



BUSA Club Development Survey 19/20

Results Analysis and Key Outcomes



Iona Smith
BUSA Development Officer 2020-21
8th July 2020



Overview

- The BUSA Club Development Survey was started in 2019 by the BUSA Development Officer at the time. It aimed to survey every University Sailing Club in the UK, to establish baseline demographics of sailors within BUSA and to understand how to best support clubs.
- The 2019/20 survey was published on 1st June 2020. 48 clubs were approached, and 47 responses had been received when the survey closed on 8th July 2020. One duplicated response and one unidentifiable response were discarded, leaving 45 unique club responses. The second edition of the survey was expanded from the 2018/19 year to include questions on Sailability and attendance at BUCS events.
- The 2019/20 academic year brought many challenges. Many events early in the season were reduced or cancelled by extreme weather, and all events scheduled in April and beyond were cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, these results may not be completely reflective of the normal operational state of the club.
- Overall, clubs had a positive response to the Club Development Survey, with a majority of clubs responding quickly to the survey, and 42 clubs left contact details indicating they were happy to discuss their responses further. 17 clubs specifically requested extra support or advice from BUSA, suggesting the survey is an effective way to encourage interaction with the BUSA committee.

Total
Responses
Received = 45

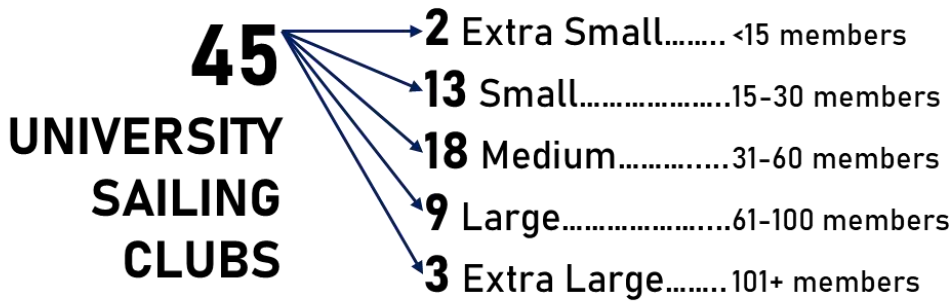
Response Rate
= 93.75%

The findings from the 2019/20 Club Development Survey are summarised in this report, covering:

- Club Membership
- Activity Engagement
- Attendance at BUCS & non-BUCS events
- Club Goals
- Development Challenges
- Finances
- Accessible Sailing Provision

This report is aimed to be supplemented with additional reports for each BUSA Area and sailing discipline. Any questions, or requests for further information can directed to the BUSA Development Officer, Iona Smith, at busacommittee@gmail.com.

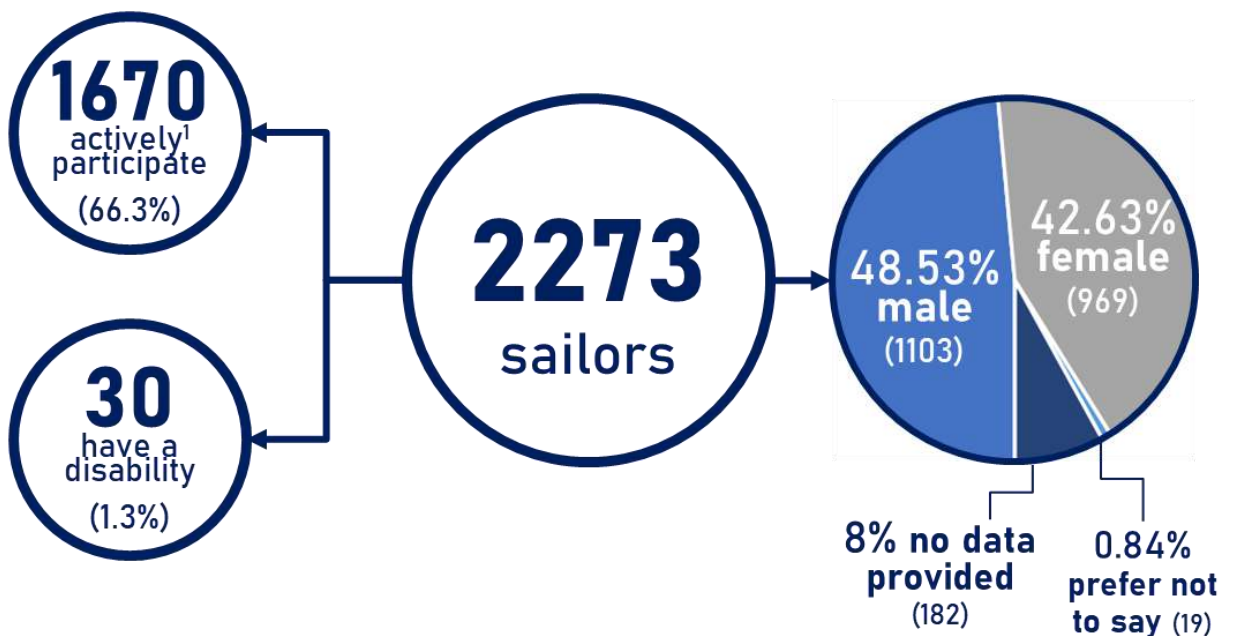
Membership Summary



Since the 2018-19 Development Survey, overall membership has dropped slightly. 48 clubs with 2489 members were recorded in 2019, which has decreased to 45 clubs with 2273 members. Of the 3 missing clubs, 2 are known to have ceased operating and 1 was not able to be contacted to fill out the 2019-20 survey.

Despite lower overall membership, active participation has increased from 1650 in 2018-19 to 1670 in 2019-20. The total male and female members has decreased from 54% and 45% respectively in 2018-19 to 48% and 42% in 2019-20, however the number of members with no data provided or members who prefer not to say has increased from 0.04% in 2018-19 to 8.84% in 2019-20.

The 2019-20 survey was the first time clubs were asked about members with a disability, as part of the new BUSA partnership with RYA Sailability.



¹ Active participation defined as attending more than 3 organised activities

Membership Demographics

	Total Members	Male	Female	Prefer not to say	No data provided	Active
Scotland	389	190	199	0	0	264
Northern	279	145	133	1	0	233
Midlands	279	164	113	0	2	228
Western	688	289	273	18	108	485
Southern	380	184	124	0	72	279
Eastern	258	131	127	0	0	181

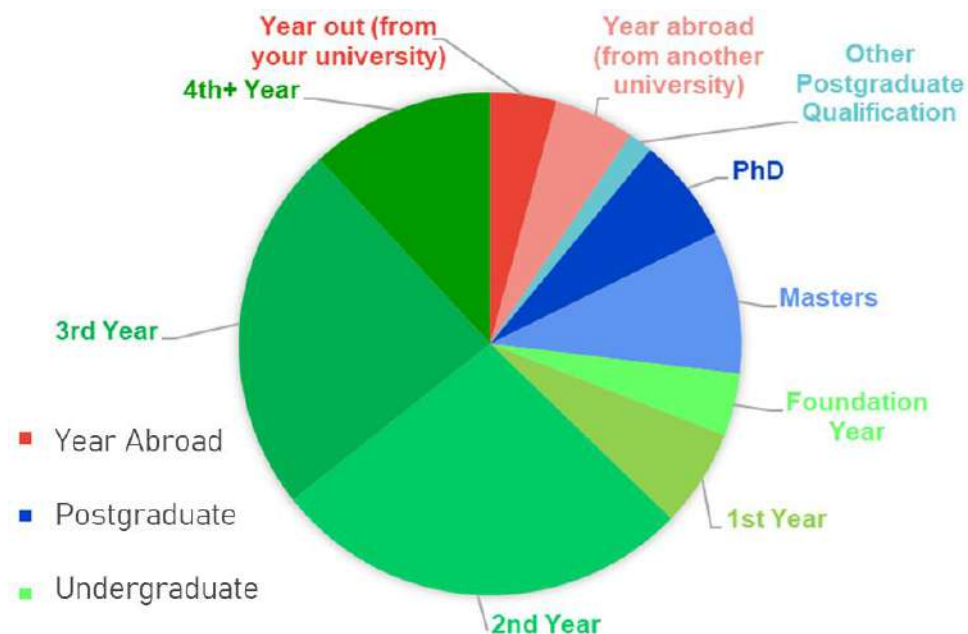
In every BUSA region, at least 40% of members are female and 70% are active.

According to the national average¹, 38% of RYA Club members are female and 38% of members actively participate.



A majority of BUSA sailors are undergraduates, with most members being in their 2nd or 3rd year of an undergraduate degree.

The lower number of postgraduate members could reflect fewer students going onto postgraduate study and have less free time.



¹ National average as published by the 2018 RYA Insights (2019 unavailable at time of writing)

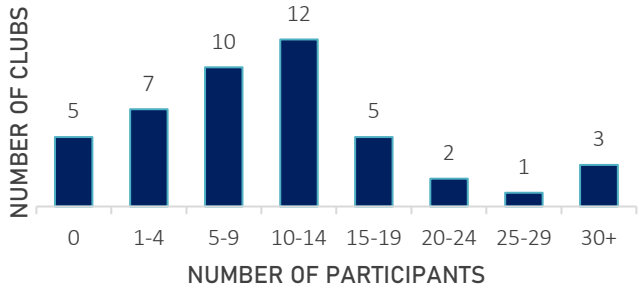
Key Points:

- BUSA clubs are above the national average for female and active participation.

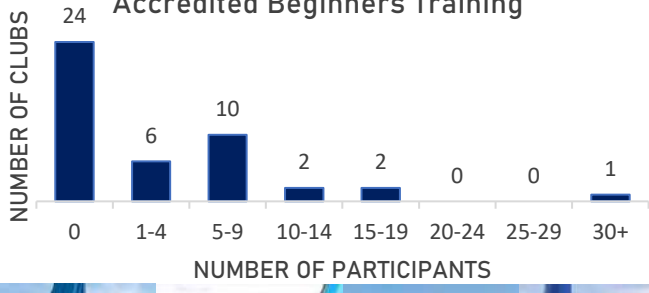
Activity Engagement

Beginners Training

Members Participating in Non-RYA Accredited Beginners Training



Members Participating in RYA Accredited Beginners Training



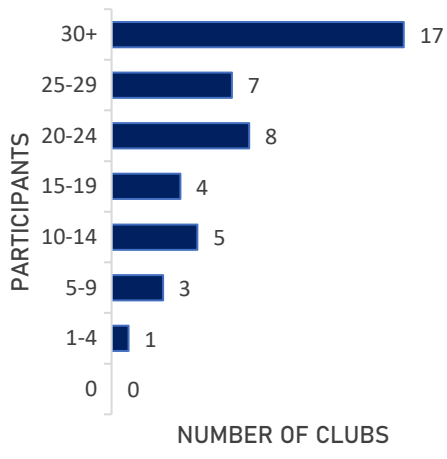
89% of USCs offering some form of non-RYA accredited beginners training. 47% of USCs also offer official RYA-accredited beginners training.

Across the membership, beginners sailing is happening across the UK, through informal sessions or accredited RYA sailing.

Informal beginners sessions may have higher participation than RYA accredited sessions due to the reduced cost, flexibility for running sessions within term time, and lower commitment requirement.

Look out for resources coming soon outlining our long term strategy to improve provision of university beginners sailing.

Socials



Socials had the highest activity participation. Every USC offered socials, and 37% of USCs had >30 participants.

High social attendance is a positive reflection on club membership. Socials can bring together all areas of club membership, especially those that offer multiple disciplines, and can be a key way to integrate and retain members.

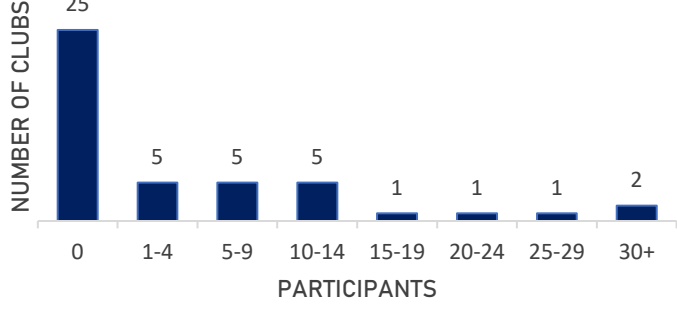
Key Points:

- Beginners training accounts for a large proportion of student sailing activity.
- Socials had the highest participation and most USCs have a very active social side.

Activity Engagement

Keelboat Racing & Cruising

Members Participating in Keelboat Racing/Cruising



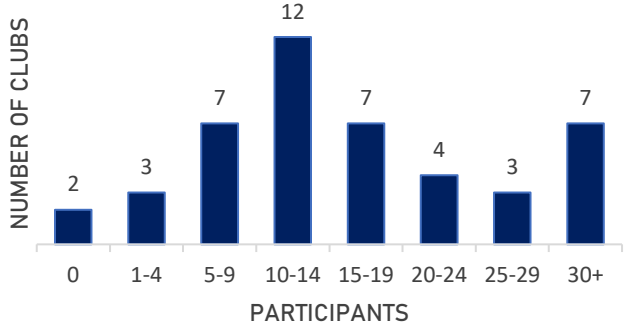
Keelboat cruising had relatively low participation at club level. Most USC's did not have any participants in 2019-20.

Scotland had the highest regional participation in keelboat sailing, while the Midlands had the lowest.

Low participation is likely to be due to geographical and financial reasons. Inland clubs have limited access to appropriate venues, and few USC's own keelboats, leading to increased participation cost through travel, accommodation and charter fees.

Dinghy Cruising & Social Sailing

Members Participating in Dinghy Cruising/Social Sailing



96% of USC's offered social sailing, with many clubs having high membership engagement within the activity.

As most USC's own boats, or have access to dinghies from their host club, dinghy cruising can be offered relatively easily and cheaply. The ease of access to dinghies, and appeal to non-competitive sailors, increases the participation in this discipline.

High participation in dinghy cruising suggests that clubs would benefit from increased BUSA support towards the discipline.

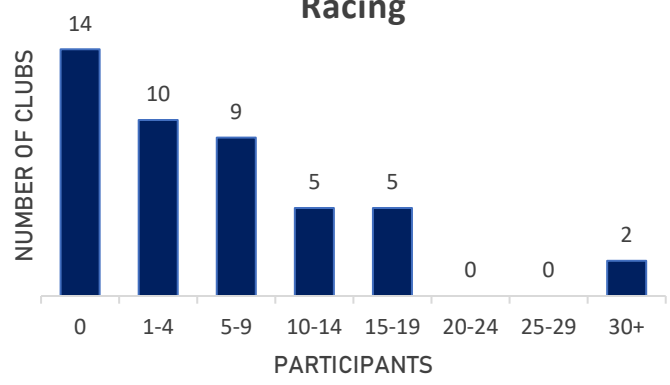
Key Points:

- Keelboat participation is primarily influenced by geographical location and access to keelboats.
- Dinghy cruising is offered by 96% of USC's and had the 3rd highest participation.

Activity Engagement

Fleet Racing

Members Participating in Fleet Racing



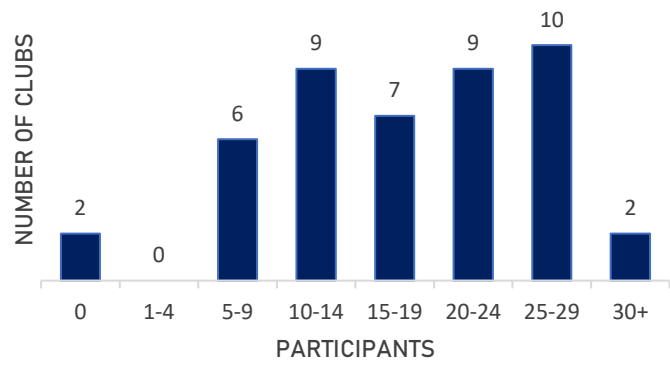
Most students who have raced pre-university will have a fleet racing background, and continuation at university could be useful for integrating into the club.

There are few student-hosted fleet racing events, and most competitive events are held out of term-time, which could decrease participation.

Although fleet racing entries are cheaper than other events, there are higher associated costs through the need to own and transport private boats to traveller events.

Team Racing

Members Participating in Team Racing



Team racing was the discipline with the highest participation, after socials.

Most USCs own or have access to Fireflies to train in and training can be run easily by club members. There is less requirement for prior experience, which widens appeal to new and returning members.

Team racing events are held frequently across the country, with organiser-provided boats, leading to minimal costs outside of entry fees. Events also provide a large social aspect for clubs, encouraging inter- and intra-club socialising.

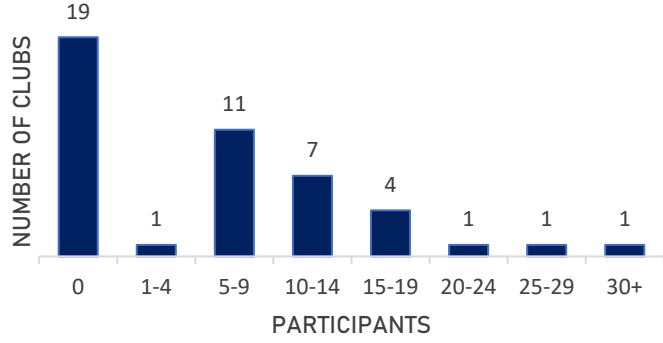
Key Points:

- Fleet racing participation is reduced by less available events and requirement to own boats.
- Participation in team racing is high due to ease of access and large social influence.

Activity Engagement

Yacht Racing

Members Participating in Yacht Racing



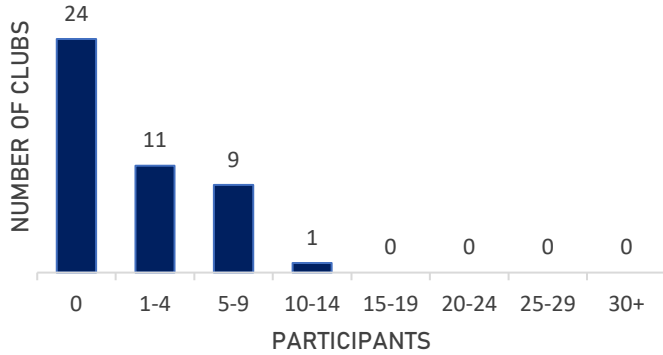
Yacht racing is largely limited to university clubs who have easy access to the coast, or who have good connections and enough funds to travel to and stay at the coast.

Clubs may also be limited by team size, requiring enough students to form a team, as well as a skipper and other members who are qualified for charter requirements.

Participation may be low due to the high costs associated with yacht racing, including expensive event entry prices, charter fees, and damage deposits.

Match Racing

Members Participating in Match Racing



Match Racing had the lowest participation of all activities. There are a limited number of appropriate fleets across the UK, many clubs struggle with access to match racing. Small team sizes also mean that less students per university are able to compete.

There are less match racing events held during the student calendar, and events often have limited entry meaning it can be harder to gain experience for clubs new to the discipline. It is likely that clubs would benefit from additional training and competition opportunities across BUSA.

Key Points:

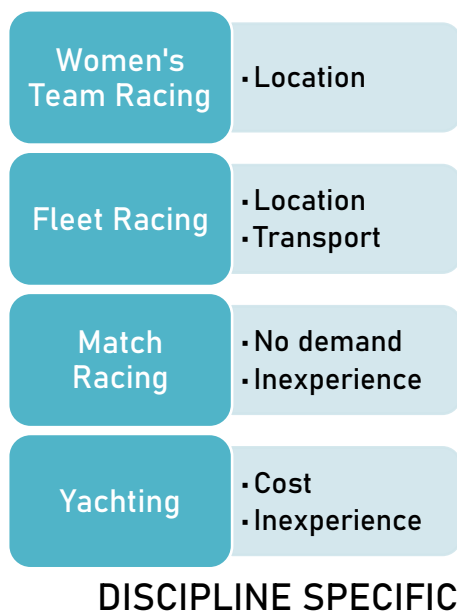
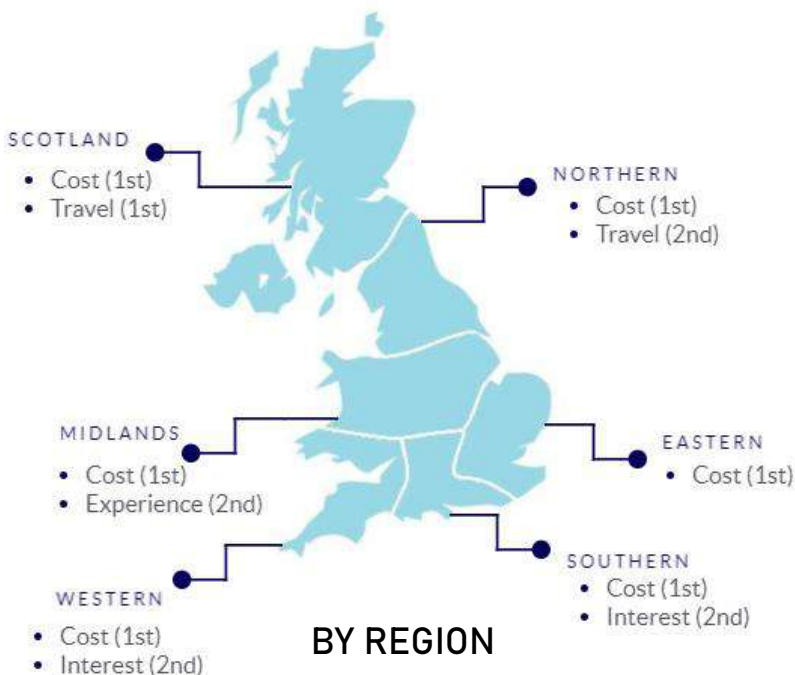
- Yacht racing participation is limited by access to the coast, cost and qualification requirements.
- Low match racing participation is likely due to small teams, lack of access and high costs.

Attendance at Events

LEADING REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT BUCS

Clubs were asked which BUSA/BUCS events they did not attend (or had planned not to attend, if the event was cancelled) in the 2019-20 season and the reasons why. Nationally and regionally, the leading reason was cost, followed by location and member demand. Location was a bigger issue in Scotland and the North, while member demand was a more frequent issue in the South and West.

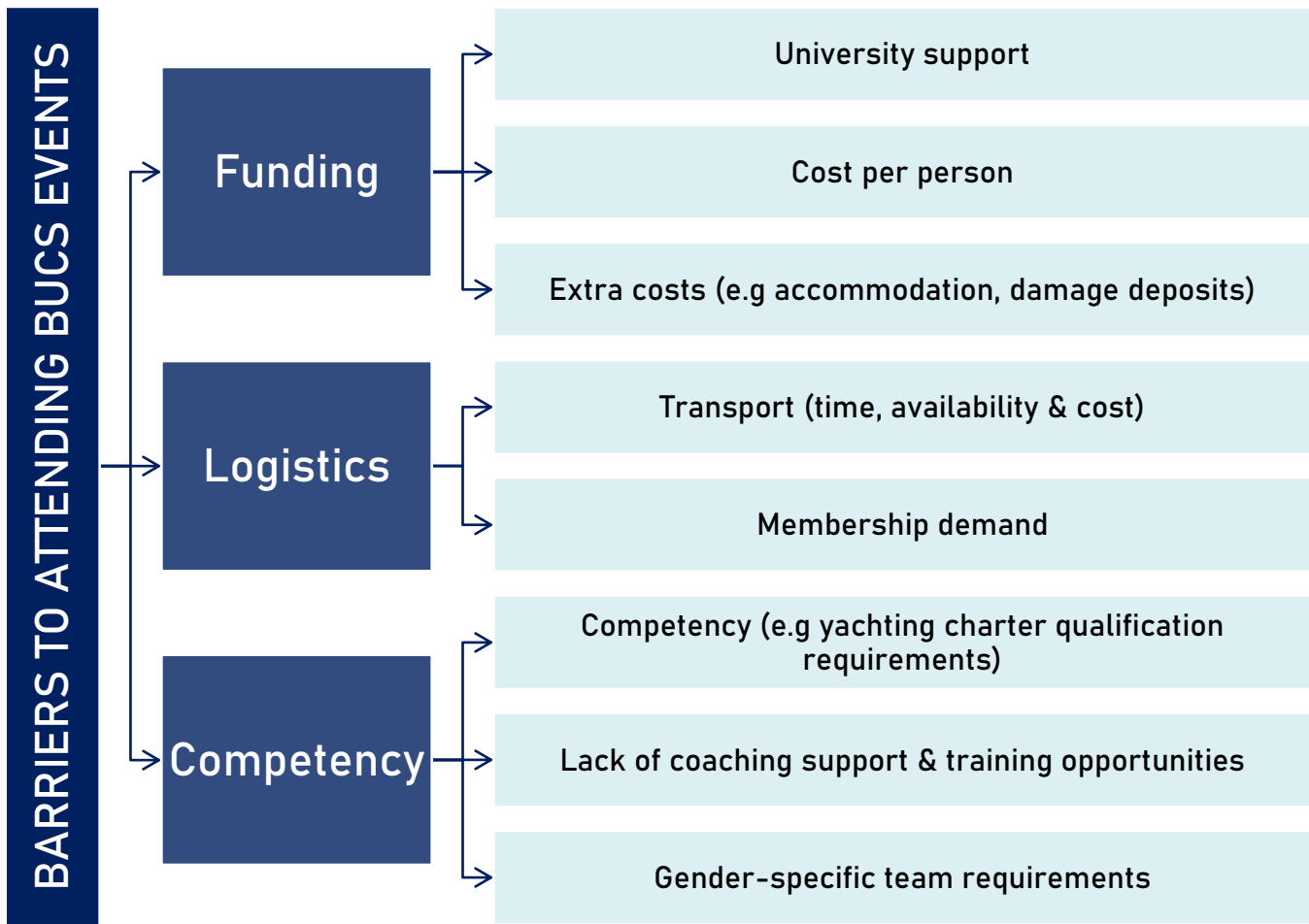
Reason for Non-Attendance (National)	Frequency
Cost including entry, damage deposit, transport and accommodation	21
Location/Travel Distance	19
Lack of Member Demand not a club focus or lack of interest	16
Sailor Inexperience	9
Transport	6
Lack of Available Training events, facilities or coaching	5
Failed to Qualify for multi-stage events and charter eligibility	4
Entered Other Events Instead for training or due to lack of funding	3
Dates clashes with other events or term time availability	3
Charter unable to charter boats for the event	2



Key Points:

- Location and cost were cited as the main barriers to attending BUCS events nationally.
- Lack of interest and experience were secondary reasons but more common in keelboat events.

Attendance at Events



How do clubs decide which non-BUCS events to attend?

Location, cost and quality of event were the biggest factors for a USC deciding to attend an event. Additional factors included if the club attended the year before (tradition), the accompanying social and if the event could be used as a training opportunity.

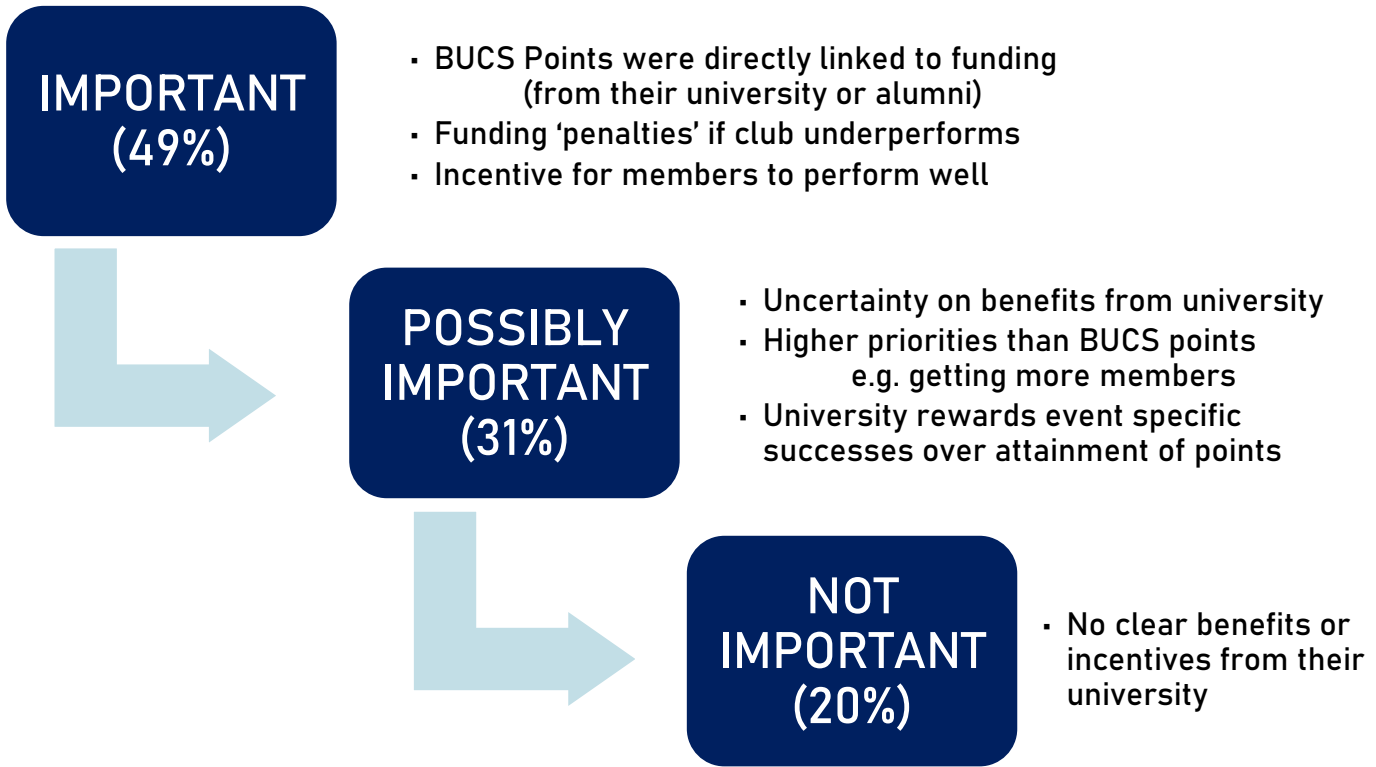
Key Points:

- Barriers to BUCS events could be divided into funding, logistical and competency factors.
- Factors for attending non-BUCS events also included logistical and social reasons.

Value of BUCS Points

Linking in with the wider BUSA review of BUCS events, clubs were asked if they thought BUCS points were important to their club.

Most USCs thought points were important to their university in some way, with many saying that their university directly links winning BUCS points to club funding, and several more saying they thought they would receive more support from their university if they won BUCS points.



"Our club consistently earns a high number of BUCS points for our university, and so the university funds our bucs events more than some others clubs in [our university]... if we were to underperform, I can imagine we would have a reduced amount of funding."

"BUCS points are important to the club and often seen as a incentive by members to do well. However, our university offers no reward or penalty in regards to BUCS points."

"The amount of points we get directly impacts the amount of financial support we receive from the university."

"Yes, BUCS points are important but not necessarily the most important. We would prefer quality racing over BUCS points allocation."



Key Points:

- Most clubs ranked BUCS points as important, with many clubs saying it impacted their funding.
- Some clubs were penalised through reduced support and funding for not winning BUCS points.

Club Goals (2020-21)

Club goals fit into three main themes, **members**, **activities**, and **operations**. Within each theme, the most common goals were *'improve participation in specific disciplines'*, *'maintain or increase membership numbers'*, *'improve BUCS performance'*, and *'buy, sell or save for new boats'*.

While many goals are similar to previous years (such as increasing membership, gaining funding and buying boats), the new inclusion of goals around being an inclusive club and having a welcoming atmosphere reflects positive attitudes towards diversity and inclusion.

MEMBERS	ACTIVITIES	OPERATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain & increase membership • Improve active participation • Engage alumni • Foster & maintain a positive club atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an event • Offer more activities (general) • Improve provision & participation in specific disciplines • Improve non-BUCS performance • Maintain & improve BUCS performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Buy, sell or save for boats • Fix or upgrade boats • Club structure & support

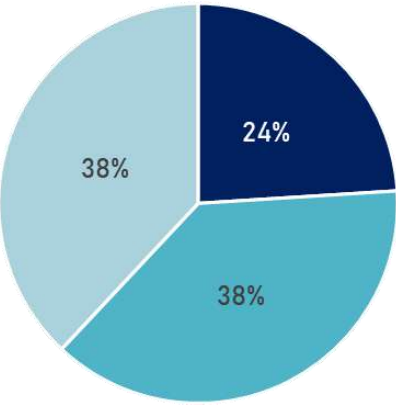
Clubs were also asked if they achieved their goals in 2019-20. Most clubs responded that they either achieved, or were on track to achieve, their goals but were interrupted by COVID-19.



Key Points:

- Goals fit into three themes, *members*, *club activities*, and *club operations*.
- The most common goals were around increasing membership and participation.

Development Challenges



- Established development plan
- New development plan
- No development plan

62% of USCs had a development plan (or equivalent).



Most clubs had a formal development plan. Challenges in applying development plans varied between clubs. The most common themes were funding and low membership, followed by committee continuity and long-term planning.

These challenges suggest that clubs would benefit from extra BUSA guidance, especially with regards to supporting new committees and longer-term club development. Some resources that committees may find useful can be found at <https://busa.co.uk/development/busa-and-development> and advice can always be sought from Area Chairs or Area Development Officers.

Challenge 1

RESOURCES

- Time
- Transport
- Funding
- Equipment

Challenge 2

MEMBERS

- Low Membership
- Participation
- Perceptions of Sailing
- Experience/Qualifications

Challenge 3

COMMITTEE

- Continuity
- Priorities
- Communication
- Long-term Planning
- University Support

Key Points:

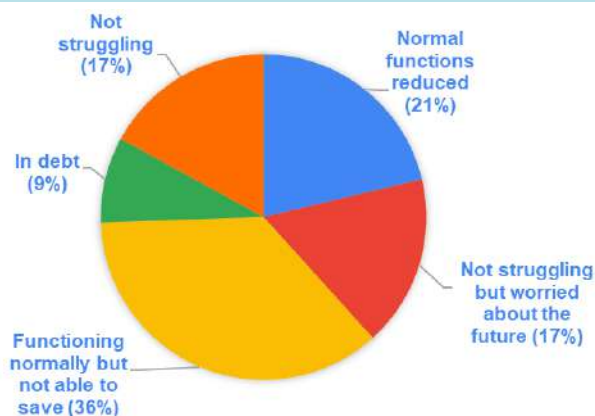
- 62% of clubs had a formal development plan.
- Most development challenges were either resource, member or committee based.

Financial Circumstances

When asked about their financial circumstances, a majority of clubs said they were either currently struggling financially, or were worried about the future.

Answers fit into three themes:

- Unreliable funding streams
- Club priorities
- Different perceptions of struggling



Unreliable Funding Streams	Club Priorities	Perception of struggling
Multiple sources	Boat replacement	Operating vs progressing
Unreliable long term funding	Event entries	Short and long term goals
Membership money fluctuates annually		Varied knowledge base
Accessibility to all students		

PERCEPTION OF STRUGGLING

Clubs have different perceptions of struggling.

Most clubs indicated they were financially struggling in some way. However, definitions of included being actively in debt, having to reduce offered activities, being unable to save for the future. Compared to the 2018-19 survey, more clubs in the 2019-20 survey indicated they were not currently struggling financially, but were worried for the future.

FUNDING COMPLEXITIES

Few clubs have a stable funding stream.

Most universities rely on multiple-sources of funding. One main source of funding for many clubs is grant funding from their university, but this is largely targeted to events where good performance benefits the university. Many clubs rely on running an event and membership income another main income source. With the current COVID-19 situation, it is unclear how these income streams will be affected in 2020-21.

CLUB PRIORITIES

Short term vs long term priorities.

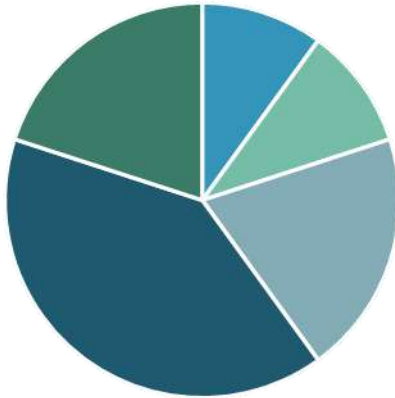
Pretty much every club sees progress as a new flight of boats which actually is a huge goal and for most, unattainable. Clubs should look to set up a good boat repair/long term replacement plan to reduce short to mid term costs. Other short term priorities included immediate costs such as event entries and memberships.

Key Points:

- Most clubs ranked themselves as struggling financially, or being worried about the future.
- Clubs have different perceptions of struggling and different financial priorities.

Sailability Provision

Regional spread of student sailors with disabilities



■ East ■ Scotland ■ North ■ Midlands ■ South-Central

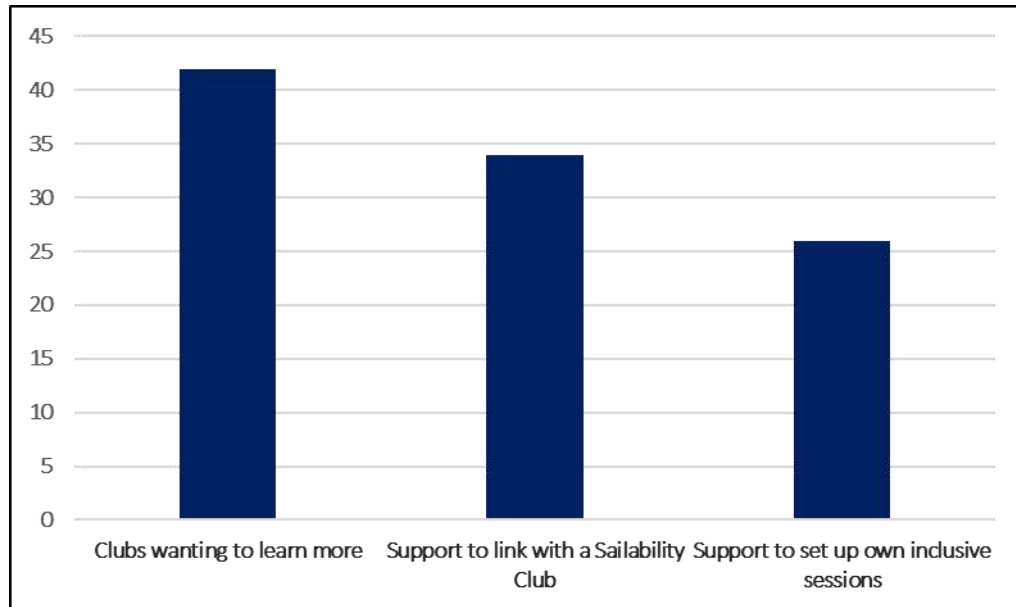
Although numbers of sailors per club were fairly low last year, 5 out of our 6 BUSA regions had clubs with active student members identifying as having a disability.

Over the next year, we hope to help more of our clubs offer sailing for all students and also increase the number of BUSA opportunities.



CLUBS INTERESTED IN ENGAGING WITH A SAILABILITY PARTNERSHIP

- **42** out of our 45 clubs wanted to learn more about our newest partnership with RYA Sailability.
- **34** clubs either had an existing link with a Sailability Club or were interested in creating one.
- **26** clubs (over half) expressed interest in running their own inclusive sessions next year.



Key Points:

- Few clubs currently have disabled members, however over half were interested in running sessions.
- Most clubs were interested in learning more about the RYA Sailability partnership with BUSA.



BUSA Club Development Survey 19/20

Key Contacts (2020-21):

Iona Smith (BUSA Development Officer)
Emily Hill (Scottish Area Chair)
Pippa Cropley (Northern Area Chair)
Kate Ledgard (Midlands Area Chair)
Jessica Harman (South-Central Area Chair)
William Cuncliffe (Western Area Chair)
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