

GOC website design refresh & branding survey

Whether or not you are a GOC member, thank you for taking a few minutes to help us to make our website more attractive and user friendly and to grow the club for everyone in our LGBTQI+ community.

Please skip any questions if you have no response. Click 'next' or 'submit' to go on and swipe or click 'back' to go back. There are 9 questions about GOC and 4 about you. The survey closes 9 July.

For context please see <https://www.goc.org.uk/news/149300/>

Thank you!
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Questions by OUTloud & Martin Gilbraith. Full responses of 136 members (8.3% of 1,638 emailed) and graphics from [Mentimeter](#). Text summary by [ChatGPT](#), bold & italic format by Martin. See also [Introducing OUT loud, supporting GOC to refresh our branding and website design](#).

1. How would you describe the character of GOC as it is today?

The responses to the survey question "How would you describe the character of GOC as it is today?" vary widely in terms of opinions and descriptions. Some common themes and keywords emerge from the responses:

1. **Age-related:** Several responses mention the older age demographic associated with the club, using terms like "older," "elderly," "middle-aged," and "aging."
2. **Friendly and welcoming:** "Friendly," "welcoming," "supportive," and "inclusive" are frequently used to describe the character of the club, indicating a positive and inclusive atmosphere.
3. **Outdoors and walking focus:** The club's emphasis on outdoor activities, particularly walking, is mentioned in responses such as "outdoor," "walking," and "ramblers."
4. **Traditional and established:** Some responses characterize the club as "traditional," "established," and "enduring," suggesting a long-standing presence and adherence to certain values or practices.
5. **Diversity and inclusivity:** While some responses emphasize inclusivity, others mention the club's focus on specific demographics like "gay-only" or "male-oriented." However, there are also mentions of the need to update and attract a younger generation.
6. **Aging and active aging:** The club's association with aging and active aging is highlighted in responses like "active aging," "aging companionable," and "suitable for older people."
7. **Mixed opinions:** There are varying opinions about the club, with some responses expressing satisfaction and enjoyment ("fun," "enjoyable") while others find it dated, dull, or in need of improvement.

Overall, the responses suggest that GOC is seen as a **friendly and welcoming club with a focus on outdoor activities, primarily attracting an older demographic**. While some respondents appreciate its traditional and established nature, there are also calls for updating and attracting younger members.

Overall, the GOC is highly regarded for its **inclusive and friendly** nature, its organization of **walks and activities**, its role in building **social connections and friendships**, and its provision of a **safe and supportive** environment for LGBTQ+ individuals. It is valued for its ability to bring people together, facilitate outdoor experiences, and create a **sense of community** among like-minded individuals.

3. What does GOC have that other clubs don't- what makes GOC relevant?

The responses to the survey question "*What does GOC have that other clubs don't - what makes GOC relevant?*" highlight several key points.

Firstly, **GOC is seen as more inclusive and safe** compared to other clubs like OutdoorLads, particularly for the LGBTQ+ community. Participants appreciate **the sense of community and national connections** offered by GOC, which sets it apart from other LGBTQ+ events that are often annual and expensive.

The club's focus on **activities outside of gay nightlife** is also highlighted as a distinguishing factor. GOC provides a common area of interest, such as walking, which allows for a **cheaper and non-threatening way to meet** others. **The club's website is praised for being very good**, enhancing the overall experience for members.

GOC is recognized as a **safe space for individuals to be themselves and connect with like-minded LGBTQ+ people** who share similar interests. The club's aim of walking and **its wide age range appeal** to participants, as well as the **friendliness** and less aggressive nature of the group compared to others like OutdoorLads.

Being **the only gay club in certain areas** and catering specifically to gay people further contributes to GOC's relevance. The club's emphasis on providing **activities and a meeting place for older gay individuals** is appreciated, as other organizations tend to focus more on young people and strenuous activities. GOC's **national reach and friendly club atmosphere**, rather than a corporate feel, are also mentioned as unique aspects.

Overall, GOC's relevance is attributed to its **focus on the LGBTQ+ community**, its **affordability**, wide range of **activities**, sense of **inclusivity**, and the opportunity to meet like-minded individuals in a **safe and non-judgmental** environment. **The club's longevity, member-driven nature, and nationwide coverage** further add to its significance.

4. What difference can GOC make, to you and to others?

Participants in the survey expressed various *ways in which the Gay Outdoor Club (GOC) can make a difference to them and others*.

One recurring theme was the need for **more accessible and public transport-friendly activities**, particularly in regions where the group is currently inaccessible without a car. Many respondents emphasized the importance of **tackling isolation**, both in rural areas and for individuals who are closeted, by offering **activities in different locations** and providing a **safe and welcoming environment** for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Several participants mentioned the positive impact of GOC in terms of **mental health and well-being**, emphasizing the opportunities for **exercise, socializing, and making new friends**. The club was seen as a place where **like-minded people with shared interests can connect, form friendships, and overcome**

Loneliness. Others highlighted the **inclusivity and diversity** of GOC, appreciating its ability to bring together individuals from different backgrounds and experiences.

Some respondents mentioned the **personal development opportunities** offered by the club, such as developing leadership skills, presentation skills, and gaining transferable skills through organizing walks and events. The GOC was also seen as a means of **expanding social circles**, meeting new people, and creating a sense of community.

While many respondents expressed **overall satisfaction** with the club, some suggested areas for improvement, including the need for **more frequent events** (dependent on volunteers), **shorter walks** for those with limited mobility, and **greater visibility and contact with the wider LGBTQ+ community**. The desire for **more diversity** within the membership was also mentioned, as well as the need for continued efforts to create **an inclusive and welcoming environment for all**.

Overall, the survey responses highlighted the positive impact of the Gay Outdoor Club in providing **opportunities for socializing, physical activity, personal growth, and a sense of belonging** for LGBTQ+ individuals, while also identifying areas where the club can further enhance its offerings and accessibility.

5. If GOC didn't exist, what would be the alternative?"

The responses to the survey question "*If GOC didn't exist, what would be the alternative?*" indicate a variety of perspectives on potential alternatives to the GOC (Gay Outdoor Club). Here is a summary of the responses:

1. **Joining local general walking clubs:** Some respondents attempted to join non-LGBTQ+ walking clubs but encountered issues such as racism and homophobia, leading them to give up.
2. **Ramblers Association:** The Ramblers Association was mentioned as a possible alternative, although some respondents felt that it may not be as safe and inclusive for LGBT+ individuals.
3. **Outdoor Lads:** Outdoor Lads was suggested as an alternative, specifically catering to gay men and offering outdoor activities.
4. **Meetup groups:** Several respondents mentioned using Meetup to find other walking or outdoor activity groups in their area.
5. **Other local walking clubs:** Many respondents suggested joining local walking clubs or forming smaller independent walking groups.
6. **Walking alone or with friends:** Some respondents mentioned walking alone or organizing events directly with their own friends.
7. **Online platforms:** Dating apps and online platforms like Facebook were mentioned as alternatives for meeting and organizing walks.
8. **No satisfactory alternative:** A significant number of respondents stated that they were not aware of any satisfactory alternatives to the GOC and would either walk less or feel isolated without it.
9. **Lack of alternatives in rural areas:** Some respondents expressed difficulty finding alternatives in rural areas and highlighted the limited availability of LGBTQ+ walking groups outside of larger cities.

Overall, the responses reflected **a mix of suggestions**, including existing organizations like the Ramblers Association and Outdoor Lads, as well as the idea of joining or forming local walking groups. Many respondents expressed **concerns about finding a similarly inclusive and supportive community** without the GOC.

6. What can GOC do better to keep existing members, and keep them active in the club?

The responses to the survey question on improving the Gay Outdoor Club (GOC) *to retain existing members and keep them active in the club* can be summarized as follows:

1. **Increase Frequency and Variety of Events:** Many members suggested having more frequent events and walks, with a mix of different lengths and difficulties. They also expressed a desire for new subgroups focused on specific interests such as garden visits and history.
2. **Encourage Diversity and Attract Younger Members:** Members emphasized the need to promote diversity and attract younger participants through targeted marketing and branding. They suggested organizing events directed at younger and more diverse groups to create a welcoming and inclusive environment.
3. **Improve Communication and Accessibility:** Several members mentioned the importance of better communication about planned and past activities. They suggested utilizing social media platforms and advertising events to improve engagement. Additionally, members highlighted the need for easily accessible events that can be reached using public transport.
4. **Support and Empower Group Coordinators:** Members recommended providing training opportunities for group leaders, mentorship programs, and tools for planning and organizing walks. They also emphasized the importance of having coordinators who are welcoming, friendly, and inclusive.
5. **Retain Core Membership and Maintain Purpose:** Some members suggested focusing on core membership and ensuring that the club remains true to its purpose. They emphasized the importance of maintaining regular activities, providing a full program of events, and celebrating the club's identity.
6. **Improve Website Functionality and Online Presence:** Members recommended improving the functionality of the club's website, making it more interactive with forums and a means of sharing photos after walks. They also suggested exploring the use of a phone app to facilitate regular contact between members.
7. **Address Aging Profile and Accessibility:** With an aging membership, members highlighted the need for shorter walks and activities suitable for those with mobility limitations. They also mentioned the importance of providing events in different geographic areas to reduce travel costs and increase participation.

Overall, the suggestions focused on **increasing the frequency and variety of events**, promoting **diversity** and **attracting younger members**, improving **communication and accessibility**, **supporting group coordinators**, and addressing the needs of an **aging membership**. Additionally, members recommended improving the **website**, retaining **core membership**, and ensuring an **inclusive and welcoming environment** for all.

7. What can GOC do better to attract new members, particularly younger people, women and LGBTQ+ people?

The responses to the survey question suggest several areas where the GOC (Gay Outdoor Club) can improve to attract new members, particularly younger people, women, and LGBTQ+ individuals. These suggestions include:

1. **Increase Car-Free Activities:** Offer more activities that do not require private transportation to make them more accessible to younger people and those without cars.
2. **Presence at Pride Events:** Attend and have a presence at local and regional Pride events to reach out to the LGBTQ+ community.
3. **Engage with Universities and LGBTQ+ Societies:** Establish connections with local universities and LGBTQ+ societies to engage with younger individuals and promote GOC activities.
4. **Accessibility for Autistic Individuals:** Make the club more accessible to LGBTQ+ autistic individuals who are more likely to have minority gender or sexuality. Consider their specific needs when organizing events.
5. **Rebranding and Website Improvement:** Some respondents suggested changing the branding and improving the functionality of the website to make it more appealing and up-to-date.
6. **Social Media Presence:** Increase the club's presence on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and newer platforms to reach a wider audience and allow for easy sharing of information by existing members.
7. **Diverse Representation:** Show more diverse pictures on the website and in advertising materials to reflect the diversity of the potential members.
8. **Target Publicity towards Older Individuals:** Concentrate publicity on individuals in their 40s who might be more open to joining the club as they may no longer be involved in other sports or activities.
9. **Advertisement in LGBT+ Press and Social Media:** Improve marketing efforts by targeting the LGBT+ press and utilizing social media platforms for advertising.
10. **Provide Non-Walking Activities:** Offer events and activities other than walks to cater to a wider range of interests and preferences.
11. **Collaborate with Other Groups:** Collaborate with women's groups, young people's groups, and other LGBTQ+ organizations for joint events and activities.
12. **Create Safe and Inclusive Spaces:** Ensure that all members feel valued and included by creating a safe and friendly environment. Provide opportunities for women, non-binary, and trans individuals to have a voice and presence in the club.
13. **Improved Public Transportation Access:** Organize events in urban areas with good public transportation access to make it easier for younger people and city-based individuals to participate.
14. **Make Advertising Inclusive and Visible:** Use inclusive language and imagery in advertising materials, increase visibility in appropriate media, and utilize different platforms and mediums to attract a wider membership.
15. **Offer Reduced Membership Fees:** Consider offering reduced first-year membership fees or incentives to attract younger individuals.

It is important to note that **not all suggestions are aligned**, and there may be **conflicting opinions** regarding the target audience and strategies for attracting new members. The GOC should carefully consider these suggestions and tailor their approach based on their goals and the needs of the community they aim to serve.

8. What else should GOC start doing- or do more or better or differently?

Survey respondents provided a wide range of suggestions for *what the GOC (Gay Outdoor Club) should start doing, do more or better, or do differently*. Here are the key themes that emerged:

1. Increase Variety and Accessibility:

- Offer national trails and long-distance walking/camping events to attract participants from different locations.
- Encourage more people to lead events and offer a wider range of activities beyond walking, such as garden visits, historic town visits, racquet sports, and social events like quiz nights and sports days.
- Organize shorter walks and activities for those unable to participate in longer walks, including visits to castles, National Trust properties, and other social activities.

2. Improve Communication and Technology:

- Provide more efficient communication methods, such as text or email notifications when new events are posted to reduce the need for constant website checking.
- Develop a phone app with event details to attract a younger audience and facilitate access to information.
- Utilize targeted social media advertising to reach new audiences and attract diverse participants.
- Improve the quality of emails and explore a better platform for communication.
- Enhance the GOC website by allowing hyperlinks in members-only sections, including a separate field for directions, and implementing attendance monitoring for objective assessment of event success.

3. Outreach and Promotion:

- Increase visibility and promotion of GOC through stalls at local events, banners at Pride events, and wider advertising in women's groups, LGBTQ+ communities, and other diverse audiences.
- Show more diversity in publicity shots to appeal to a broader range of people.
- Collaborate with other groups, such as women's, BME, disability, and LGBTQ+ organizations, and hold joint events to foster inclusivity and expand the GOC's reach.
- Raise the profile of GOC within the LGBTQ+ community and promote its core values.

4. Volunteer Support and Recognition:

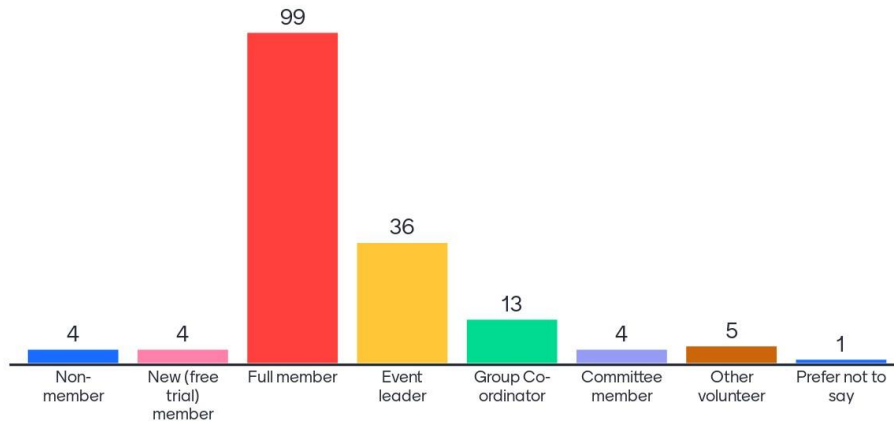
- Make it easier for members to lead walks and events, potentially through training and support programs.
- Recognize and thank walk leaders and group coordinators who contribute significantly to the club.
- Reward and support group coordinators with meaningful incentives and benefits.
- Recruit and train more volunteers to increase the club's effectiveness and expand its activities.

5. Enhance Member Experience:

- Provide additional support and resources for members, including mental health resources on the website.
- Offer inexpensive gear for purchase during walks to provide convenience and generate impulse sales.
- Explore opportunities for social and interpersonal support-focused groups and activities.
- Create signposting to gay-friendly services and professionals for members' benefit.

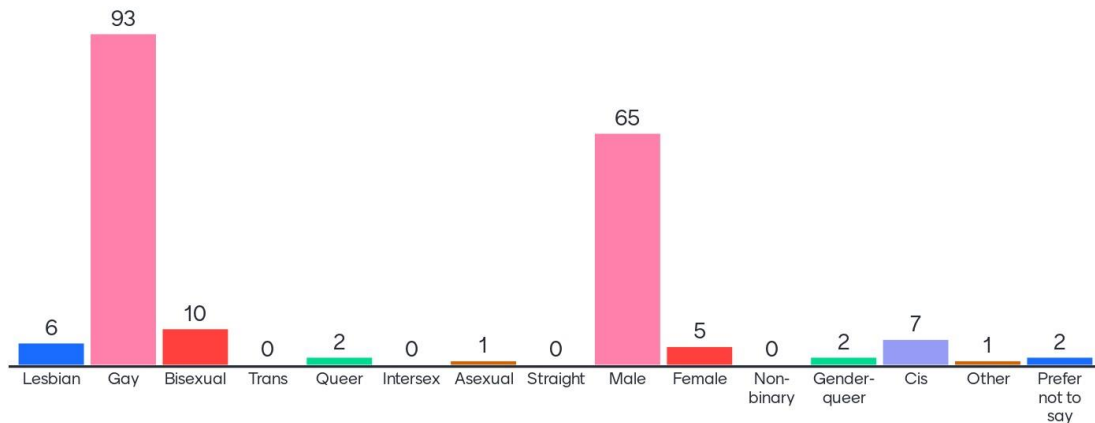
While there were **some divergent opinions** and requests for maintaining certain aspects, the overall sentiment reflected a desire for **increased diversity, accessibility, effective communication, and outreach** efforts to attract new members while supporting and recognizing existing ones.

10. About you & GOC - please check all that apply



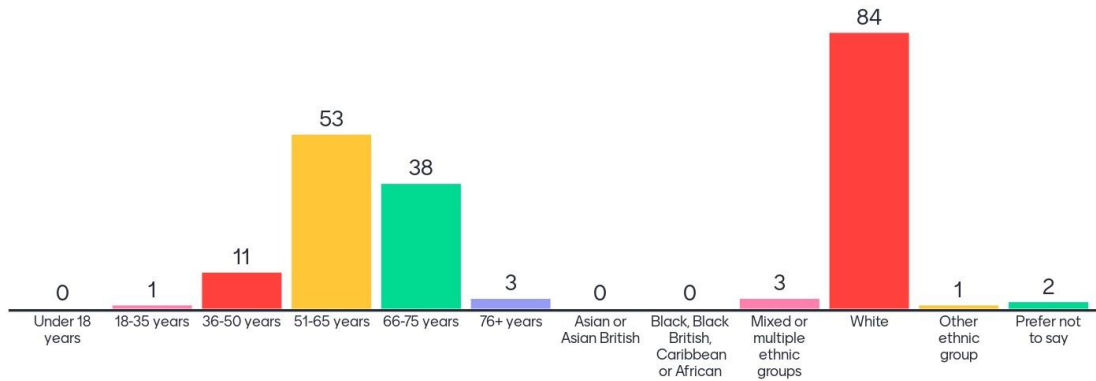
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11. About your sexual & gender identity - please check all that apply



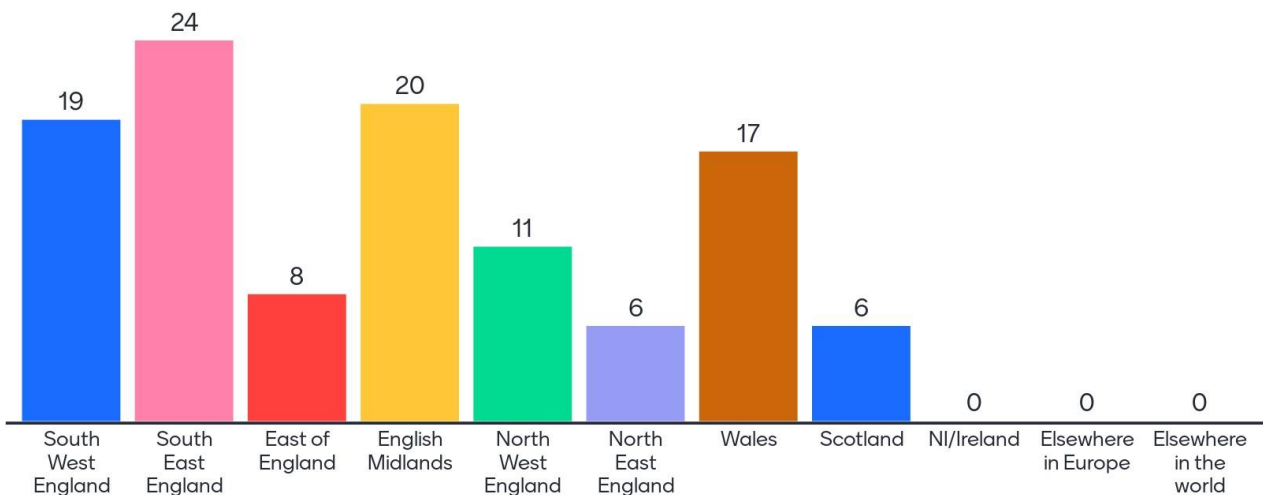
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12. About your age & race/ethnicity - please check all that apply



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13. About your location



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