

# YLG Research Insight Report

Prepared by Liveryman Luke  
Sehmer on behalf of the  
Membership Committee

Data collected: August 2020



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THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF  
**PLASTERERS**

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# Key Findings



1. Younger Livery members are happy with their level of involvement and expect to be more involved in the future
  - The majority of younger members are interested in progression, although there is a lack of clarity on the process
2. Reaction to the YLG is overwhelmingly positive: more than two-thirds of younger members want to be involved in establishing the group
  - Informal events and those targeted at younger members of the Livery are of greatest interest, along with a charitable fund-raising events
3. Overall, younger members are happy to give their time to committee meetings
  - Adjusting the timing of the meetings and encouraging remote attendance will help make it easier to attend
4. Younger members consider the traditions, charitable efforts, the community spirit and events are the most important aspects of Livery life
5. Current events are well liked by younger members of the Livery, with the formality not impacting younger members' perceptions of the events

# Background, Objectives & Methodology



## BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

*Early in 2020, the Master, Margaret Coates, began an initiative to establish a Livery Group for Younger Members (YLG).*

*The aims of the initiative are well documented; and it was decided that a survey amongst the target membership would be appropriate. The objectives were to:*

- 1. Determine interest in the YLG and what needs the new group might fulfil*
- 2. Understand how Younger Members view the Livery*

## METHODOLOGY

*An 15 minute online survey was undertaken with members of the Plaisterers' Livery understood to be aged 45 and under.*

*There are approximately 51 qualifying members of the Livery and 37 of them completed the survey (73%).*

*In addition to being able to select prescribed answers, the survey included a number of open text questions to allow members to offer their input.*

*All responses are anonymised and remain confidential.*

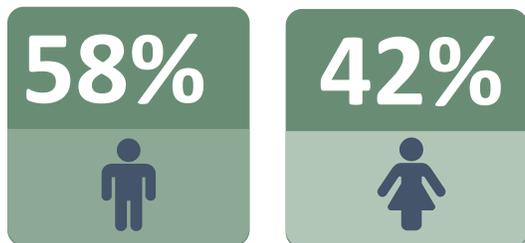


# Younger Members: Profile & Engagement with the Livery

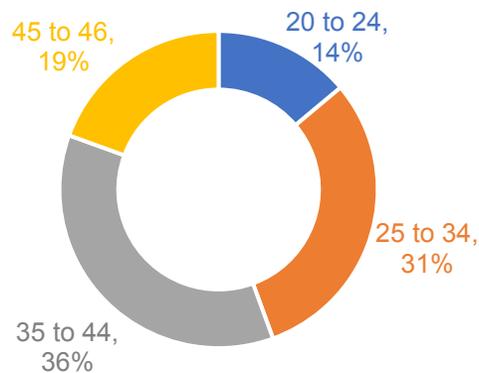
# Profile of the Younger Members of the Livery



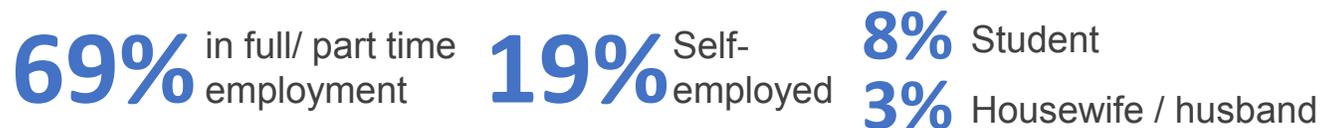
## Gender



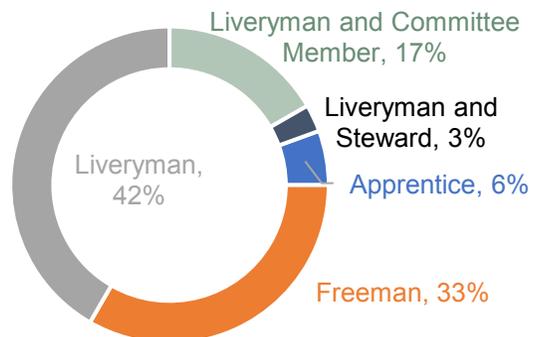
## Age Profile



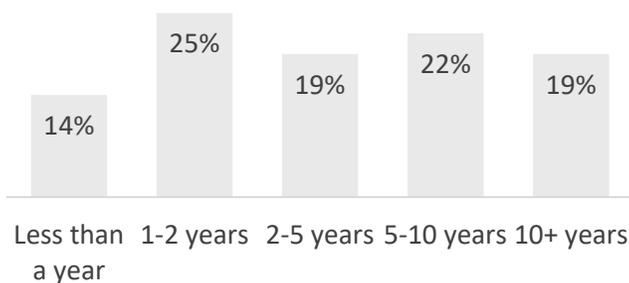
## Working Status



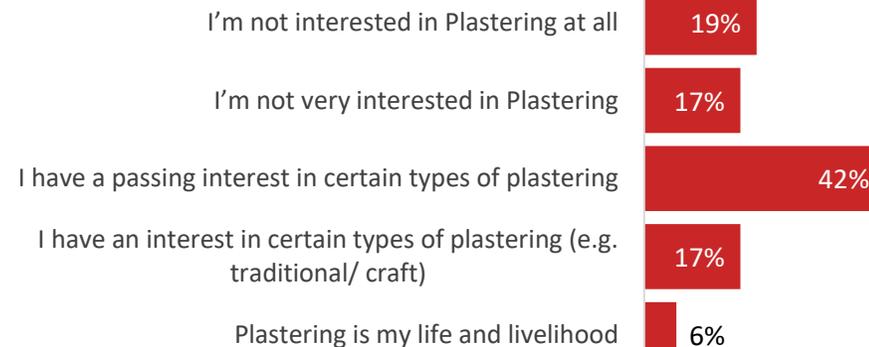
## Plaisterers' Membership



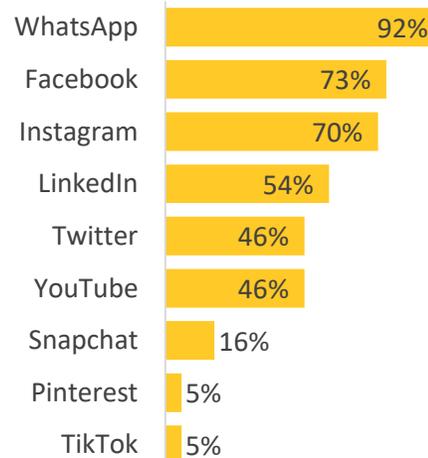
## Plaisterers' Tenure



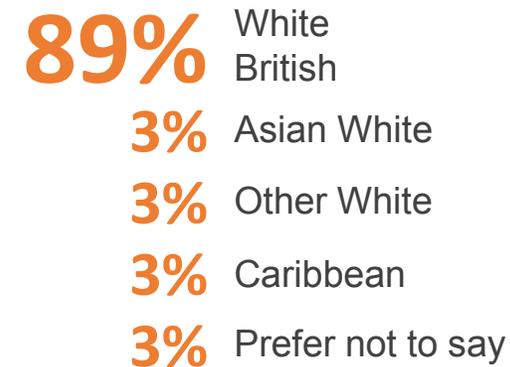
## Interest in Plastering



## Social Media Use



## Ethnic Background



# Diversity Comparison: Freemen vs. Liverymen

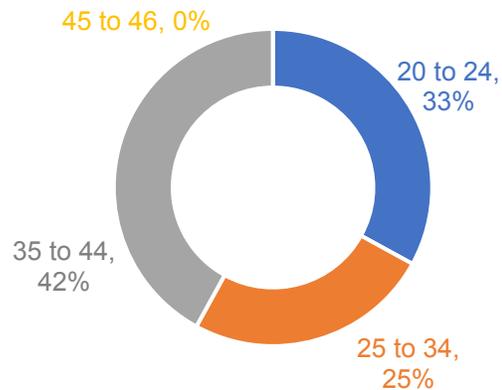


## Freemen

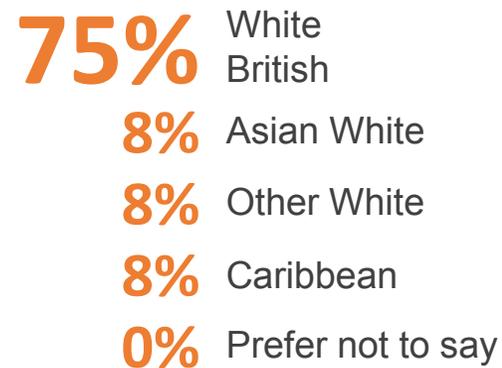
Gender



Age Profile



Ethnic Background

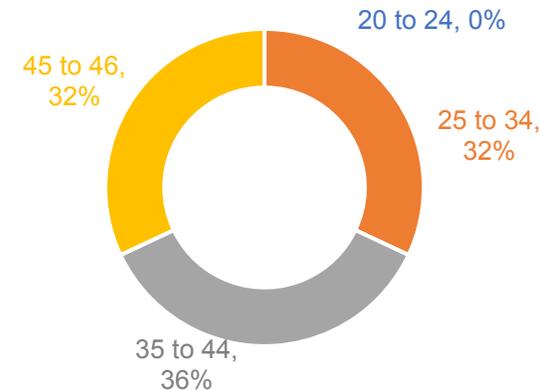


## Liverymen

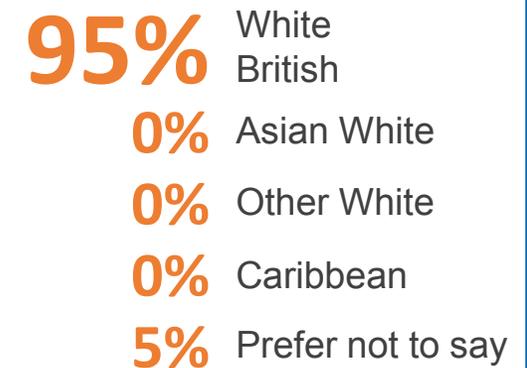
Gender



Age Profile



Ethnic Background



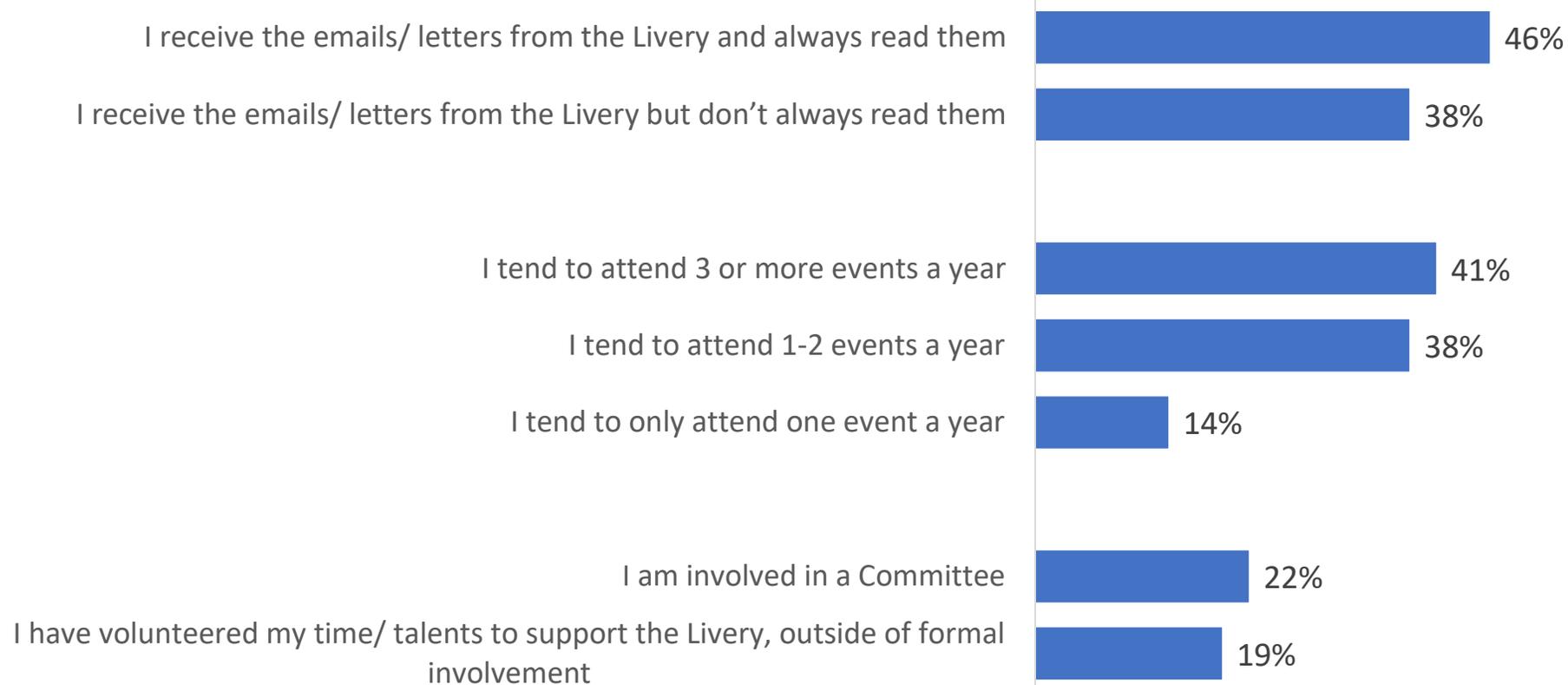
Gender, Age & Ethnicity

Base: Freemen aged 45 and under (n=12); Liverymen aged 45 and under (n=23)

Those younger members completing the survey are relatively active, with the majority attending more than one event a year (pre-pandemic)



### Involvement with the Livery



B4a: Which of the following descriptions are true for you, with regard to your current involvement with the Livery?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# Younger Livery members are happy with the current level of involvement, and expect to be more involved in the future



## Involvement with the Livery

Current involvement



Future aspirations



Interest in joining/ being involved in a Committee

Not interested at all

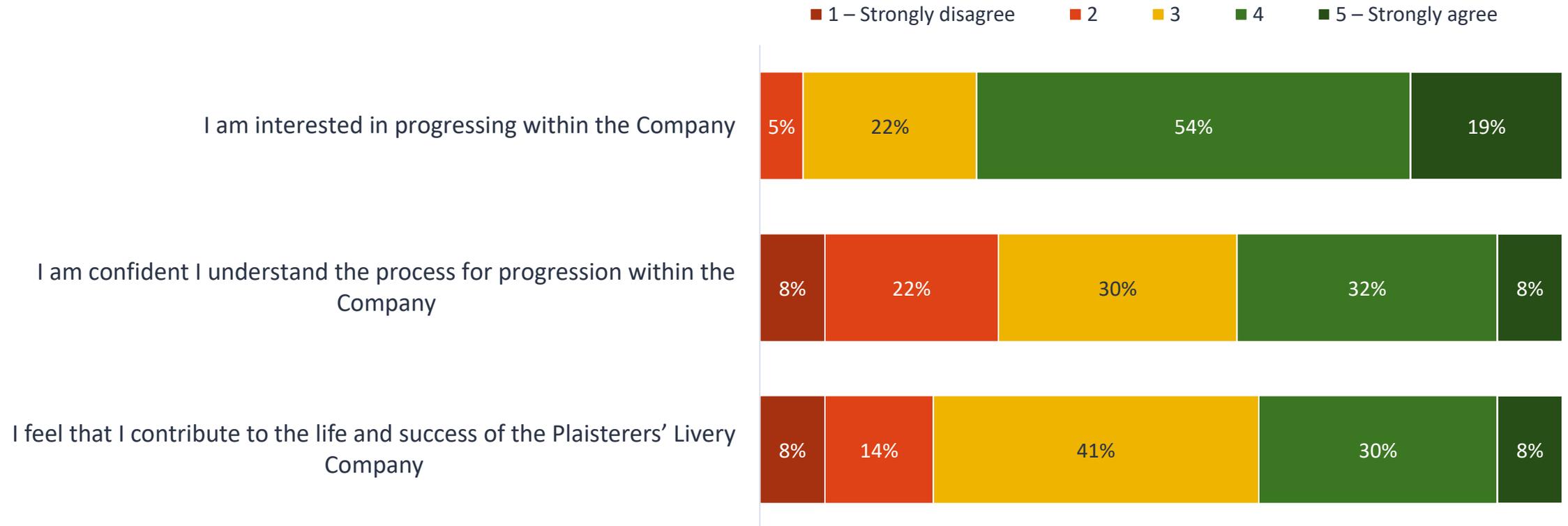


B4b: Thinking about your involvement in the Livery, which of the following best describes your current appetite to be involved in the Livery? B4c: And thinking about your future aspirations for involvement in the Livery, which of the below fits best? B6a: Specifically thinking about the Committees, how interested are you in joining, or being involved with, one of the Committees? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

The majority of younger members are interested in progression within the Livery; however, the process is a grey area for nearly a third of them



### Perceptions of the Plaisterers' Livery



D4: Thank you for your answers so far. We are nearing the end of the survey and before we come to the final questions, would like to understand your attitudes to certain aspects of the Livery. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)



# Response to the Young Livery Group (YLG)

The YLG is very well received. Over two-thirds of younger members of the Livery are willing to be involved in the founding of the YLG and over half are prepared to lead the group



Willingness to found/ lead the YLG

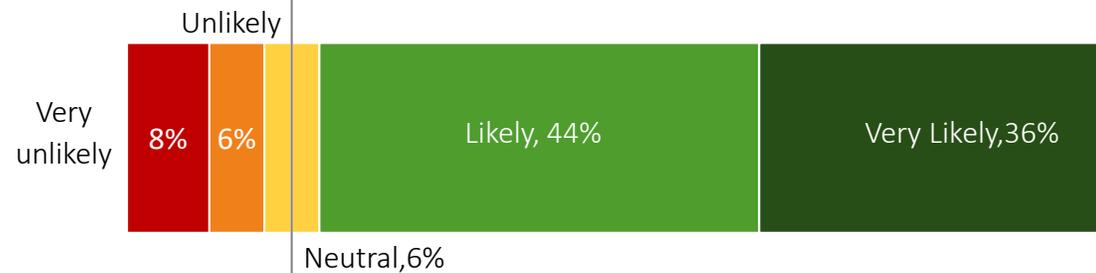
Willingness to be a founding YLG member



Willingness to lead the YLG



Likelihood to join a YLG LinkedIn group



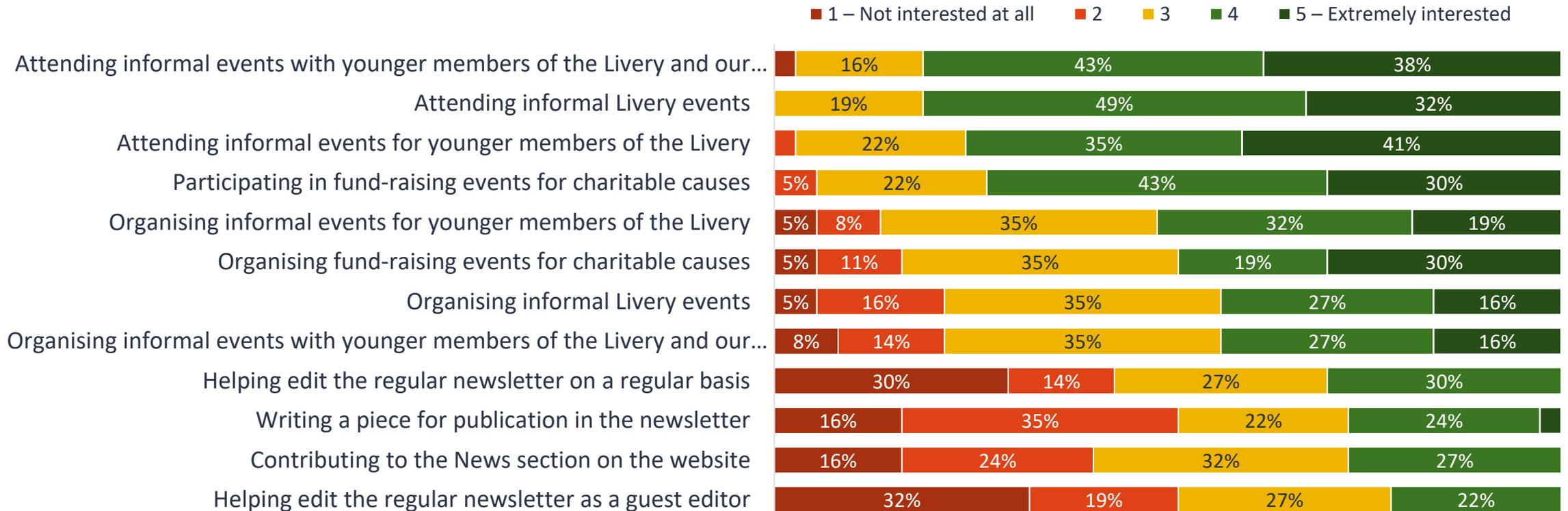
Those willing to be a founding member split across the different age groups:  
 20-24: 19%;  
 25-34: 35%;  
 35-44: 27%;  
 45-46: 19%

C4a: How willing are you to be one of the founding members of the Young Livery Group? C4b: And, if asked, how willing are you to lead the founding members of the Young Livery Group? C4b\_2: If the Plaisterers' Young Livery Group used LinkedIn to provide a platform to connect with other younger members of the Livery and a forum for information/ discussion, how likely are you to join? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37); Livery members aged 45 and under willing to be a founding member of the YLG (n=26)

Informal events and those targeted at younger members of the Livery are of greatest interest, along with a charitable fund-raising events. Participation is of greater interest than organising...



Interest in potential YLG ideas



C3: We now want to reflect on different ideas for Livery life that may appeal to you as a younger member of the Livery. To what extent are you interested (or not interested) in each of the following? Base: Livery members aged

45 and under (n=37)

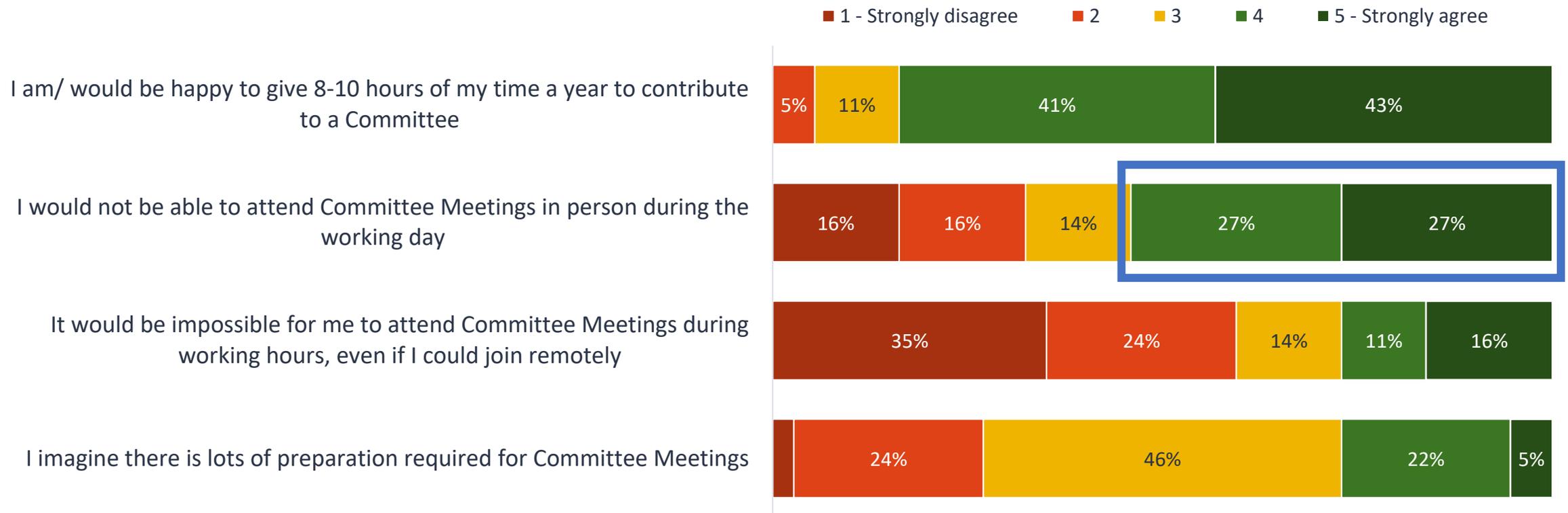


# Committee Membership Appetite & Perceptions

Overall, younger members are happy to give their time to committee meetings; however, over half would not be able to attend meetings during the working day



Committee Meeting Expectations



# How would you change the committees to appeal to a more diverse group of members/ potential members?



*“An interesting question. I've sat on one of the committees for 7 years. The biggest issue I've seen is trying to get people to attend the meetings and then act on the outputs. Perhaps we need to make them less daunting? Using video conferencing has been a big change but I think a really positive one. It's less formal, took much less time and the output was identical. Perhaps they shouldn't be in the middle of the day when everyone is at work? Is it still appropriate to have wine available - not something younger people would be used to at all? Personally I really like my committee because I get to see the Master and often the Wardens and speak to them in a really relaxed way, something that I think many others would benefit from. Perhaps every committee has to have 1/2 'young' Liverymen as part of the strategic plan? Perhaps there are other benefits only held for committee members, such as a clearer progression route from here onto court/stewarding?”*

*“I don't think big changes are needed on the committees. If you're asking how can we make it more appealing for a diverse group to join and attend committees I think they should promote inclusiveness and be welcoming. Also be as flexible as possible with regards to the meetings e.g. allow zoom calls remembering that diversity isn't just race but also physical abilities, gender and religion. I also help once the committees are more diverse to attract a more diverse group”*

*“Conveying clearly the level of commitment required and, secondly, being flexible as to how committees operate (e.g. not necessarily requiring regular in person meetings). For instance, having a young family makes it difficult to commit significant time on top of existing work & family commitments, but clarity and flexibility might at least smooth the path.”*

*“Simply make the process and decision making more open, minutes being made available online. Allow those interested in a committee to sit in on a meeting to see how it works. Emphasise the benefits the company committee members have and the benefits to members committees have.”*

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C2b: The Livery is currently run by a series of Committees making recommendations to the Court. Whilst we're unlikely to be able to change the way the Livery is run; how would you change/ influence the Committees to appeal to a more diverse group of members/ potential members? **Note:** Not all responses shown

# How would you change the committees to appeal to a more diverse group of members/ potential members?



*“Allow guests to join a meeting to see what they are all about?”*

*“Encourage members of the Livery to recommend more ethnic minorities to join.”*

*“Encourage new entrants from minority backgrounds openly, consider reducing importance of religious aspects of Livery events”*

*“Events to understand what each committee does. Potentially having that committee host an event”*

*“Have a representative on each committee that has been a member for less than 3 years. New ideas and fresh thinking to be encouraged.”*

*“Meet chair or a member beforehand”*

*“Move the events to a Wednesday or Thursday evening”*

*“Outline what they do and how and engage with those outside of them as to whether this could be improved. They operate behind closed doors unless you're very involved”*

*“Perhaps a call for more interaction from Liverymen with individual committees.”*

*“Possibly make them accessible to other Liverymen to attend as observers, or to post a summary of the points discussed etc.”*

*“Promotion of opportunities available Livery, more low cost events outside of London at evenings and weekends”*

*“Publicise the work of the committees more to help people understand what is involved and get them to offer their support on their terms”*

*“Remote/online meetings so people with families or who live further away could join in”*

*“Stop holding meetings during the day - have them as dial in later in the day. It assumes you have a city job*

*“To amend how the committees are run - as a working mum I just can't commit to join any”*

*“Using technology to allow more voice from the ranks. Anonymous or not.”*

*“Video conferencing meetings, post office hours” & “Timing/ make virtual”*

C2b: The Livery is currently run by a series of Committees making recommendations to the Court. Whilst we're unlikely to be able to change the way the Livery is run; how would you change/ influence the Committees to appeal to a more diverse group of members/ potential members? **Note:** Not all responses shown

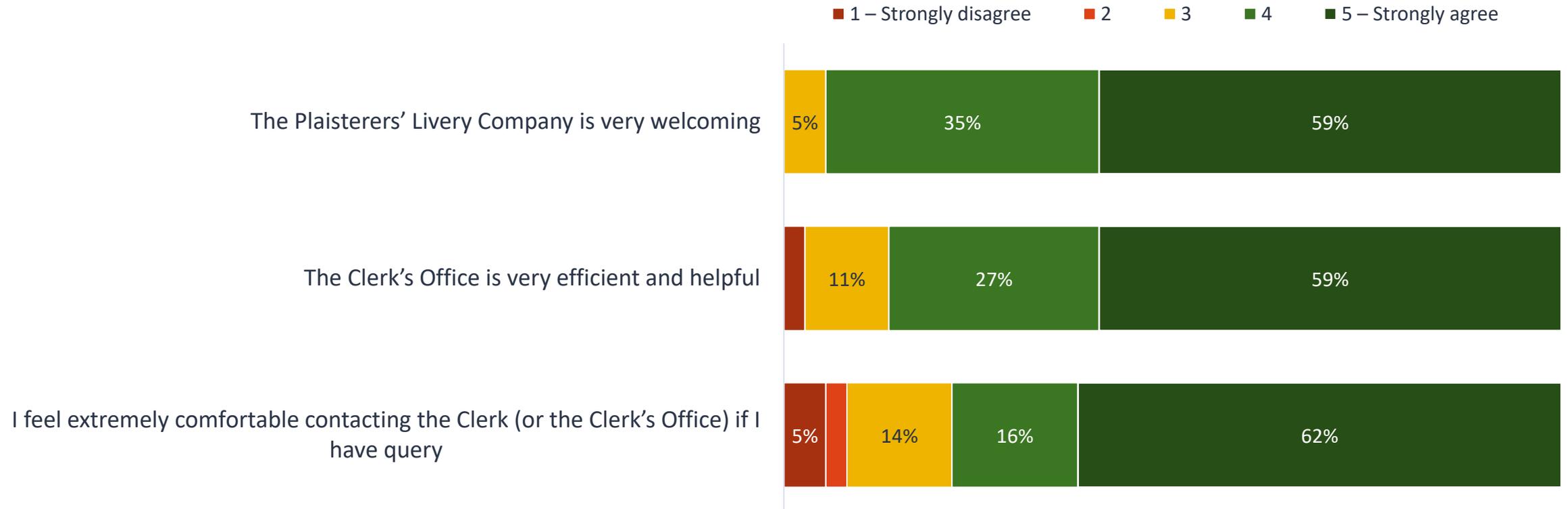


# Livery Life

# Younger members have a very positive overall experience with the Livery and the Clerk's Office



## Perceptions of the Plaisterers' Livery



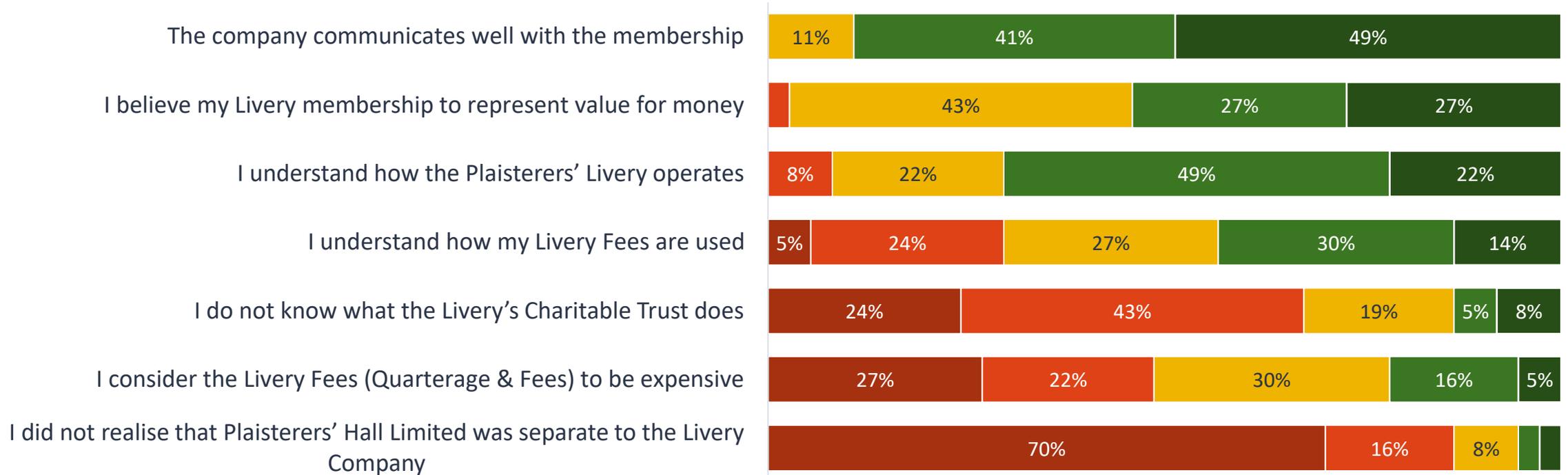
D4: Thank you for your answers so far. We are nearing the end of the survey and before we come to the final questions, would like to understand your attitudes to certain aspects of the Livery. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# Plasterers is considered to communicate well, and younger members feel, on the whole, that they understand how the Livery operates



## Perceptions of the Livery

■ 1 - Strongly disagree ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 - Strongly agree



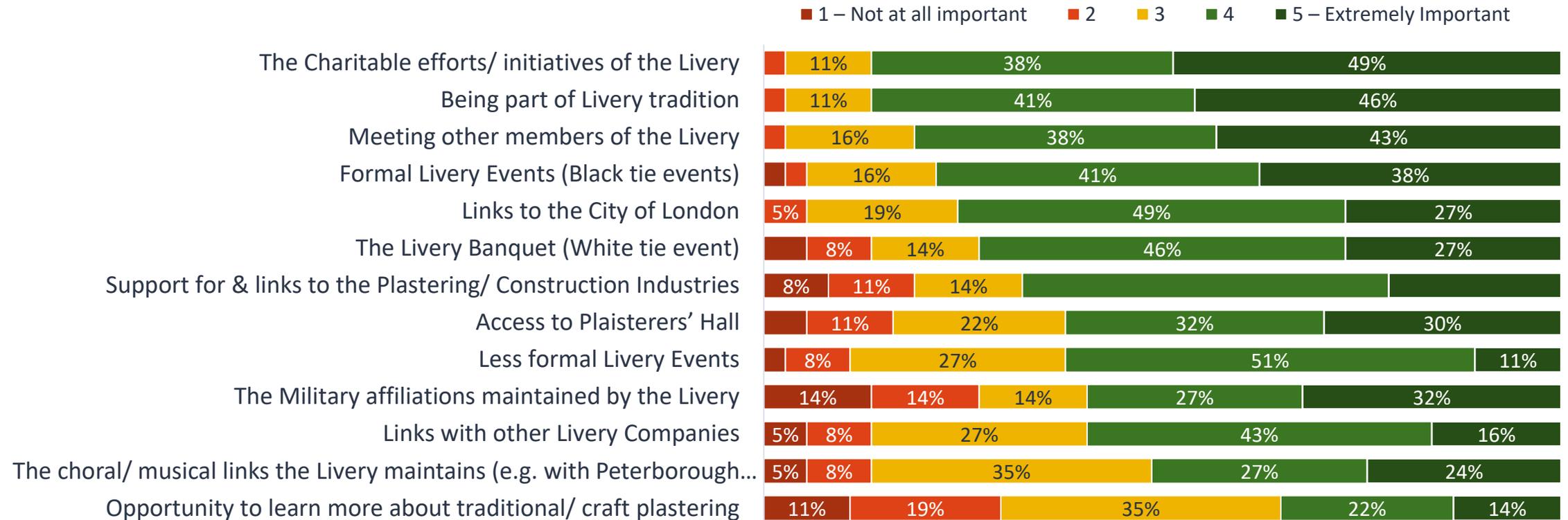
B5: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# Livery tradition and charitable efforts, as well as the community and events, are the most important aspects of Livery life



## Importance of different aspects of Livery life



B9: Members of the Livery consider different aspects of Livery life to have different importance/ value to them.

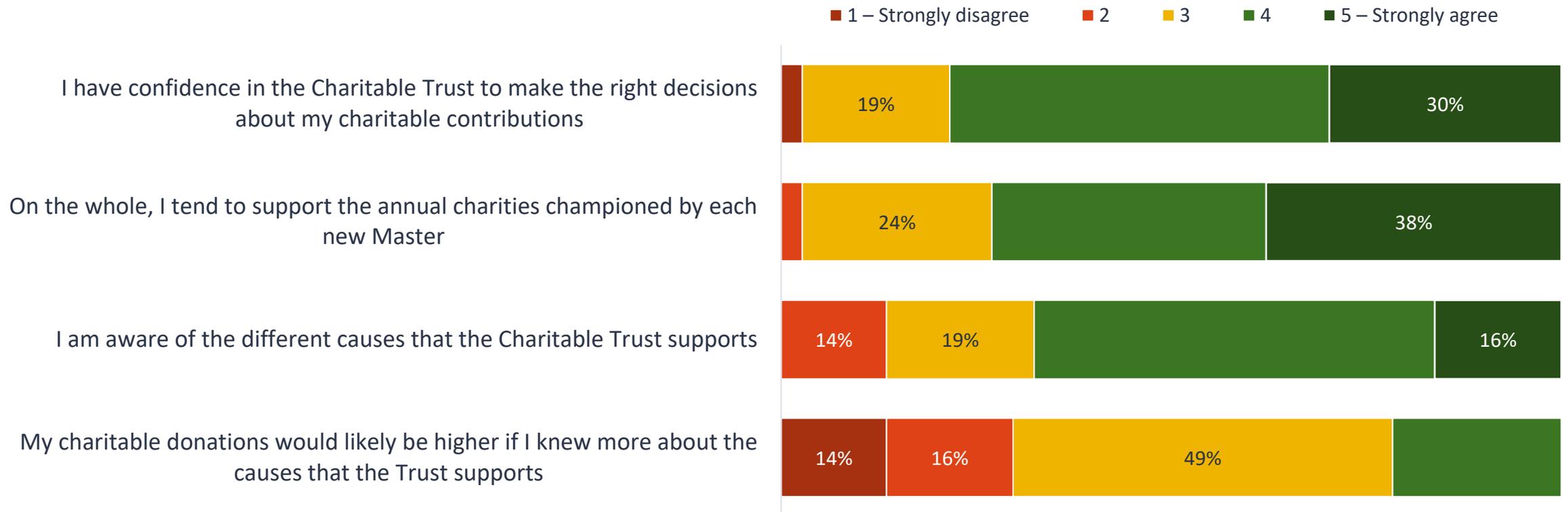
Looking at the items below, how important are each of them to your membership of the Plaisterers?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

On the whole, younger members of the Livery are very supportive of the Livery's charitable efforts without the need for more information



Perceptions of the Plaisterers' Charitable Efforts



D4: Thank you for your answers so far. We are nearing the end of the survey and before we come to the final questions, would like to understand your attitudes to certain aspects of the Livery. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

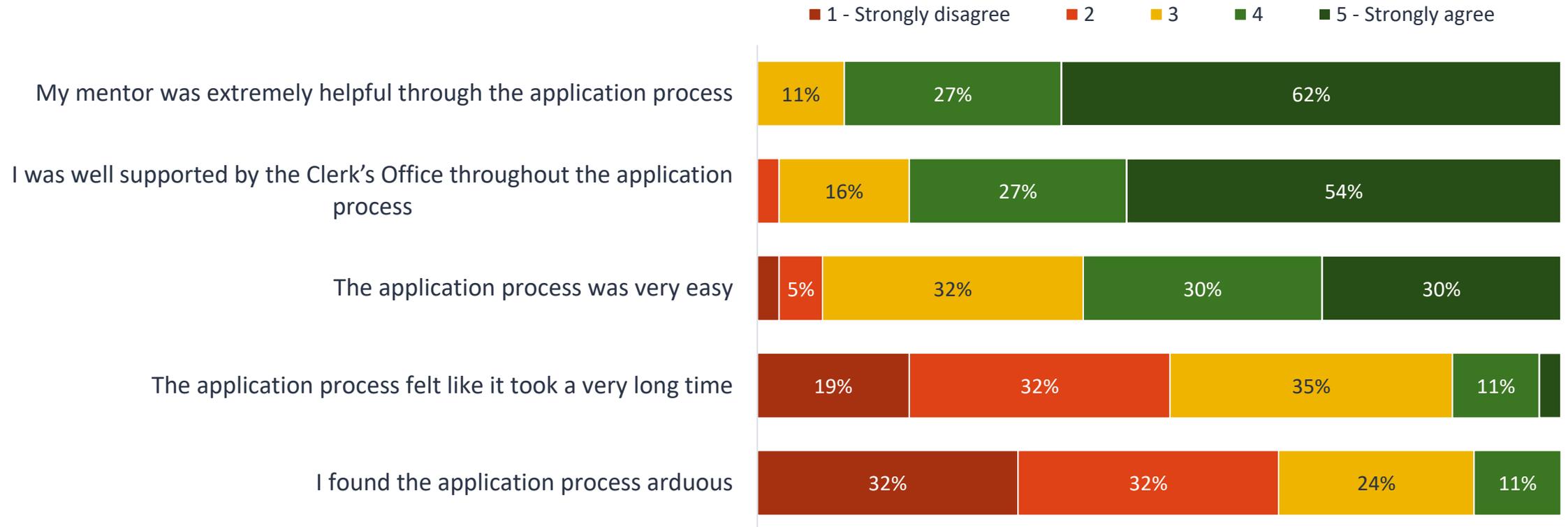


# Membership Process

There are no red flags about the application process. Younger members of the Livery appreciate the support from those who propose them and the Clerk's office



### Membership Application Process



B8: Thinking about the application process to become a member of the Plaisterers, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# *What would you say was the main reason you joined for becoming a member of the Livery?*



*“Charitable efforts and achievements by the company”*

*“Charitable work & preserve traditions”*

*“Enjoy going to the events”/ “the social side”*

*“Family ties and charitable support”*

*“Great place for networking alongside both social and charitable events”*

*“I enjoy the sense of institution and tradition, and the formal dinners etc.”*

*“I was the fortunate beneficiary of a bursary from the company and its members”*

*“Many good friends were members”*

*“My future and networking”*

*“Opportunity to network and carry on the history of the Livery”*

*“Sense of belonging to an organisation with strong charitable values and close-knit community”*

*“Social and professional gatherings”*

*“To be part of a significant and historic organisation that continues important traditions, supports the industry and has a charitable purpose”*

*“To broaden my networks, meet new people and become more involved in the City of London (where I have worked for more than half my career). Of course also to bring friends to events and enjoy the unique hospitality of the Livery”*

*“To build on the connection between 282 sqn and the Livery”*

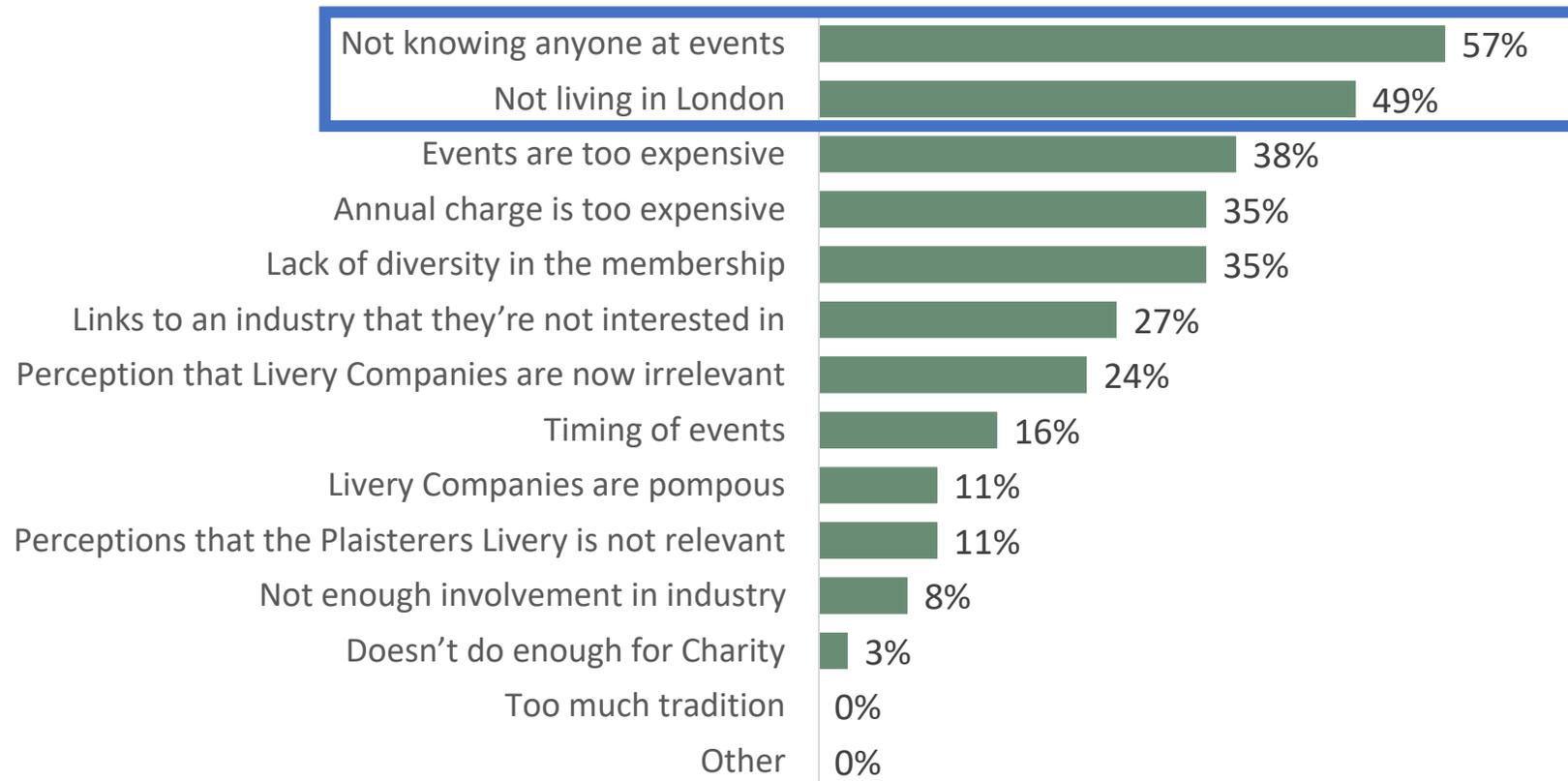
*“To increase female membership”*

*“To meet interesting and likeminded people and to learn more about the City of London and the role of the Liveries have played and continue to play in the life of the City and beyond”*

# An anxiety about knowing people at events and geography are thought to be the primary barriers to people joining the Livery



## Barriers to joining



B8: There are a variety of things that put people off joining the Plaisterers, which of the following do you think are the biggest barriers to potential members joining the Livery? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# The majority of younger members consider themselves likely to introduce new members and consider themselves comfortable talking to potential new members about the Livery



## Introducing new members



B7a: How likely are you (at any time in the future) to introduce other new members to the Livery Company? B7b: Thinking about your current knowledge, understanding and experience of the Plaisterers (rather than other factors), how comfortable would you feel talking to potential members about the Livery?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# *What, specifically, do you think we should be doing to encourage a more diverse membership? (1 of 3)*



- 1. We could actively approach people of colour, disabled people, neurodiverse people, people in the LGBTQ+ community and people of all genders to join or become involved - perhaps by advertising in relevant magazines or involving WCP in organisations e.g. Pride Magazine, The Voice, Black Professionals in Construction, Able Magazine, Stonewall, Transliving, Women in Construction, The Female Lead, etc.*
- 2. In accordance with the above, we could be much more open and transparent with membership by advertising publicly (perhaps by social media in addition to our website), rather than heavily relying on patrimony or private invitations to like-minded friends and colleagues. We could also hold public open evenings (with online registry so you know numbers in advance), as well as ones by invitation only.*
- 3. By openly welcoming people to pay in monthly instalments for quarterage and the initial membership fee (these figures shown clearly on our website, perhaps - publicly noting where it goes), we would attract less affluent potential members as well as demonstrating that we are a charitable organisation.*
- 4. Instagram/Twitter/Facebook/website optics: using respectful and diverse imagery and inclusive language online is a positive step towards a more diverse membership. If someone's representation is excluded from our photos and text, why would they join?*
- 5. We should be using inclusive and respectful language in all correspondence, incl. menus/seating plans with 'loving cup' instructions and event guidelines (e.g. 'they' rather than 'he'; 'Livery members' instead of 'Liverymen'; non-binary clothing examples).*
- 6. I'm certain this won't be popular, but an alternative to our gendered motto could be "Let filial love continue", from the Latin filius (son) and filia (daughter)...? Bonus points for traditional Latin derivative!*

C1: What, specifically, do you think we should be doing to encourage a more diverse membership?

**Note:** Not all responses shown

# *What, specifically, do you think we should be doing to encourage a more diverse membership? (2 of 3)*

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*I think very simply while we aspire to be diverse in all forms on this word the senior levels are all fulfilled by a particular group of people. If you were to take the court over the last 10 years and profile them you would find it's not diverse at all.*

*That's of course not to take away from the excellent advances in gender diversity with 3 female master in 8 years, when previously there had been a grand total of zero.*

*The great work the like of Chris Mackey has done with 282 is going to reap huge dividends for us, but we have to get these younger freeman engaged in the committees and the court.*

*So the court needs to look at itself and drive diversity from the top down. In addition there should be a scaled fee for entry and perhaps discounts for annual quarterage.*

*It was incredible to think we used to give discounts for older Liverymen, when it the younger ones from more challenged backgrounds who probably have the greater need.*

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# *What, specifically, do you think we should be doing to encourage a more diverse membership? (3 of 3)*



Spread knowledge of what the Livery (and Liveries generally) do as widely, and to as young an age group, as possible. It is lack of knowledge of Liveries and their activities that I suspect is the first and foremost barrier.

Trade/professional publications (beyond plastering)?

The events could use a more diverse range of speakers and also performers.

This is a difficult questions. We need to remove the barriers that caused the lack of diversity in the first place. It's difficult for me to know exactly what those were. I suspect the lack of diversity itself can be intimidating. We could change how we seek new members, to reach more diverse candidates. Consider more events that are more attractive to these potential new members.

To use the younger members to recruit a diverse range of potential candidates within our existing networks, by showing them specific glimpses into the Livery tradition and life.

Use social media to promote the benefits of being a member of the Company and encourage existing members of the company to share social media posts.

Utilitize the speakers and invite diverse and interesting people to widen the knowledge and challenge the status quo. At present the company attracts only those who fit the mould and it's functionality is historically lead. To move forwards it should encourage diversity and modern thinking within a traditional setting. Provide an intellectual conversation to move with the times rather than repeating the old. How this is achieved is a challenge as it would be a break from the normal speakers and traditions of Livery

*A stronger recruitment outreach - links to firms with more tenuous plastering connections to reach a demographic that is more likely to be interested in joining*

*Encourage more current working tradesmen/women to join for events.*

*Engage with specific under represented communities to establish what they would look for in a Livery and what might encourage them to engage*

*Increase education initiatives in communities of high diversity. Spotlight on existing diverse members as positive role models to attracting additional members from minority communities.*

*Maybe encourage people to bring more guests to some of the more high profile events*

*Perhaps an event such as the prospective new members' nights, but at other locations such as in employers' offices or other locations with "passing footfall"*

*Seek to broaden the catchment for new Livery members and seek to encourage diversity from within.*

*Should be doing more outreach events, whether that be to universities to attract members or colleges that teach plastering. Consider having a presence at other events in the city, not just the Lord Mayors Show but sporting events, like the London marathon etc. Be more visible on social media which can be a low cost high impact platform.*

C1: What, specifically, do you think we should be doing to encourage a more diverse membership?

**Note:** Not all responses shown

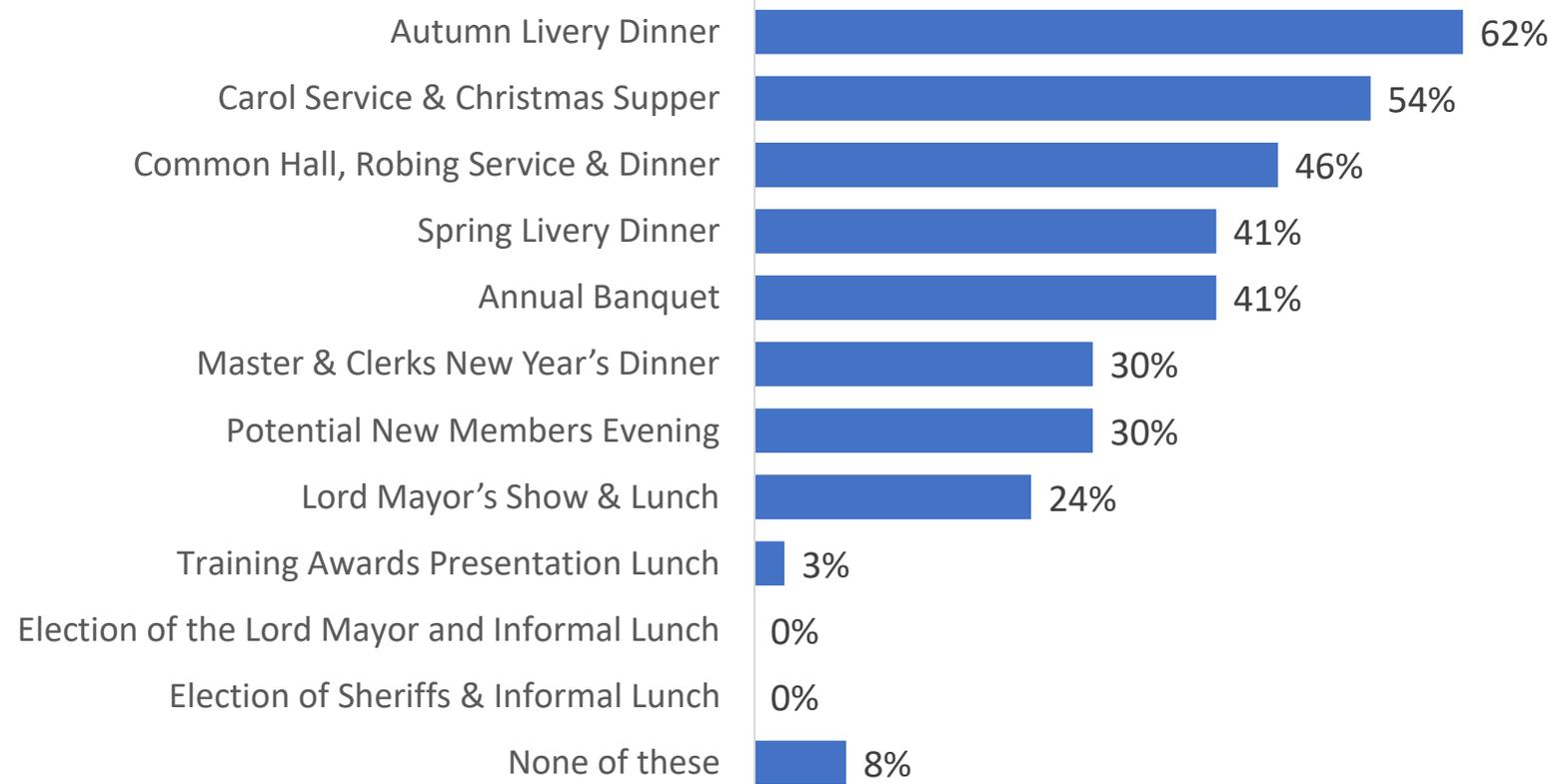


# Perceptions of Existing Events

# The Autumn Livery Dinner is the event that most younger people have attended, followed by the Carol Service



## Event Attendance

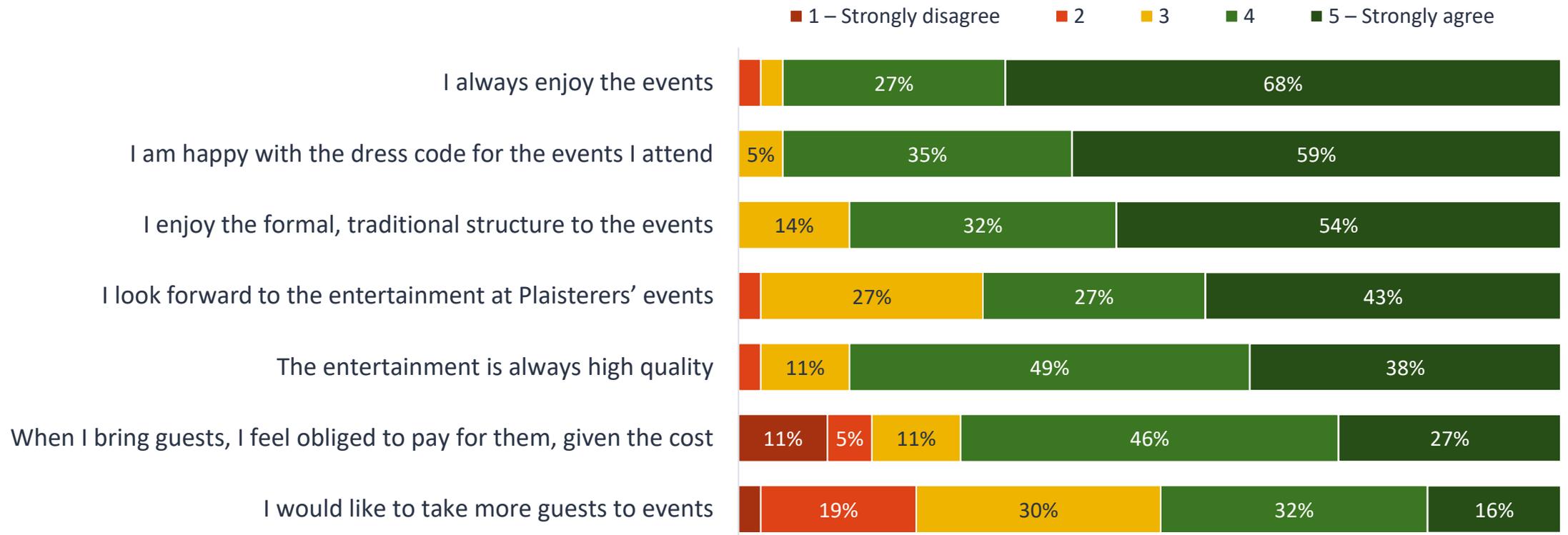


D1: Thinking now about the events associated with the Plaisterers' Livery, which of the following have you attended in the last 12 months prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown (February 2019 to February 2020)? Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

The current events are well liked by younger members of the Livery, although there is some sense of obligation to pay for their guests, given the cost



Attitude to & Perception of Events (1/2)



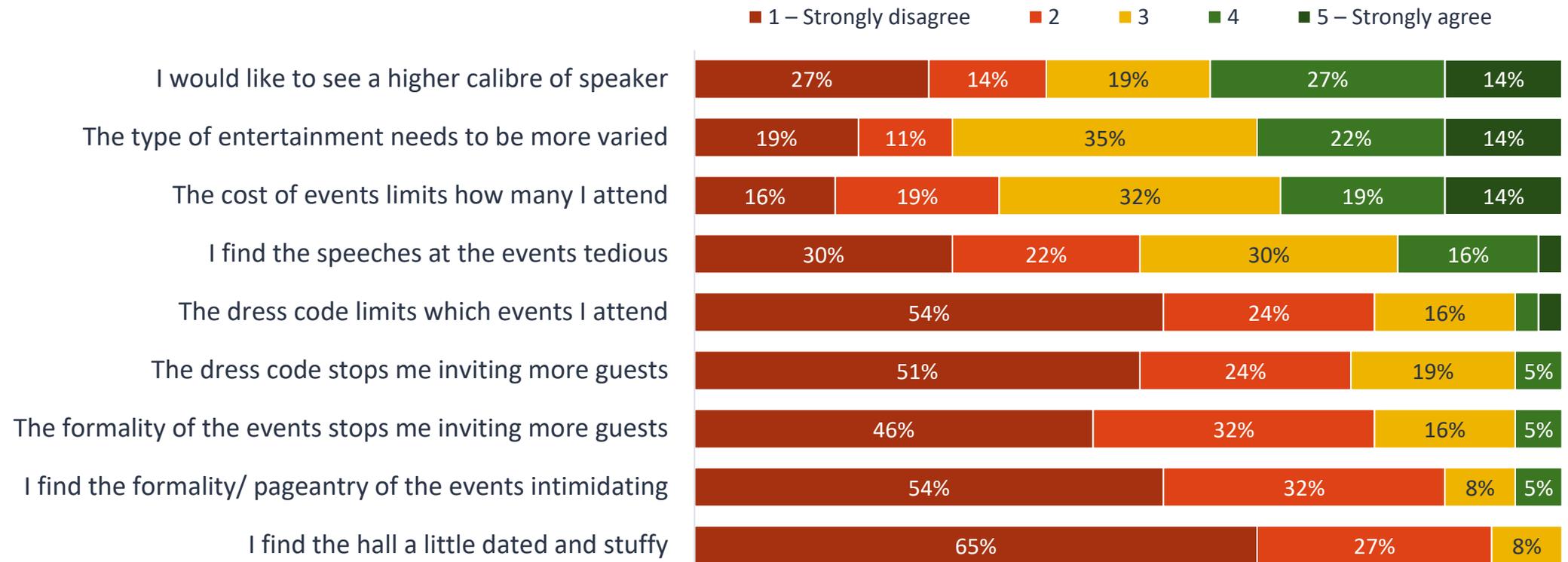
D2: Still thinking about Livery events, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# The formality of events does not appear to impact younger members' perceptions of the events



## Attitude to & Perception of Events (2/2)



D2: Still thinking about Livery events, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)

# YLG Research Insight Report

Prepared by Liveryman Luke  
Sehmer on behalf of the  
Membership Committee

Data collected: August 2020



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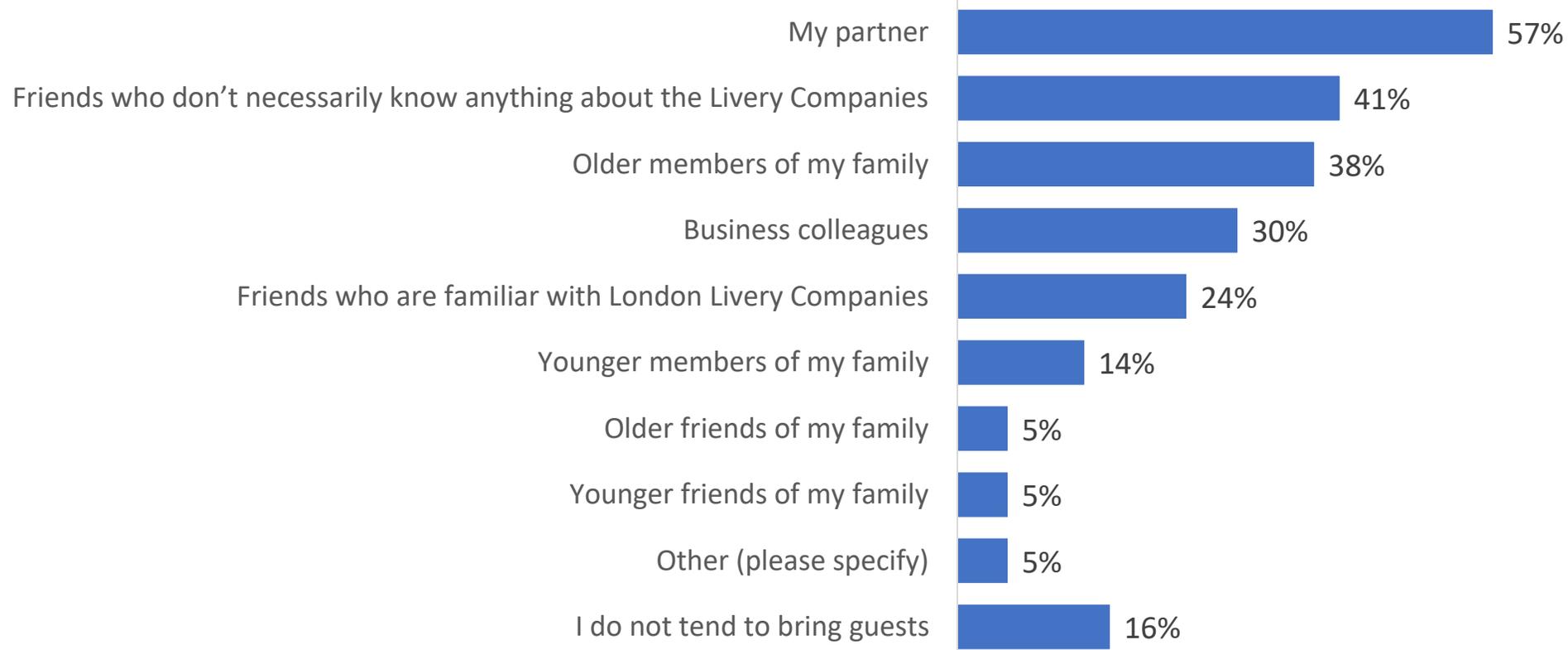


# Appendix

# Younger members tend to bring their partners to events, along with friends and family



## Who normally bring to events



D3: Who do you typically bring to events as guests?

Base: Livery members aged 45 and under (n=37)