fees for Standard Playing Members vary significantly - from £500, to £1,500+.



Among those Proprietary Clubs reporting Social Membership, the majority – as in 2011 charged £0 to £25.

A Steady 2 out of Every 3 Proprietary Clubs Have No Entrance Fees

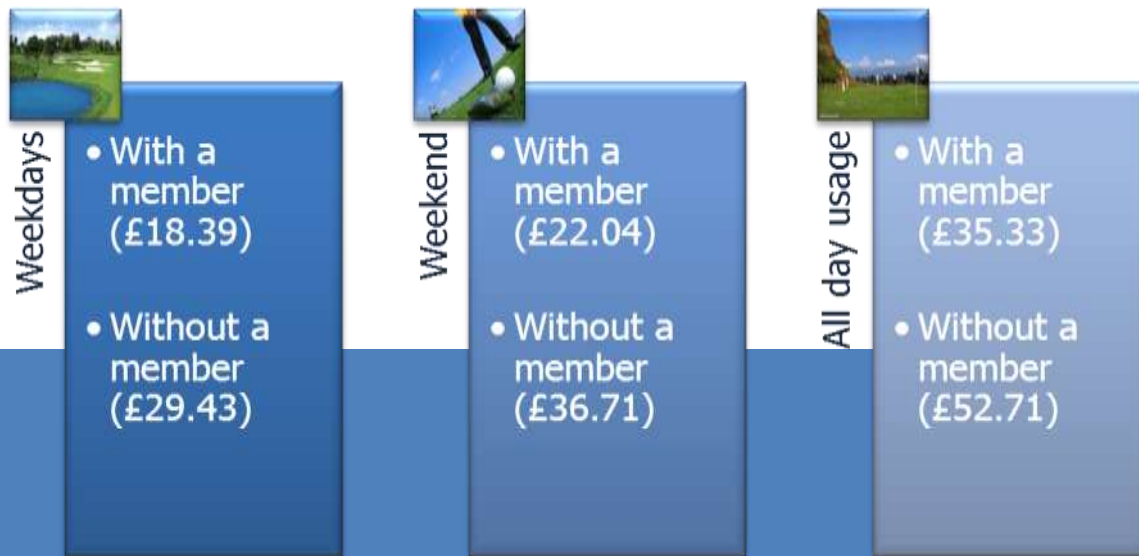
As in 2011, a consistent 1 in every 3 Proprietary Clubs still have an entrance fee, ranging from £45 to £3,000.

None of the Proprietary Clubs, without entrance fees, propose to implement one. They principally cite demand, market levels and competition as the three key considerations influencing this decision.

**market
demand
competition**

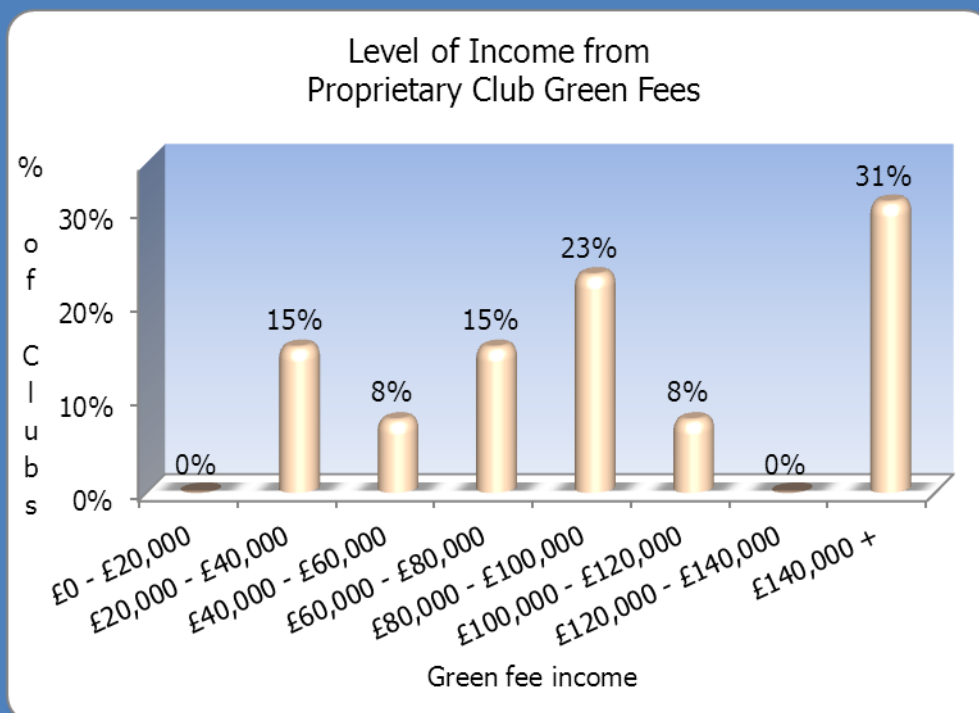
Slightly Lower Average Green Fee Charges in 2012

Average green fee charges are shown below, across weekdays, weekends and all day use, both with and without members. These charges are very slightly lower than those of 2011, indicating that Proprietary Clubs are striving to remain both competitive and attractive to prospective users.



Extremely Varied Green Fee Incomes

As in 2011, incomes from green fees are extremely diverse - spread across the income spectrum, from £20,000 to over £140,000. This year sees a rise from 20% to over 30% of Proprietary Clubs with green fee income of £140,000 plus.



Less Expensive Society Packages

Many Proprietary Clubs offer society packages, with average costs as follows.



Some Proprietary Clubs offer a range of prices dependent on numbers and catering.

Society package costs are lower than in 2011, and remain lower than in Members Clubs. This is consistent with our expectations in the current climate.

Three-quarters of those Proprietary Clubs offering society packages feel that two aspects impact most significantly on these:



Room and Facility Hire

Of those Proprietary Clubs providing room hire figures for Members and for Member-sponsored events, the majority indicated that this was **free of charge**.

Non-member room hire ranged from £50 to £250.

80% of Clubs Charge No Match Fee to Visiting Teams from Neighbouring Clubs

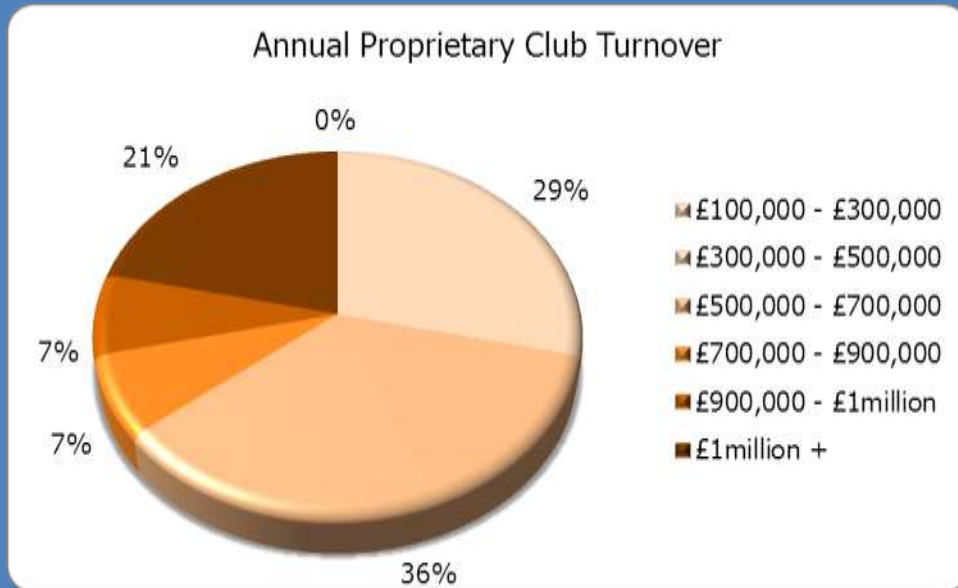
Among those who currently don't, opinion was divided as to the possibility of introducing this – with many clubs reticent to do so.

Those who do, charge between £11 and £20.

Financial Information

Typical Club Turnover of £300,000 - £700,000

Consistent with the results of previous years, Proprietary Clubs reported turnover levels ranging from £300,000 to £1million+.



Society Income Increasing for Some Clubs

Society income for Proprietary Clubs remains below £60,000 for around 60% of Clubs. However, the figures suggest that income IS increasing, with almost twice as many Clubs in 2012 taking in excess of £60,000, compared to 2011.

2011: **20%** taking more than
£60,000

2012: **38%** taking more than
£60,000

Bar Revenue and Costs

This year, bar revenue from Proprietary Clubs is slightly poorer than that reported by Members Clubs. In 2011 Proprietary Clubs were performing in line with Members Clubs in this area.

The importance of bar usage as an income stream should not be underestimated. Two-thirds of Proprietary Clubs take less than £100,000 in this area of business. Just 1 in 5 takes more than £250,000.

The following diagram illustrates average bar-related gross margins, rateable value and rate cost. As most Clubs do not disclose net profit, it is not possible to report on it, nor make comparisons with 2011 figures.

Average Bar and Rate Costs for Proprietary Clubs		
Gross margin: £86,500	Rateable value: £52,400	Rate Cost: £33,800

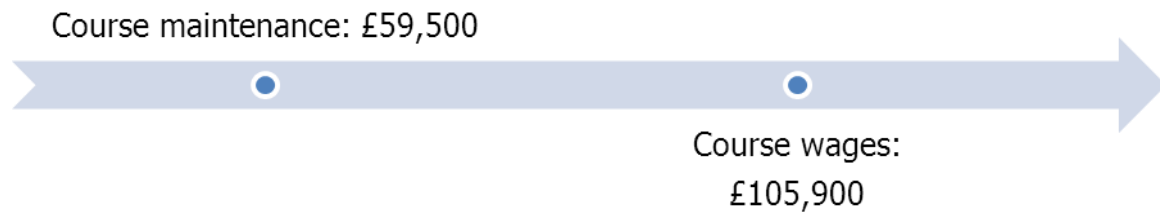
Utility Costs

Average utility costs vary significantly across Clubs. However, averages are as follows.

Average Utility Costs for Proprietary Clubs			
Electricity £17,300	Gas: £7,900	Water: £6,200	Combination: £53,200

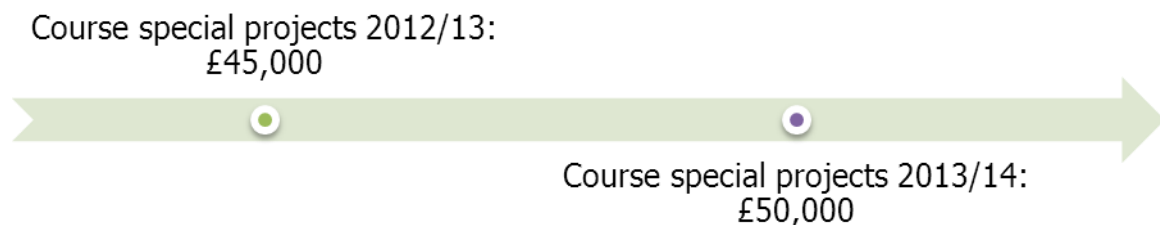
Average Course Maintenance and Wage Costs

Typically in the region of £60,000 for maintenance and over £100,000 for wages.



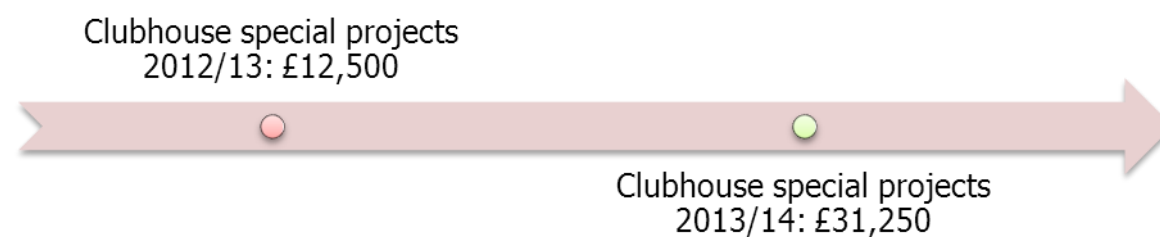
Average Current and Anticipated Course Special Project Costs

Most Clubs intend to maintain their level of spending on course special projects over this and the following year. Just one Club indicated an increase and this heavily influenced the average increase in spend.



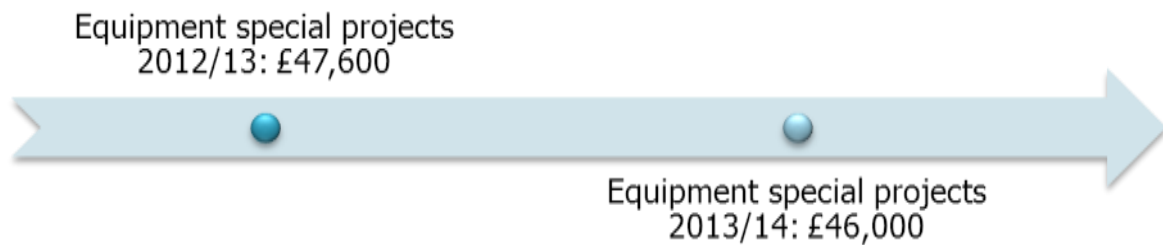
Average Current and Anticipated Clubhouse Special Project Costs

Just two Clubs provided data on Clubhouse special project costs, with one intending to maintain and one increase their spending, yielding an average increase in spend.



Average Current and Anticipated Equipment Special Project Costs

Just five Clubs provided data on equipment special project costs, with most intending to maintain their spending.



Clubhouse Maintenance Costs and Staffing

Few Clubs provided an indication of Clubhouse maintenance costs. Those who did, yielded an average per annum figure of around £17,000. Clubhouse staff wages came in at an average yearly figure of just over £100,000.

Franchise Catering Used by around a Third of Proprietary Clubs

1 in every 3 Proprietary Clubs uses a franchise for its catering needs.

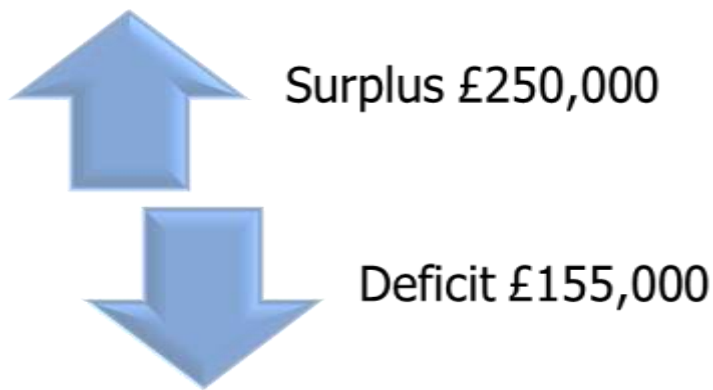
Among those Clubs who cater *without* the services of a franchise, revenue levels for own catering range from up to £50,000 to £250,000+. For two-thirds of these Clubs this is typically up to the £100,000 mark.

Profit margins range from less than 20% to 70%+, with 55% emerging as a typical percentage.



Annual Surpluses & Deficits

In Proprietary Clubs, the highest surplus figure was **£250,000**, with a highest deficit of **£155,000**.



VAT Recovery

Just 5 Proprietary Clubs reported VAT recovery figures. Two Clubs reported 15-30%; one 30-45%; and two 60%+.

In most cases, we would expect **100% VAT recovery** for almost all Proprietary Clubs. This provides an **opportunity for Clubs to increase revenue** by simply reviewing their VAT arrangements with a specialist.

Steady Rates of Annual General Insurance

As in 2011, 75% of Proprietary Clubs are typically paying up to £10,000 for annual general insurance, 17% pay up to £10-15,000 and 8% of Proprietary Clubs pay in excess of £20,000.



Business Development

Fewer Proprietary Clubs Reporting Growth than in 2012, but a Healthy 50%+ Growing

In 2010, 57% of Clubs believed that they were growing. In 2011 this rose to 67%, whilst in 2012 this has dropped to 54%. 8% of Clubs currently feel that they are shrinking.

Significantly More Proprietary Clubs Now Investing in Marketing

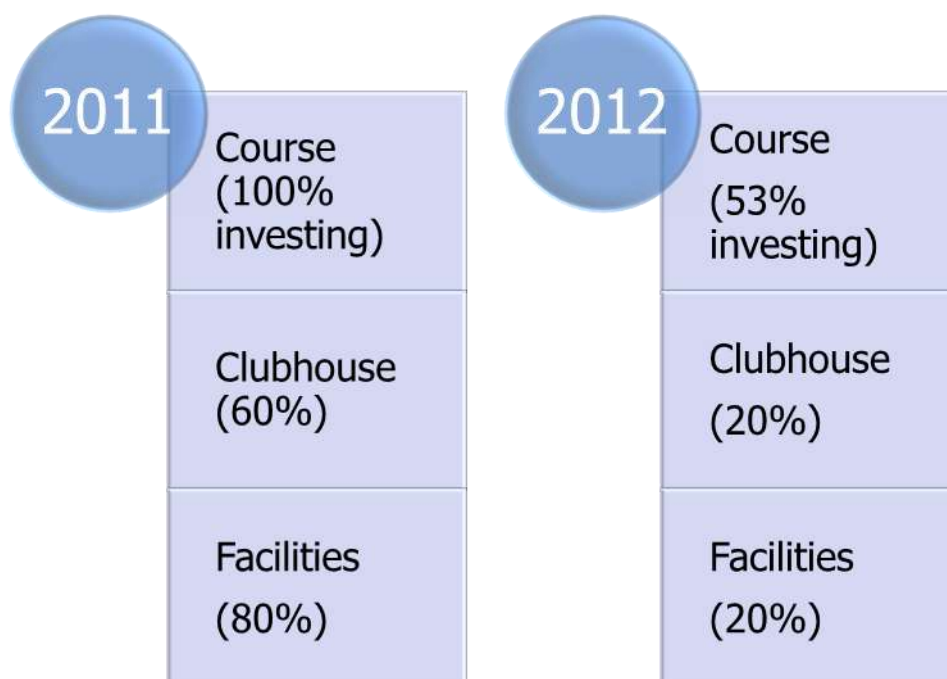
A sharp increase in the number of Clubs who invest in marketing is now evident, rising from over 50% in 2011, to close to 90% currently. Special offers (60%), advertising (53%), networking (47%) and email campaigns (47%) are highlighted as the most frequent types of marketing undertaken. These figures show that email marketing is becoming more common in Proprietary Clubs.

advertising
networking **Special offers**
email campaigns

Each of these marketing methods is selected because of their perceived effectiveness, peaking with special offers. Around 1 in every 3 Clubs operates a 2 for 1 Scheme.

Fewer Proprietary Clubs Investing

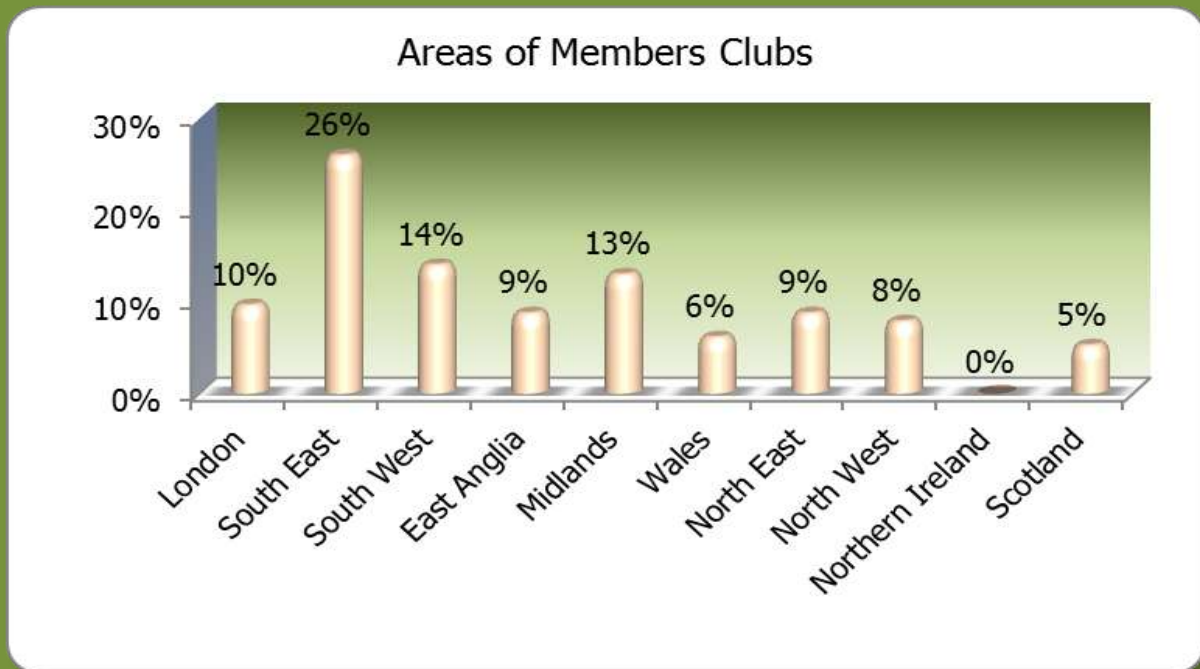
Compared to 2011, far fewer Clubs are now investing in their infrastructure.



Members Clubs Results 2012

114 Clubs, Typically with 18-hole Courses

This year we bring you data from 114 Members Clubs from across nine regions of the UK.



As in 2011, these were predominantly 18-hole Clubs (86%), with a few 9-hole (4%), 27-hole (6%) and 36-hole (4%) Clubs.

Few Honorary Positions

The vast majority of survey respondents mainly managers and secretaries - were paid members of their Club, with just 11% from honorary positions.

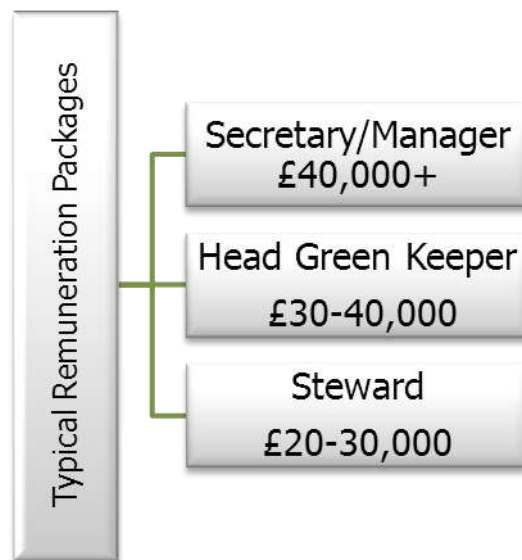


Staffing

Typical Remuneration Packages Lower than Those of Proprietary Clubs

The survey respondents had a typical remuneration package of in excess of £40,000 (42%). However, in overall terms, lower remuneration was reported at Members Clubs compared to Proprietary Clubs.

The Head Green Keeper remuneration package was slightly lower at £30,000-£40,000 (41%), with Steward remuneration lower still at £20,000-£30,000 (35%).



PGA Professionals at Most Members Clubs

94% of Members Clubs indicate that they had a PGA professional. Among those who pay a retainer, this is typically £1,500-£2,000 per month. 2012 figures suggest that Members Clubs are now paying a slightly lower retainer than in 2011.

Around 42% of Members Clubs pay in excess of £2,000 to their PGA professional, compared to 57% in 2011.

Members Clubs pay a typical PGA professional monthly wage of £1,500-£2,000 - slightly less than evident in 2011.

More Clubs Pay Commission to their Professionals

An increasing percentage of Members Clubs now pay commission to their professional (rising from 52% in 2011 to 60% this year). Commission levels average 7%.

However, less Members Clubs (58% compared to 86% in 2011) now provide free premises as part of their package, with more now providing a retainer (94% compared to 86% in 2011). This may however reflect the greater regional spread of this survey.

PGA Duties Focus on Tuition, Green Fees and Pro-Shop Management

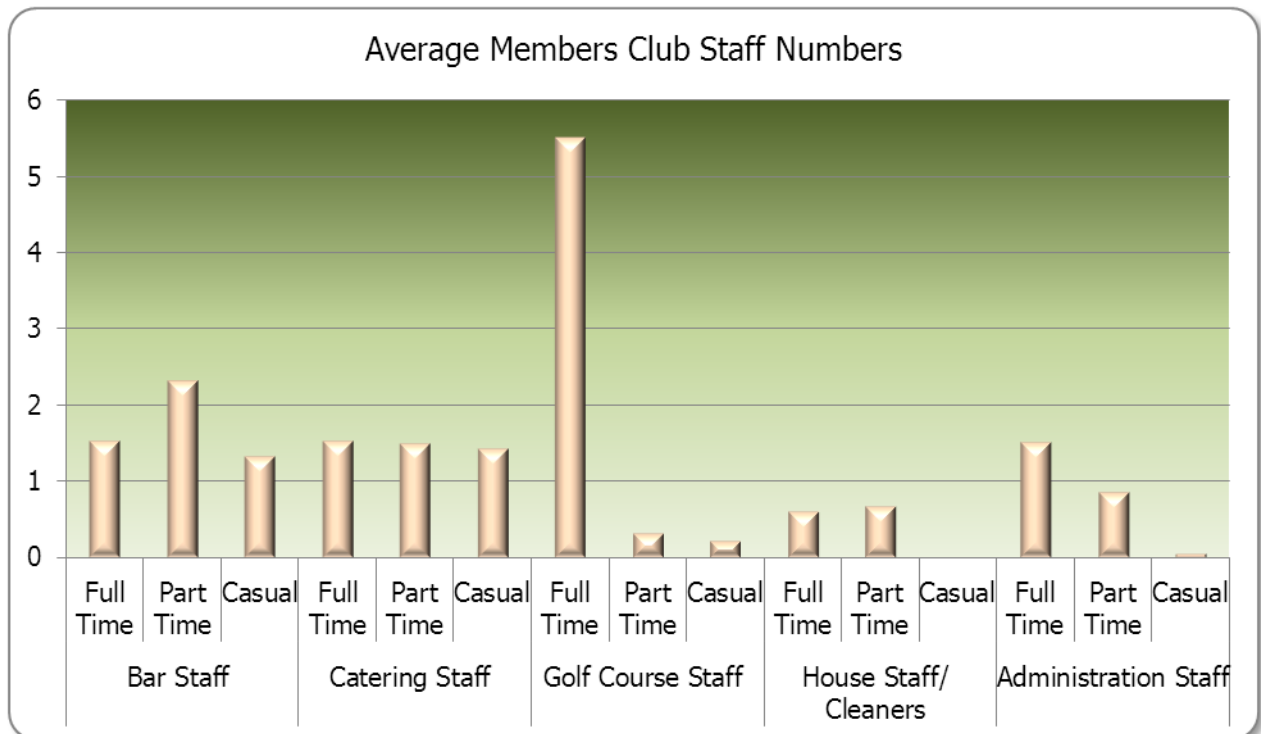
PGA professionals undertake a number of duties for their Clubs, with the main roles being: tuition provision; green fee collection; and pro-shop management.

None of these currently represent VAT exempt supplies by the club meaning that any VAT on the retainer should be recoverable in full.



An Average of 21 Staff at Members Clubs

Always highly variable and dependent on the size and needs of each Club in question, staffing figures range from 3 to 100 across Members Clubs, with an average total staffing number of 21. Average numbers across functions are broken down as follows.



Growing Member Numbers at Many Clubs

Members Clubs display a wide ranging number of playing members, with 29% having 100-500; 30% having 500-600; 26% having 600-700 and 16% having 700+. Contrary to expectations these figures suggest some growth, with Clubs with 500-700 members rising from 39% in 2010, to 52% in 2011, to 56% currently.

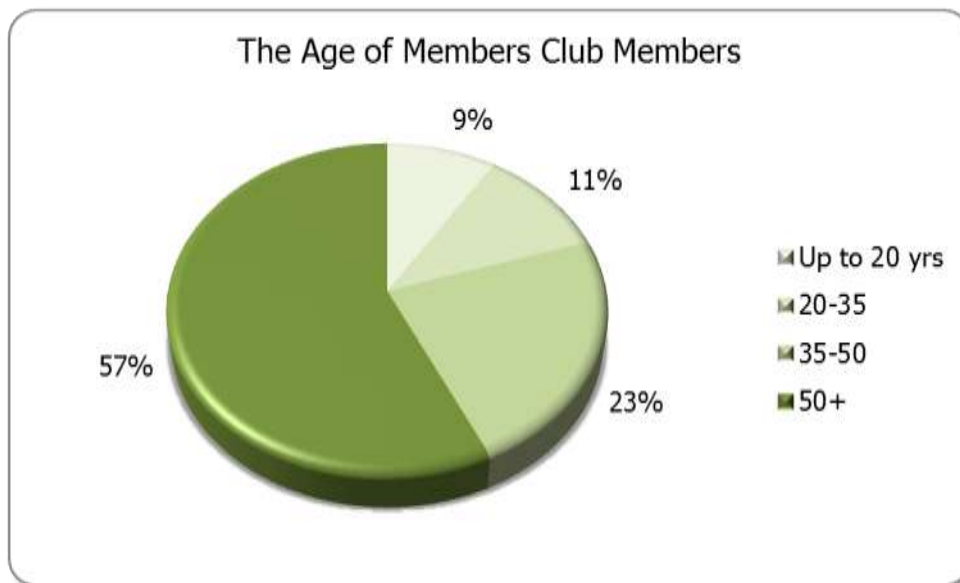
Limiting Membership

As in 2011, 75% of Members Clubs suggest a cap on their number of playing members.

Suggestions for this limit vary significantly. However, a limit of 600-700 features most frequently.

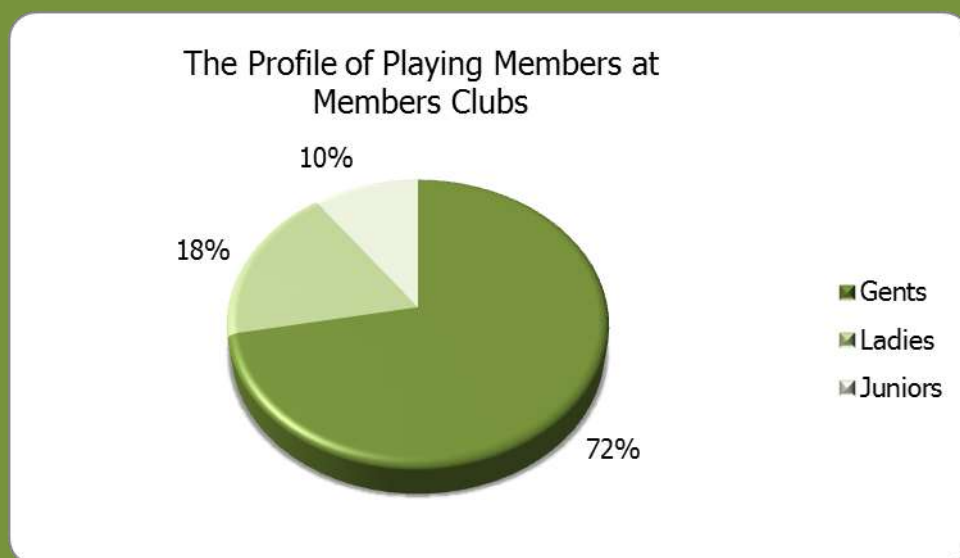
Member Ages Distributed Towards the 50+ Age Group

As in 2011, and as shown in the following chart, the age distribution of Members Club members shows fewer younger members (in lighter shades) and more older members (darker shades).



A Continuing Higher Gentlemen to Lady Member Ratio

As shown in the following chart, and again aligned to the findings of 2011, the gender distribution of Members Club playing members shows fewer female and junior members, and more gentlemen members.



Just 40% of Members Clubs say that their Female Membership is Increasing

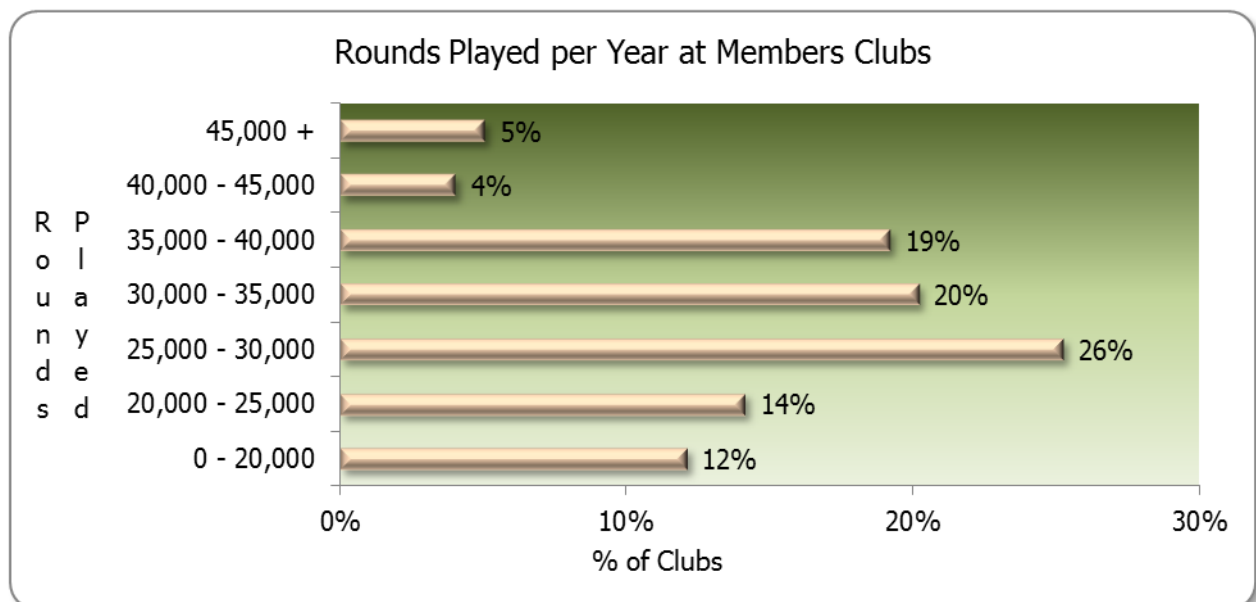
This is far less than that indicated by Proprietary Clubs (75%). A small number of Clubs still restrict Lady Member usage, typically instances of time restrictions. However, 13% of Members Clubs, almost twice as many as Proprietary Clubs, still have reduced rates for Lady Members.

Significantly Increasing Numbers of Social Members

In 2011, just 9% of Members Clubs had a social membership exceeding 100. In 2012, this has risen significantly to 32%. These figures are extremely encouraging as clubs undoubtedly benefit from increasing social membership levels, with a positive impact on revenue.

Total Annual Rounds Played in Members Clubs

A large variation in the number of rounds played annually at Members Clubs was reported.



Increasing Society Rounds

Rounds played by societies range from zero to 40,000. The typical number of rounds played by societies is approximately 2,150 annually. Just under 40% of all Members Clubs report an increase in the number of rounds played by societies in the last year.

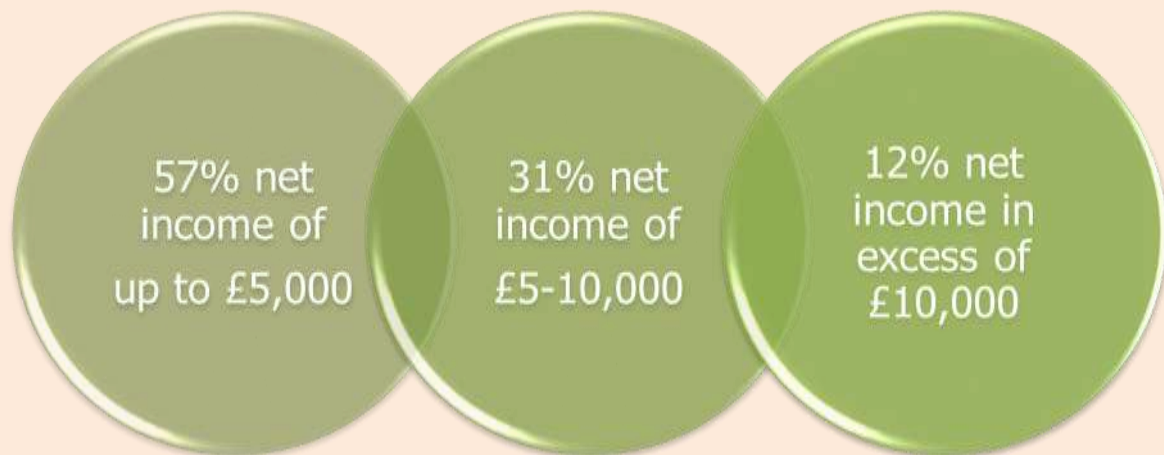
Lower Waiting Lists

18% of Members Clubs have a waiting list. Amongst these Clubs the average number of people waiting to join is just over 50, with waiting times from just one month to three years.

Facilities

Most Members Clubs Have No Driving Range

In sharp contrast to Proprietary Clubs, less than 30% of Members Clubs have a driving range. Members Club yearly driving range income rarely exceeds £10,000.



Fewer Members Clubs than Proprietary Clubs Have an Academy Area

However, the percentage with an academy area is consistent with that of 2011.



Fees & Charges

Standard Player Member Subscriptions

Membership fees for Standard Playing Members vary from up to £500, to £1,500+.



In both 2010 and 2011, the most typical social membership charge was £100 (62%). In 2012 this has fallen with the ranges now being, up to £50 (37%) or £50-£100 (37%) for social membership.

Fewer Clubs with Entrance Fees

Compared to 74% in 2011, just under 60% of Members Clubs reported still having an entrance fee, ranging from £10 to in excess of £4,000, and an average of almost £1,200.

The vast majority of these Clubs anticipate no change in this fee.

Very few Clubs, currently without entrance fees, propose implementing one, highlighting demand, membership levels and local competition as the three key aspects influencing this decision.

market
competition
demand

Average Green Fee Charges at Members Clubs

Average green fee charges are shown below, across weekdays, weekends and all day use, both with and without members. These are fairly consistent with 2011 charges.



Green Fee Incomes at Members Clubs

Incomes from green fees are spread across the income spectrum, from £20,000 to £140,000+. This year sees 55% of Members Clubs with green fee income of up to £60,000, compared to 42% in 2011. 10% of Members have a green fee income of £140,000 plus, compared to none in 2011. This reflects the general trend of increasing green fees which we have seen across all clubs over the past year.



Society Packages and their Costs

Many Members Clubs offer society packages, with average costs as follows*. Society costs remain higher in Members Clubs than in Proprietary Clubs - consistent with expectations in the current climate.



*Some Members Clubs offer a range of prices dependent on numbers and catering.

Three-quarters of those Members Clubs offering society packages feel that two aspects impact most significantly on society packages – the time of year/season and the catering package level.

Average Room & Facility Hire

Average approximate rates for room hire within Members Clubs are presented below. A number of Clubs indicated that this was free. Others indicated price per head facilities and variable charges dependent on numbers and catering.



90% of Members Clubs Charge No Match Fee to Visiting Teams from Neighbouring Clubs

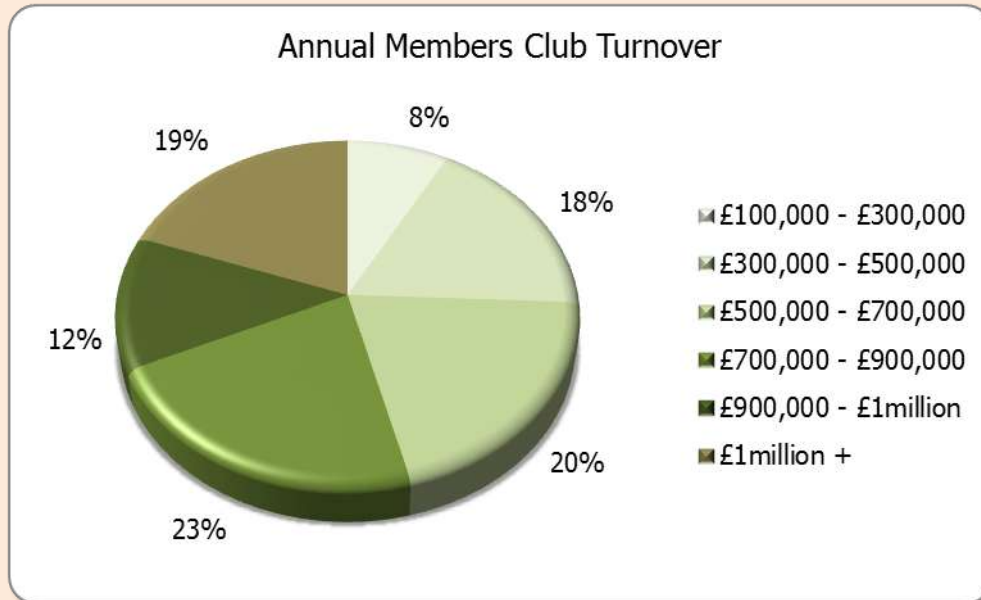
Among those who currently don't, the vast majority (83%) of Members Clubs were reticent to do so.

Those who do, charge between £11 and £20, sometimes with the inclusion of food.

Financial Information

Fewer Clubs with a Turnover of £1million+

Members Clubs report turnover levels ranging from £100,000 to £1million



Society Income at Members Clubs

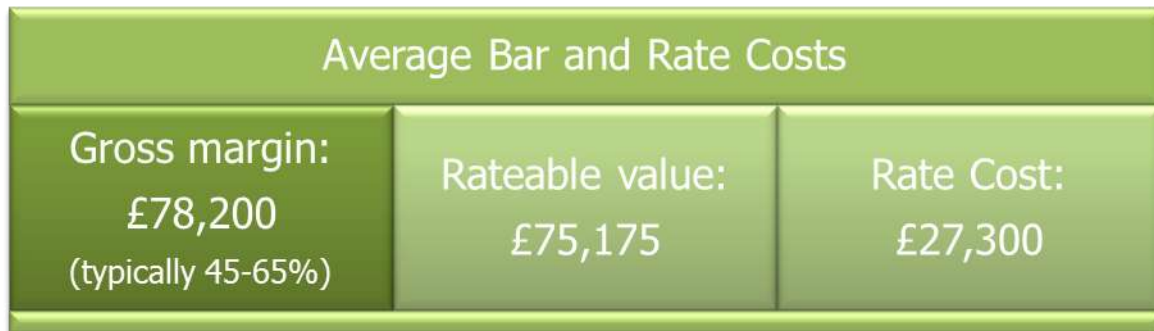
Society income for Members Clubs is most commonly £20,000-£40,000 (32%).

The figures obtained in 2012 suggest that income remains fairly consistent, with 25% of Clubs receiving in excess of £60,000 in 2012, compared to 23% in 2011.

Decreasing Levels of Bar Revenue and Costs

The importance of bar usage as an income stream should not be underestimated. However, this year bar revenue from Members Clubs appears to be in decline. 60% of Members Clubs take between £50,000 and £150,000 in this area of business. Just 28% take more than £150,000, compared to 38% in 2011. Whilst again this may reflect some regional differences overall the trend seems to be reduced bar revenue.

The following diagram illustrates average bar-related gross margins, rateable value and rate cost. As most Clubs do not disclose net profit, it is not possible to report on it, nor make comparisons with 2011 figures.



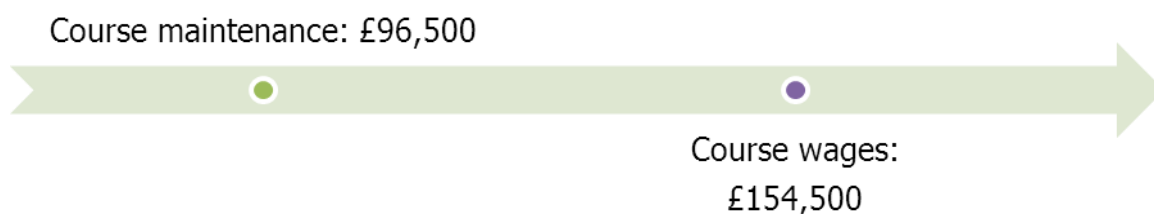
Utility Costs

Average utility costs vary significantly across Clubs. However, averages are as follows.



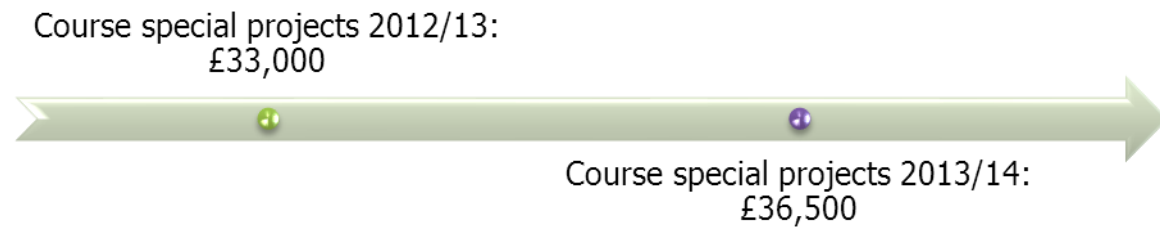
Average Course Maintenance and Wage Costs

Typically in the region of £96,000 for maintenance and over £150,000 for wages.



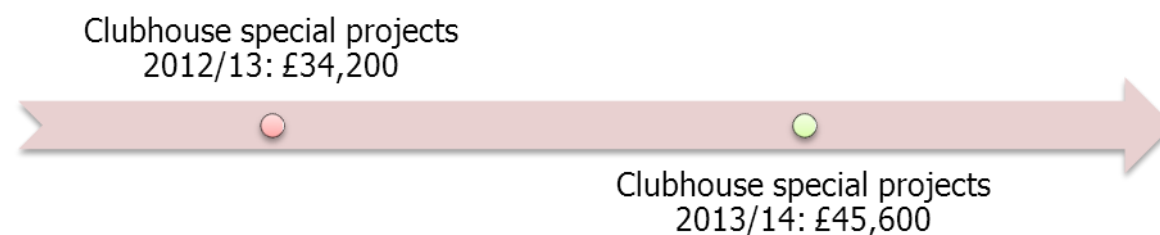
Average Current and Anticipated Course Special Project Costs

Most Clubs intend to maintain the level of spending on course special projects over this and the following year. In overall terms, spend is likely to increase very slightly over the following year.



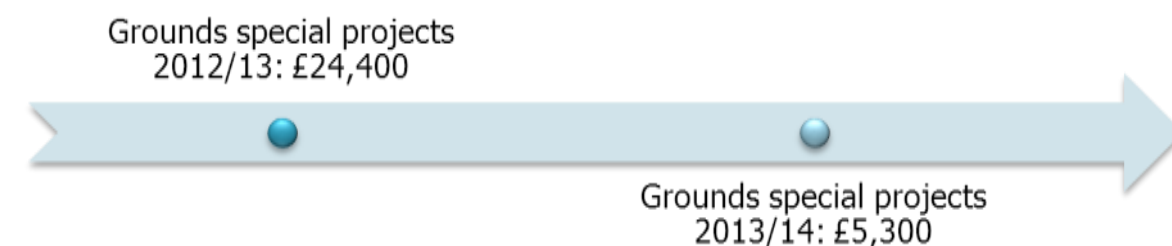
Average Current and Anticipated Clubhouse Special Project Costs

Again, most Clubs intend to maintain their level of spending on course special projects over this and the following year. However, as some Clubs foresee much higher expenditure for 2013/14, this has influenced the average figure.



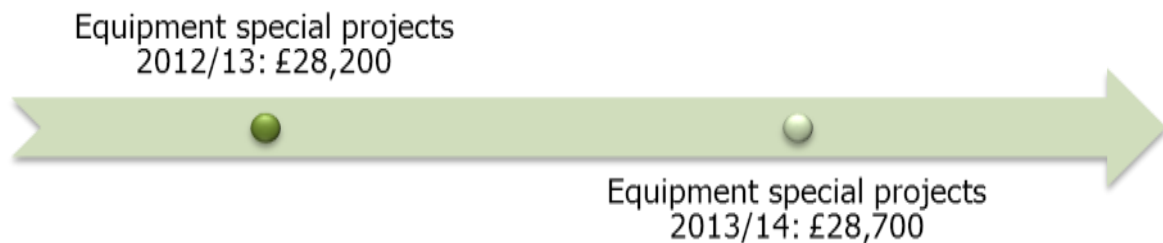
Average Current and Anticipated Grounds Special Project Costs

Many Clubs intend to decrease their level of spending on grounds special projects between this and the following year.



Average Current and Anticipated Equipment Special Project Costs

Most Clubs intended to maintain their spending on equipment special projects, yielding an average overall very slight increase in spend.



Clubhouse Maintenance Costs and Staffing

Few Clubs provided an indication of Clubhouse maintenance costs. Those who did, yielded an average per annum figure of around £60,680.

Clubhouse staff wages among Members Clubs came in at an average yearly figure of around £96,000.

60% of Members Clubs Using Franchise Catering

60% of Members Clubs - consistent with 2011 - use a franchise for their catering needs – a percentage almost double that of Proprietary Clubs.

Among those Clubs without a franchise, revenue levels for own catering range from zero to £250,000+. For around 60% of Clubs this is typically around the £150,000 mark.

Profit margins range from less than 20% to 60%+, with 50-60% emerging as a typical percentage.

Club Surpluses and Deficits

Among Members Clubs, the highest surplus figure was **£299,000**, with a highest deficit of **£50,000**. The average surplus was around the **£31,000** mark.



VAT Recovery

VAT recovery figures among Members Clubs are most frequently found in the 15-30% and 30-45% ranges.

Two-thirds of Members Clubs recover VAT in one of these categories.

In most cases we would anticipate a VAT recovery of around 35%-40% for most Members Clubs. This may provide opportunities for Clubs not achieving these levels to **increase revenue** here. Speak to a specialist who can review your VAT arrangements.

General Insurance

As in 2011, Members Clubs are typically paying between £5,000-£10,000 annually for general insurance (62%).

17% pay up to £5,000 and 17% pay £10,000-£15,000. 5% of Members Clubs pay in excess of £15,000.

Business Development

More Members Clubs Now Reporting Growth

In 2010, 25% of Members Clubs felt that they were growing. In 2011, this rose to 33%, whilst in 2012 this has risen again to 38%. In parallel, the number who feel that they are reducing, has dropped from 19% in 2011 to just 9% in 2012. These are really surprising results and contrary to what had been expected.



Most Members Clubs Continuing to Invest in Marketing

As in 2011, most Members Clubs are continuing to invest in marketing (86%). Networking (58%), advertising (53%) and special offers (49%) are highlighted as the most frequent types of marketing undertaken. Each of these marketing methods is selected because of its perceived effectiveness, peaking with special offers.

Far more Members Clubs (rising from 8% in 2011 to around 26% currently) operate a 2 for 1 Scheme – though still slightly fewer than Proprietary Clubs. These schemes generate from £500 to £25,000 per year.

A Focus on the Golf Course as the Major Source of Investment

Compared to 2011, slightly more Members Clubs are now investing in their course. However, fewer are investing in their clubhouse, marketing and facilities. This is very much in line with our recommendation in earlier years reports.



Key Messages

Future Trends and Recommendations

Whilst we are seeing some progress, this is not universal across all Clubs. We believe that with the right impetus all Clubs can move forward. Some of the key areas continue to be maintaining member numbers, improving the course and making the most of all income opportunities. All clubs are changing, introducing reduced dress codes and more flexible joining arrangements, but this is now attracting golfers who want to play rather than occasional players who just wanted to be members of the club.

This is starting to put more pressure on playing times and availability of the course especially at weekends. Some clubs have already had to move to a tee booking system though this is still a very emotive subject at most clubs. It is interesting to note that successful proprietary clubs are run as successful businesses and if members clubs wish to compete in this area they have to consider doing the same.

There may be an advantage in some clubs returning to their more exclusive past arrangements. This would result in less non member usage and therefore more availability for members. It is certainly true that green fee income in most clubs is rising simply because golfers can now play more or less at any club they wish. The key for clubs is to generate as much income as possible from these visitors.

It is pleasing to note that the average surplus in most clubs is now around £31,000. This is gradually climbing towards the £50,000 level we have been recommending for some years. We strongly believe that this figure, or above, is required in order to provide sufficient funds for the proper ongoing maintenance of all of the clubs facilities.

We hope you find the above report interesting. Our Golf Club specialist, Robert Twydle, would be delighted to visit your Club individually if you would like a thorough review of your existing arrangements and recommendations for improvement, where necessary.

To book a golf club review contact:

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