

APS Member Survey 2018 – The Results

This note is intended to provide APS members with some feedback on the results from the recent Member Survey, but firstly, can the committee please thank everyone who took part and submitted questionnaires – very much appreciated.

Because of the amount of information provided, this summary is presented in bullet form to keep it relatively short, and not every question is reported on. If any member wants more information, they can contact Pete Bissell on thebissell@aol.com.

The committee considered the full results in depth at a meeting on 6th November, and will be taking these into account in future planning. Where relevant the committee's conclusions are noted below.

- 24 members completed the questionnaire including one on behalf of a couple – so the responses covered the views of 25 people representing two thirds of the current membership of 37.
- The overall conclusion was that the Society is doing pretty well as it is, with 70% of members indicating that things are fine as they are, or not suggesting any change. Of the balance who did suggest any possible changes, there was no consistent theme, though a few members did suggest more interaction/active sessions – *'more talking; more participation; less sitting/watching'*. Interestingly, as noted below, this contrasts with 2 of the 3 least enjoyed activities being photographic walks and workshops.
- A few of the general comments were *'APS is OK as it is!!!'*; *'Don't make too many changes – there's not a lot wrong with things at the moment'* and *'we have a lot to be proud of at APS'*.
- The friendliness of the Society was the most important reason why people joined and stayed. The committee recognised this and will work hard to try to retain the same atmosphere within the Society going forward.
- When asked to rate their enjoyment of a range of factors/activities on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being 'extremely enjoyable' and 1 being 'not enjoyable'), members rated the Company as being the highest with an average 4.9! Visitor and member presentations were also very highly rated at 4.6 and 4.5 respectively. Least enjoyed were Interclub activities (2.9), Photographic Walks (3.1) and Workshops (3.3). Competitions were in the middle with an average rating of 4.0. Given that presentations are currently weighted fairly heavily toward visitors (14 visitor presentations in 2018/19 compared to 5 member presentations and 4 group member evenings – eg novice/advance nights) the committee concluded that we should try to cut back somewhat on visitor presentations and include more member presentations as long as there are enough members interested in doing a presentation.
- There was a broad spectrum of types of photography that members are interested in – as either an author or viewer. The most popular was landscape (more than 80% as author and 96% as viewer) and the least popular was Macro (45% author and 62% viewer). The committee concluded from this that it was important to ensure that we retained a broad range of speakers covering the full spectrum of types of photography.
- When asked whether we should introduce anything new, the main suggestions related to competitions – more of which is covered below. Other suggestions included interclub activities and workshops, but as already noted these are generally among the least popular activities. The committee concluded that with the possible exception of more member presentations and limited changes to the competitions, there was no real call for other changes to the programme – though we should always be open to new ideas and suggestions.
- There were only very limited responses to the request for volunteers to run workshops or provide mentoring. However, the committee felt that we should make best use of the skills of people who were prepared to provide these and look to include some sharing of skills in the programme in the future. Mentoring was likely to be the best approach, with a buddy system a possibility for new or novice members.

- In relation to competitions, more than 80% of members indicated that they were happy with the current competitions. A number of members did, though, suggest that we may want to consider introducing either themed or mobile phone image competitions. Even before the survey was launched, the committee had established a competition sub-committee to look at the structure of our current competitions and make recommendations to ensure that these remained relevant and in line with members' wishes. As such the full results from the member survey will be taken into account as part of this review. The objective is to complete this in the first quarter of 2019, and the committee will then consider the outcome and come back to the members for their views – all against the background that members are generally happy with the current competitions.

The Competition Sub-Committee is made up of Frank Gill (chair), Pat Osborne, Mike Yates and David Williams. If any members have any additional comments that they want the Sub-Committee to consider as part of their review can they please let Frank or other members know.

- Members may recall that the question of subscription categories was raised at the AGM, with a suggestion that the current couples/family membership category be scrapped. Two thirds of the membership who expressed a view in the survey felt that the couples/family membership category should be retained, and this increased to nearly 80% for single members who expressed a view. The general consensus was also that if the couples/family membership category is retained, the subscription level should remain at £56. The committee concluded that with this level of support, the current couples/family membership category and subscription level should be retained. The subscription level will then be reviewed at the 2019 AGM in line with normal practice.

Thank you again to everyone who took part in this survey of members' opinions. The results will be used to help develop the club in the future in line with the wishes of our membership.

The APS Committee – November 2018