

Kerry's 2017 VP Project

“Round and Round the Mulberry Bush”

Historian R. S. Duncan, former governor of England's Wakefield Prison, says the **song** originated with the 420-year-old institution's female prisoners, who were exercised around a **mulberry** tree.



Member research debrief May 2017

Total # of members participating in VP research: 56*

(*72 people in total were consulted with 56 ultimately contributing. Findings have also been supplemented by circa 50 Clubbiness workshop participants)

Background Context from Kerry

Dear fellow Wacler

This is the monster 'work in progress' debrief of my VP project that Merry Baskin and I have been working on together, and which was delivered to the Executive Committee for consideration on 2 May 2017.

We'd now very much like to share it with you.

Please don't be too alarmed at its size – it's a pretty readable story so you should crack through it in under an hour. We have included some of the outcomes from the two recent Clubbiness sessions because they are so relevant and pertinent to the VP project. And what do we want from YOU, dear reader? There is room at the end of this deck for your immediate thoughts, comments, and feedback which we would love to garner.

Once you've had a chance to read and comment, we will be inviting you to participate in an All Member Survey, to give quantifiable guidance to some of the changes to aspects of the Club that may be proposed. However, one key recommendation relating to WACL's purpose will be made at the AGM, which we hope to ratify later in the year once you have had a chance to consider it.

It is important to say right now that I am truly indebted to Merry, who has given this project a depth and rigour it would never have had without her, and to Jan Gooding who has shared her Clubbiness Committee's great work and provided immense momentum behind the findings of both initiatives.

Happy reading. Kerry

WACL

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What this deck covers

- **Why** the VP project objectives evolved – and **how**
- The (unchanging) list of member's issues:
 1. Defining the Club's purpose
 2. Adding a WACL Voice (to that purpose)
 3. Valued benefits of membership: deriving value in different ways
 4. Issues surrounding charity fundraising
 5. Concerns about the size of the Club's membership
 6. Role and purpose of Associate members
 7. Introducing and inducting new members
 8. Engagement with and contributing to the Club: "3 event rule"
 9. "Cliques-ness" within the Club
 10. Recruitment to Exec and Sub-Committees
- Conclusions or implications for each issue
- Appendices

2017 Methodology/Sample

4 x group discussions (32 folk) recruited/conducted in March 2017:

- *“New” Full Members, (past 4 years), not yet sat on any committee*
- *Full Members, any tenure, sat on sub-committees but NOT the Executive Committee*
- *Full Members (over 4 years) who have never sat on a sub-committee or the Executive Committee*
- *Honorary Members, Past Presidents, Previous (NOT current) Members of the Executive Committee, Associate Members.*

PLUS 24 X Online ‘consultation’ questionnaires completed by Club volunteers and the Executive Committee during April 2017, to expand upon group findings

Kerry's Initial VP Project Objectives:

- To review the process for how members are elected to serve on the Executive Committee and consider whether there are any improvements that could be made
- To give clarity as to what it means to serve on the Executive Committee, what is expected of the elected member, and the duration of that responsibility
- To review the process for forming the sub-committees to the Executive Committee, in order to not only meet the needs of the sub-committee chair, but to also ensure that the process of forming them is inclusive
- (Bearing in mind that findings would feed into Kerry's planned Presidential agenda of Fit for Purpose @100)

Why the VP Objectives Evolved:

- They were hijacked in the groups, from the get-go...
- What we wanted to talk about was not what they wanted to talk about
- It was less about how the Exec runs the club (and copes with its growing size and increasing fundraising), and more about why we do what we do in the first place
- We also learned pretty quickly that we have been here before....many times!



A chart from 13 years ago: only one item in this list did not come up in 2017

When WACL does not live up to expectations:

- Difficult for newer members (under 5 years) to 'break in'
- Criticisms of cliques
- Perception of a tiered system of membership
- Feeling that the club does not accommodate or facilitate changes in member working status
- The language and attitudes of the club can seem agency focussed
- The charity emphasis can overwhelm the true purpose of the club
- Criteria for club membership unclear and can appear subjective
- Some feel the club recruits the job title not the person
- Despite previous studies results re club role and objectives, findings not felt to be applied
- Too few opportunities to network
- While there are many great things about the club there is an underlying feeling that it needs:
 - to evolve
 - to embrace the new needs of the broader membership
 - to become more professional as a club itself

Why the VP Objectives Evolved:

“It’s impossible to answer these questions without agreeing about what we’re here for. There is no right answer to that question. What is our purpose? I’m serious”

“(A group of us were asked) to look at the Club and how to make it more inclusive, we worked hard and nothing happened”

“I remember that it was about a PR initiative, in response to the fact that WACL was never asked to comment on issues to do with women, marketing etc. I have no idea what happened to it, as nothing did seem to happen afterwards”



Other Club Initiatives We Referenced

- Member qual research done by Wendy Gordon in 1997
- Dame Carolyn McCall's VP project on membership issues in 2001/2 (members' evening: 26; questionnaire: 55 = to two thirds of Club)
- Helen Calcraft's 3 Dinner Rule/Engagement project in 2004/5 (qual: 20 telecons, then 55 questionnaires)
- Debbie Klein's raising WACL profile discussions, May 2005
- Elizabeth Fagan's Purpose quant membership survey, Sept 2009
- Lindsey Clay's 2016 membership survey findings on speaking up and 30% initiative – 93 responses
- Jan Gooding's 2 x 'Clubbiness' workshops 2017 - c.50 participants (small member overlap with Kerry's VP project)

There may be more!

Whither WACL? Fundamentals: Purpose, Voice and Structure

- We all agree that there is still, a century on, a need for an all-female club to exist in our industry
- Gender (in)equality has stuck at 25% senior women – in spite of evidence that greater gender diversity on senior executive teams boosts performance
- Until that changes to 50/50, we have much work to do
- Is WACL doing enough to address this? i.e. Should we be actively *campaigning* rather than more passively *influencing* – what are we all comfortable with?

A rising tide of members want us to do more

But are we aligned?

WACL also has internal issues

- Logistically, everything our members do to help run the Club is voluntary. And usually on top of a big day job. It's a big ask of a few, as we keep growing
- Emotionally, the polarity/gap between fully engaged and committed members, and passive, inactive, less engaged ones, appears to be an ongoing issue. We saw passion, frustration, guilt and awe
- Misperceptions and urban mythology continue to abound about various Club constructs (new member acquisition, participation rules, "cliqueyness" etc)

(Financially, however, we're in good shape!)

Time to Get our Act Together?

- Various (myriad?) Club projects and initiatives over the past decade have made **small incremental improvements in some areas and/or subsequently just spluttered away and died**
- Members clearly do need to be organised (good stuff like the Postcode Parties initiative die away unless someone keeps reminding members that it's still a WACL thing)
- Logistically/physically, given its size, the Club needs to restructure if it is to survive a second successful century without 'breaking'

It is time to grasp the nettle to make some fundamental, enduring 'fit for purpose' changes to the Club as we go into C2

A big hint from the Lindsey's last slide from 2016 AGM

For future discussion/consideration

- Aligning with others in the industry who experience inequality due to ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability
- Using member events to discuss the direction and aims of the club
- 3 dinner rule/international members/contributing to the club
- Working to ensure everyone feels “valuable”
- Supporting members as well as younger women
- How big should the club get?
- How should we engage with men?
- Selection process for the VP and election of the exec

Which means...

This is more than a one year, one-off, VP project.

We need a mandate to pass the baton, from President to President, until the task is done.



(Unanimously agreed by the Exec on 2.5.17)

We've Identified 10 Nettles to Grab

1. Defining the Club's purpose
2. Adding a WACL Voice (to that purpose)
3. Valued benefits of membership: different people derive value in different ways
4. Issues surrounding charity fundraising
5. Concerns about membership size/growth
6. Role and purpose of Associate members
7. Introducing and inducting new members
8. Engagement with, and contributing to, the Club: "3 event rule"
9. "Cliques-ness"
10. Recruitment to, and roles of, the Executive and Sub-Committees



There was also an 11th Nettle.....

11. To make the Club more digitally proficient e.g. using Eventbrite for dinner and event bookings or sharing more information between ourselves on social media.

Rest assured, this one is being grasped as you read this document



1. What is the Club's Purpose?

- A reminder of our current purpose:

WACL is a network of the most influential women in advertising, marketing, media and communications business. It is a supportive and spirited group of individuals who meet to enable women in our industry to reach their potential and retain senior positions.

(WACL Constitution – originally 1923 but last minor revision was July 16)



Or as Lindsey Clay puts it:

Why do we exist? (or What is our purpose?)

...To enable women in our industry to reach their potential. AND to encourage greater numbers of women to get to and stay in senior positions.

“Firstly, how wishy washy!

Secondly, to add insult to injury, we have not 1 but 2 wishy washy purposes. We can't even be single-minded about our wishy washy-ness. It sounds like a cross between a slogan for a primary school and a self-help group for unambitious women who are in danger of being fired at any moment”.

(Source: Clubbiness session 27.4.17)

Club Purpose: What did our groups say? (1)

“I think it's confused. It seems to fulfill two functions: a) a ‘gentle’ networking opportunity for senior women so they can get support, advice and simply get to know other women in similar positions. b) to champion women in the industry, using the influence of senior women to help those still working their way up And then there's the whole raising money for charity thing....which I DON'T think is part of its core purpose”

“What’s the North Star we are all heading towards?”

“To provide senior women with a support network for their roles in organisations (which often still have male dominated boards). Also to provide a platform for members to encourage younger women in the industry to be as good as they possibly can be”

“Networking, fundraising, and influencing the industry on issues affecting women at all stages of their careers. Also helping women get to and stay and the top and inspiring younger women. Hmm. Clearly this needs simplifying or re-expressing at the very least”

“The potency and potential of this group is so under-leveraged”

Club Purpose: What did our groups say? (2)

“A club for senior women in advertising, communications and marketing to network effectively, enjoy stimulating speaker dinners and to support women in the industry with their careers (and balancing that with family / home life too). Only more clearly and succinctly expressed than this!”

“If I looked at WACL as my client, at the top you haven’t written your goals and purpose well, you haven’t written your strategy to achieve that purpose. You haven’t written the 5 principles of our framework. Every year you might define the voice (of those principles). This year we’re discussing maternity leave, next year it’s discussing why women don’t want to get to the top of the business”

“For me, it’s less about the numbers. I keep coming back to “What’s the purpose?” If it is to give a leg up to as many women as possible, then the number should grow. If it’s about having an exclusive voice, it’s different. If it’s about leading a broader community, the numbers need to remain small. If it’s about inclusivity and building that sense of community, then it needs to grow”

Club Purpose: What did our groups say? (3)

“It comes back to what our purpose is. If it’s about networking, should we be creating events where we’re encouraging members to network? If the second purpose is community and training, how can we do that? What sort of events should those be? Should we focus on making those the most effective they can be?”

“I agree that our internal purpose is networking and our external purpose is to campaign for the benefit of women. We should do that until we feel that we have equal opportunities, and we should no longer be a gender-specific club”

“To use the energy and potency of senior women to create change in the world”

“Empower women is what we are here to do”

“We drive a behaviour (speaker dinner attendance) that doesn’t drive the purpose (networking)”

“...We don’t get to the end of each AGM and think, ‘We’ve made a difference to women in this country and business”

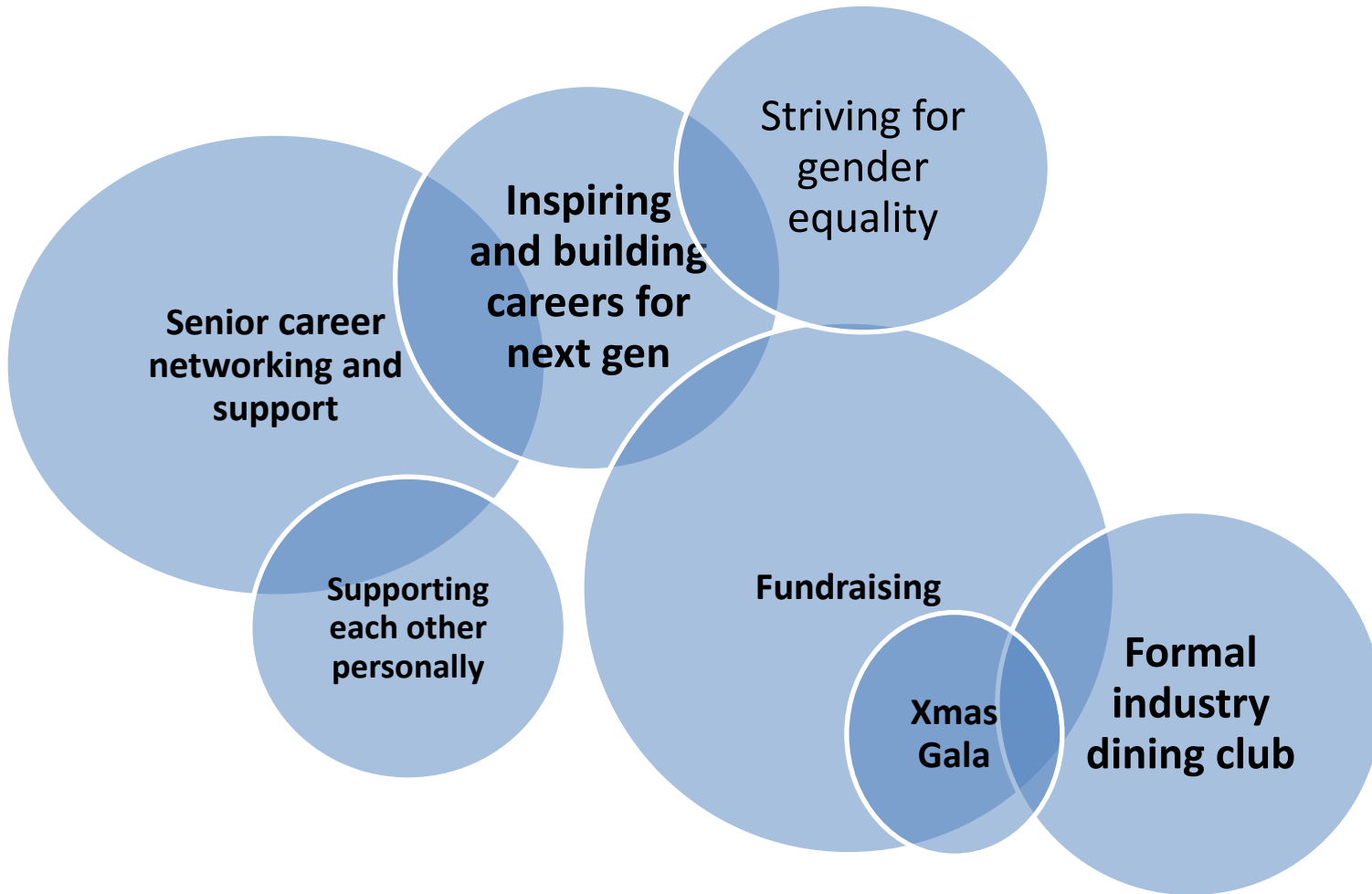
What is the Club's purpose?

(according to the 24 respondents who responded to the post-group mini survey)

- (9 said they did not know!)
- 1. Help/support senior women in our industry realise their potential/get to top and stay there
- 2. Inspiring and encouraging younger women
- 3. Networking
- 4. Fundraising for NABS and other good causes
- 5. Advancing the role of women in leadership and creativity by removing barriers
- 6. Provide a voice on gender equality
- 7. Enjoy stimulating speaker dinners

It's quite a broad list....

Too many lily pads on the pond (i.e. discrete, slightly overlapping roles) for the CLUB to be effective?



**...the membership has been saying
the same sort of things in most of
the consultations for a while now**



Clubbiness Session on ‘ if WACL could do one thing’ – April 2017

- In the Club’s past, evangelism, being vocal about the role of women in the industry, banging the feminist drum was, in certain quarters, frowned upon
- Now we are seeing a rising tide of feminism in the Club and a desire to be more active in the pursuit of gender equality
- Speak Up has been a great start – but it is not enough – to achieve anything we need deeds, not just words
 - Zoe Harris’s brilliant idea: 100 deeds done against our purpose by our 100th anniversary

If not now - when? And if not us – who?

Clubbiness session on what the Club does - Feb 2017

“There was clear endorsement to continue with those activities that are the mainstay of the Club, viz a Club for senior women (that speaks up, doesn’t take itself too seriously, and that also invites men); that provides members with a support network (through social activities), career development opportunities (through NED events, guest speakers, links with other women’s groups, formal dinners); and that provides education and mentoring for younger women (through Gather and Gatherings, FLA)”

(First Clubbiness session Feb 2017, write up by Marilyn Baxter)

What about in 2009?

wac!

What we will be sharing with you this evening

1

Overall satisfaction amongst your members is high : there is a clear sense of pride in being part of the organisation. The support wac! provides is hugely valuable

2

Internal awareness of your activities is mixed : in particular more could be done to integrate your new members

3

There is a strong feeling you could be doing more for up and coming women in the industry

4

External awareness of what you stand for and what you do is low : there is a huge need to raise your profile if you are to fully bring to life your mission

5

Ambiguity and an image of 'Cliques-ness' is impacting negatively on brand perceptions both internally and externally : openness should be a key focus moving forward

6

There is a huge opportunity to modernise your image to reflect the fast-paced, contemporary communications industry you operate in



What were we discussing in 2005?

“The fact is that people really want to DO something as WACL and to stand for something out there. There was definitely a feeling that this is the one element that is lacking from the Club today.

The only thing we really do which is external facing and is about women in our business is the Forum.

There seems to be a hunger (certainly amongst newer members) for the Club to provide something more than just events and a network.

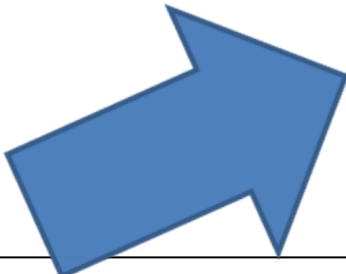
A certain disappointment for newer members is that they expected there would be 'an agenda' on issues and there isn't one”.

(Meeting notes from May 2005)

What did we say in 2004?

Prior to joining most did not have a clear idea of what the club was for

- Focus on advertising and communications
- Role for clients more blurred
- Four distinct views:
 - ① Networking for Senior Women
 - ② Dining club for women
 - ③ Signal you are now part of the elite
 - ④ Charity fundraising group
- Perceptions of the club also varied greatly
 - Knitting circle
 - Girly
 - Light not serious
 - Serious
 - Opinion forming
 - Problem solving
 - Supporting women in business
- For most, the club did not have a clear identity



Homogeneous understanding of the club's purpose does not appear to exist

What did we say about Purpose in 2002?

wacl

women in advertising and communications london

Why we exist

- To balance the male informal network at work
- To enable women to achieve their potential
- To encourage greater numbers of senior women to get to / stay at the top
- To support women in all stages of their career (to reach outside the membership)
- To be active - not just about attending dinners

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Conclusion AND Implication

An overweening priority to clearly define the Club's Purpose, get everyone on board, and then deliver against it

(And can we agree on some KPI's?)

What is our “Purposeful” idea?

(Or might we say if we were starting the Club from scratch today)

Some starters for 10



Cilla Snowball: What might it be?

I think our purpose should be to lead, support and grow the senior female talent in the industry. We should have some targets and a strategy to get there. When we get to 50/50 m/f, we can take stock again about our role and remit. We have a mountain to climb. We need to boost the pipeline. Creative leadership and management leadership should be our focus.

All the best stuff we do now celebrates, supports and grows women and we lead by example. FL, Gather and workshops do this best because they are next gen focused. We can celebrate the achievements of the lucky ones like us who have made it, sure, but our priority has to be boosting the ranks not self applause

Lyndy Payne's Revised Purpose

WACL is a not for profit organisation and exists to assist women within the communications media industry to embrace growth, change, and the development of its members. This is enabled through leadership opportunities, career development programmes and networking opportunities.

WACL raises huge amounts to money annually for two charitable causes – firstly, the industry's own charity NABS and secondly a charity nominated by the President. WACL plays a purpose for every female within the communications industry – by offering bursaries for training to assisting older members with a solution to 'what is next?' An all round membership club to give women the best support possible at every stage of her career.

Ali Large's Revised Purpose

WACL has a pioneering DNA and works tirelessly for all professional women in the Media and Communication industries, who seek to make a difference and influence for good.

It is a non-for profit club that is inclusive, enabling, confronts prejudices, has a strong social purpose, is modern in outlook and optimises talent in whatever form that might take across all ages and cultures

Lindsey Clay's Starters for 10

What about:

WACL is the advertising women's network. Our aim is to end gender inequality in the communications industry

Or something focused on young women...

WACL is a women's network of current advertising leaders who exist to remove the barriers to success for future generations of female leaders.

Or expressed as vision and mission...

*WACL is a network of female communication leaders.
Our vision is for an equal communications industry.
Our mission is to remove the barriers to inequality.*

Things to discuss re Club's Purpose

- Campaigning not influencing
- Club membership strategy, size and structure
- Fundraising – objectives and strategy
- Member activities – formal and informal events, special interests

We need to move on this!



ONLY 9 MORE NETTLES TO GO!

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2. Having a WACL Voice

- Hand in hand with the Club's Purpose – if we have a clear Purpose, we need a voice!



Voice: What did our groups say?

“One of the things that makes it difficult is that where the President changes every year, it becomes a personal voice very often. It’s a personal Presidential voice rather than a WACL one”

“There’s a finger-waggy tone to the Club sometimes. The tone of replies if you ask a question”

“We should use our funds for our agenda – be a voice for and behalf of women”

“If we are going to take this to the next level, is there a central Exec group that goes out and finds and creates opportunity for this group of women to stand up on a platform and talk about what WACL brings to its members and its agenda, continues the diversity conversation, and the mentoring, and all the other things that are important to us. Where is the PR engine for this organisation?”

“Who are the outside audiences? Some thought needs to be put into a PR strategy with that. If we make sure we have someone who is expert in comms... they could really work that. It’s such an important point. We want to be relevant in the right places”

“If there is concern for our outside reputation, we have to be very clear about what the messages are”

Voice Questionnaire – results

Having a WACL ‘voice’: In the spirit of our recent ‘speak up’ theme, do you think WACL should have a consistent industry voice which is linked to our purpose? e.g. “A WACL spokeswoman said....”

Yes: 21

No: 2

Don’t know/Not sure: 1

Pretty unanimous amongst these members

Clubbiness session feedback - Feb 2017)

What we should start doing:

- *Being more vocal and engaged in the current debate, moving towards the Club being a catalyst for change on gender equality*
- *Having a Club agenda for activism, with more debate, conversations and workshops to discuss issues, perhaps pursued through special interest groups within the Club (for example lobbying groups on pay differentials, parental rights, flexible/agile working etc),*
- *More reaching out by partnering with other organisations and Clubs (IPA, MS, ISBA, 3% Club, 30 Club, etc)*

(Marilyn Baxter write-up)

What about 2016? Drum-gate!

Opinion: Stephen Lepitak



Stephen Lepitak

A blog from The Drum's editor, Stephen Lepitak, covering reaction to events in media, social marketing, advertising and communications in general.

An Open Letter to WACL - Prove your worth


Opinion: Lindsey Clay

Speaking up for WACL – a response to The Drum's open letter

Lindsey Clay
06 October 2015 12:41pm

0 Comments

As president of WACL, my theme for the year is speak up; to inspire others, to challenge and change, and to celebrate and praise. There has certainly been no shortage of WACL members speaking up in the last 24 hours.



In yesterday's blog 'An open letter to WACL - Prove your worth', The Drum's editor Stephen Lepitak posed a couple of legitimate challenges for the WACL membership.

First, how do you foster a spirit of inclusion when your very existence as an exclusive, elite group will have a tendency to alienate those outside it?

Great response @LindseyClay - would be interested what the response from @thedrum or Stephen Lepitak is

andyvokes @LindseyClay @thedrum I feel the obvious response is that Stephen wanted to start the debate. He wrote an opinion piece NOT an editorial. Huge difference and one that has been missed by Kils.

karlnew @norman-hayden @TheDrum @WACL1 great response from a great woman @LindseyClay

ColleyWander @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 excellently written as always Lindsey

LindseyClay @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 How kind. Thank you.

twiffy @twiffy @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 Now you know I love you both more than life itself and I don't need the questions as before. Good Go and great As

tesalpa @tesalpa @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 Forget the long dinners they achieve very little other than self congratulation and external quest for status. Etc etc

twiffy @twiffy @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 Not bizarre. Mean-spirited perhaps.

twiffy @twiffy @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 look forward then to @StephenLepitak & others quietly retorting WACEE, 30

SCMLJ @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 I've just read Stephen's letter, Lindsey's reply and the string of comments below - and I read with eager anticipation to see where and how Stephen is going to reply. There is no point writing such an emotive article without being ready to respond to the subsequent criticism. I like your letter, and as a member of WACL, but have been to their events and felt included, motivated and encouraged about the future. I have seen the 'right to be heard' members of WACL - above others have created the right to be heard network (technology) which has meant sure that there is plenty of discussion about how the industry needs men and women working together to be successful. So come on Stephen where's the reply?

Ernyne @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 Dear Stephen I would 'defy' you in return to base your opinions on first hand experience rather than interpretation of others' interpretations. To anyone who is a WACL member, to anyone who has attended a WACL event, or indeed to anyone who has benefited directly or indirectly from any number of the conferences, supportive events, programs & initiatives that we run. There is very little in there which rings true. Other than the need for more to be done generally to continue to evolve our industry & tackle the diversity problems that we have.

On which note - how about inviting more women to comment / share their views proactively at #drum?

Best regards, Jo

Sally Pepper @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 I completely disagree with this view point. I have had tremendous support from a number of WACL members over the last couple of years and we also been lucky enough to have attended a couple of WACL events - truly inspirational and motivating. The passion and dedication of all WACL members is extraordinary and it really does inspire to read this.

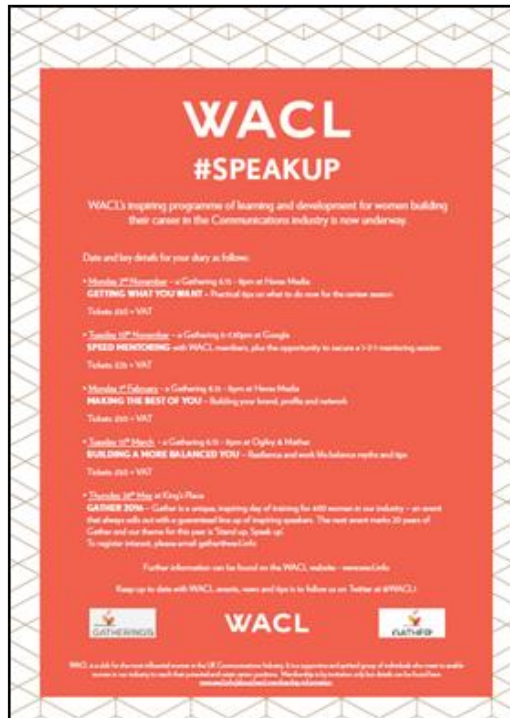
BOB @LindseyClay @TheDrum @WACL1 Now I am very shocked by this article. As a client who attended WACL events, I was so impressed and inspired by the club. When I joined it then exceeded my expectations. I have met a whole host of amazing women who are role models as well as colleagues. I am not being and working abroad but still remain a full member as I feel the value of WACL. I now question the integrity of this website if its editor can write an open letter that is so clearly wrong and badly researched. What other inaccuracies are written in The Drum articles?



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Opportunity from adversity



WACL
#SPEAKUP



WACL's inspiring programme of learning and development for women building their career in the Communications Industry is now underway.

Date and key details for your diary as follows:

- Monday 27th November - a Gathering 4.0 - Open at Home Media
GETTING WHAT YOU WANT - Practical tips on what to do now for the career season
Tickets: £10 + VAT
- Tuesday 19th November - a Gathering 4.0 Open at Google
SPEED MENTORING with WACL members, plus the opportunity to receive a 1:1 mentoring session
Tickets: £10 + VAT
- Monday 27th February - a Gathering 4.0 - Open at Home Media
MAKING THE BEST OF YOU - Building your brand, profile and network
Tickets: £10 + VAT
- Tuesday 19th March - a Gathering 4.0 - Open at Ogilvy & Mather
BUILDING A MORE BALANCED YOU - Balance and work/life balance myths and tips
Tickets: £10 + VAT
- Thursday 14th May at King's Place
CAREER SHOW - Career is a serious, inspiring day of training for 400 women in our industry - an event that always sells out with no government line up of inspiring speakers. The next event makes 20 years of Gatherings and our theme for this year is 'Stretch, Speak Up'.
To register please email gatherings@wacld.com

Further information can be found on the WACL website - www.wacld.com

Keep up to date with WACL events, news and tips to be follow us on Twitter at @WACL1

 **WACL** 

WACL is a not-for-profit organisation in the UK Communications Industry. It is a registered and limited company of individual who meet to create a network in our industry to reach their personal and professional goals. What makes it a member of the not-for-profit industry is that it is not for profit and its purpose is to support women in our industry to reach their personal and professional goals. What makes it a member of the not-for-profit industry is that it is not for profit and its purpose is to support women in our industry to reach their personal and professional goals.

WOMEN IN ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS LONDON

WACL is a wonderful club for the most influential women in the UK Communications Industry. Established in 1923 by a handful of pioneering women, WACL members have since met to network, inspire, support each other and have a lot of fun in the process. Our members represent many of the most senior women in client organisations, media owners, advertising and media agencies. Activities include:

- Prestigious speaker dinners for members and their guests.
- Members' events such as: House of Commons advertising debate, talks for aspiring NEDs.
- Charity fundraising: £1.35M raised in 10 years. 2015-16 charities are NABS & Breast Cancer Now.
- The Future Leaders' Award: training bursaries for young women.
- Gather and Gatherings: inspirational events to help develop female talent.
- Influencing: on issues affecting women at all stages of their careers.



WACL's single sex status:

We make no apology at WACL for being a single sex club because, sadly, women are still a long way from achieving equality in our industry. Even though women make up 57% of staff at entry level, they still only make up 25% of the most senior positions (even less in senior creative positions) and do not have equal pay. On top of this women are poorly represented at industry events and in the trade media. So, as long as this continues to be the case, WACL will play a vital role in the following areas:

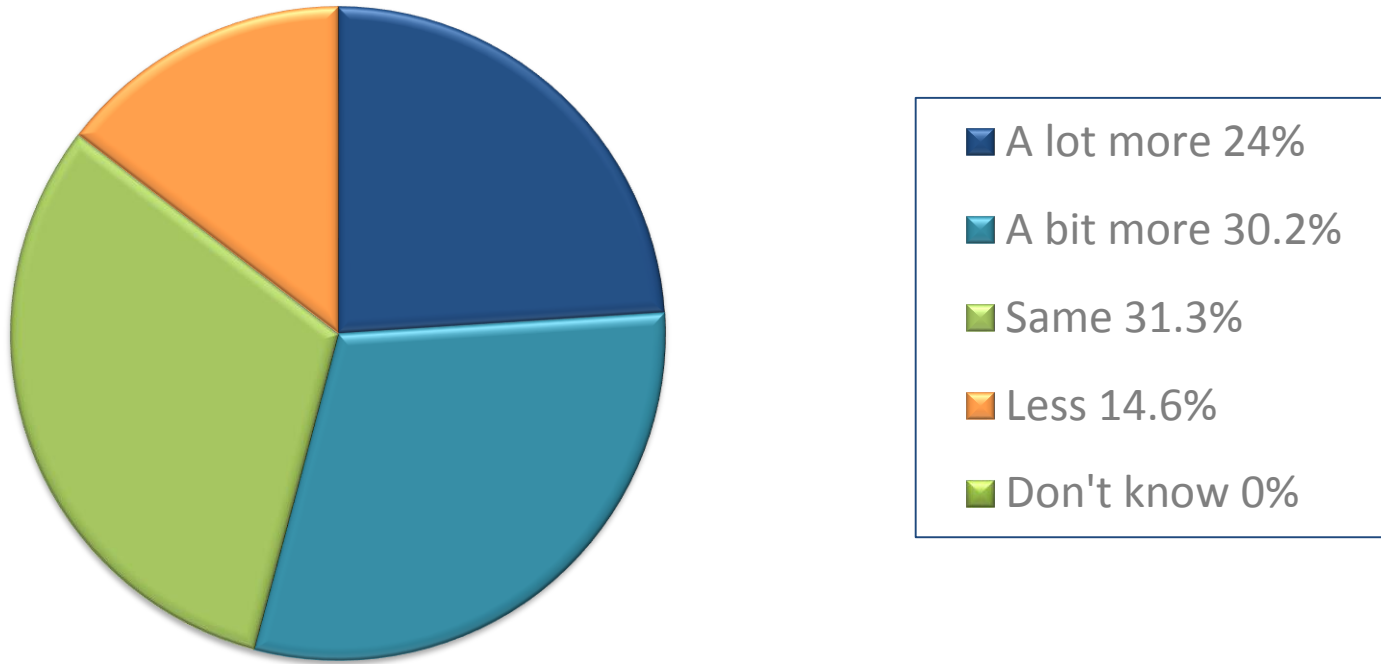
1. Providing an important source of networking and support for senior women
2. Running a programme of inspiration and training initiatives to help remove the barriers to success for up and coming women
3. Acting as a critical friend to the industry on issues of gender (and diversity) to help change it for the better.
4. Fundraising for NABS to benefit men and women across the industry.

At WACL we look forward to the day when women achieve equality. At that point it may be appropriate to review our single sex status.

WACL

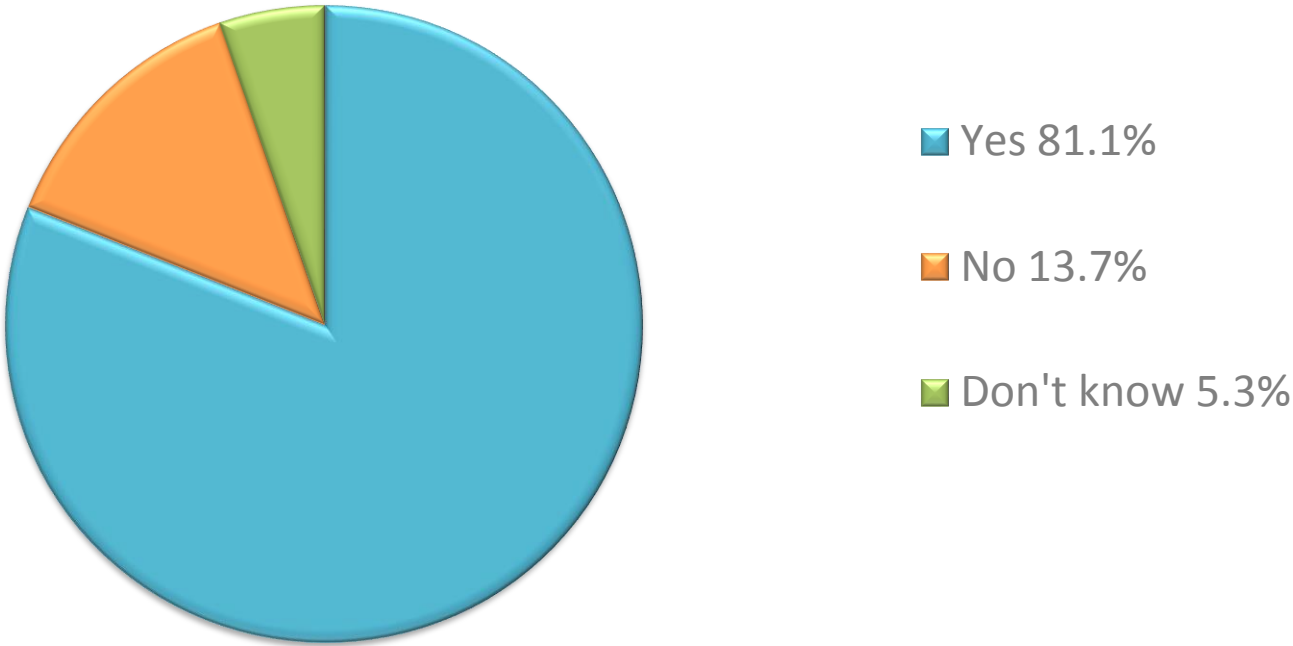
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In 2016 we asked the Club... Have you spoken up more?



Source: WACL members' research 2016

In 2016 we asked the Club...
Have you done anything more to encourage other women to speak up?



Source: WACL members' research 2016

What about Public Profile 2009?



4 Many people think wacI needs to raise its profile

48%

Think we
need to raise
our profile



The highest level of agreement from
members of all initiatives they'd like to see
us implement

In order to really live and
breathe the mission and
values it is critical that you
celebrate, and shout about,
what you do to the
listening public



What were we discussing in 2005?

“The objective is to position WACL as an authority in women in business and thereby to gradually perpetuate the notion that 'women are good for business'.

This is something which we kick off now but it becomes an ongoing part of WACL's agenda and the president of the day chooses which issues she wants to champion. In other words, it is not a one off project.

This may sit uncomfortably with some members who do not want to take a stand or stick their head above the parapet on 'women's issues'.

However, the feeling was that this was not about feminism, or whingeing stories but rather a constructive, positive take on the contribution women make to business that we can champion”

What did we say about Having a Voice in 2002?

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What issues we should be involved in

- Influencing (not campaigning) certain issues in our industry and beyond was felt to be appropriate by all
- Concentrate on issues in our world (e.g women in creative) and take ownership of them
- Broader working women's issues via CBI, IOD – specifically professional women's issues – are of secondary importance

Conclusions on 'Having an external Voice' or WACL Spokeswoman

- It appears we should have one
- It makes sense to intrinsically link it to our discussions on the Club's Purpose
- The nature of the Voice – campaigning or influencing – needs to be agreed
- The external Voice managed via the Exec
 - we do not need a PR Agency
 - it would be inauthentic
- We should allow for different voices *internally*



3. Valued Benefits of Membership

- Externally, there is what we do and why we do it
- Internally, there is how we get to know and look after each other
- Various manifestations of this
 - Like LinkedIn – names, contacts, biogs, messaging
 - Doing business together
 - Getting to know other women in my peer group
 - Sounding board/advice on career issues
 - Peer to peer mentoring e.g. NED group
 - Nurturing mutually supportive friendships
 - Giving something back to the industry
 - Being part of an elite/I've made it

Benefits: What did our groups say? (1)

“If it’s about networking, should we be creating events where we’re encouraging members to network? If the second purpose is community and training, how can we do that? What sort of events should those be?”

“It’s the human-ness that we like about WACL”

“Of all the clubs I belong to, I feel WACL is the most supportive. It’s because there is a community I can go to”

“For newer members, there is a sense of clique and ‘how do I get into the clique?’”

“When people talk about cliquy, I think it’s because some people think, ‘I’m in the A list, you’re not’. I don’t think it’s ‘I’ll only talk to the people I know’. I think it’s more professional than that”

“My clients used to love the dinners”

“I find the dinners really great for client hospitality. It’s that constituency. You pick your clients for different speaker people.”

Benefits: What did our groups say? (2)

“I’m jealous (of the audience for) Gather and Gatherings - I want them for me!”

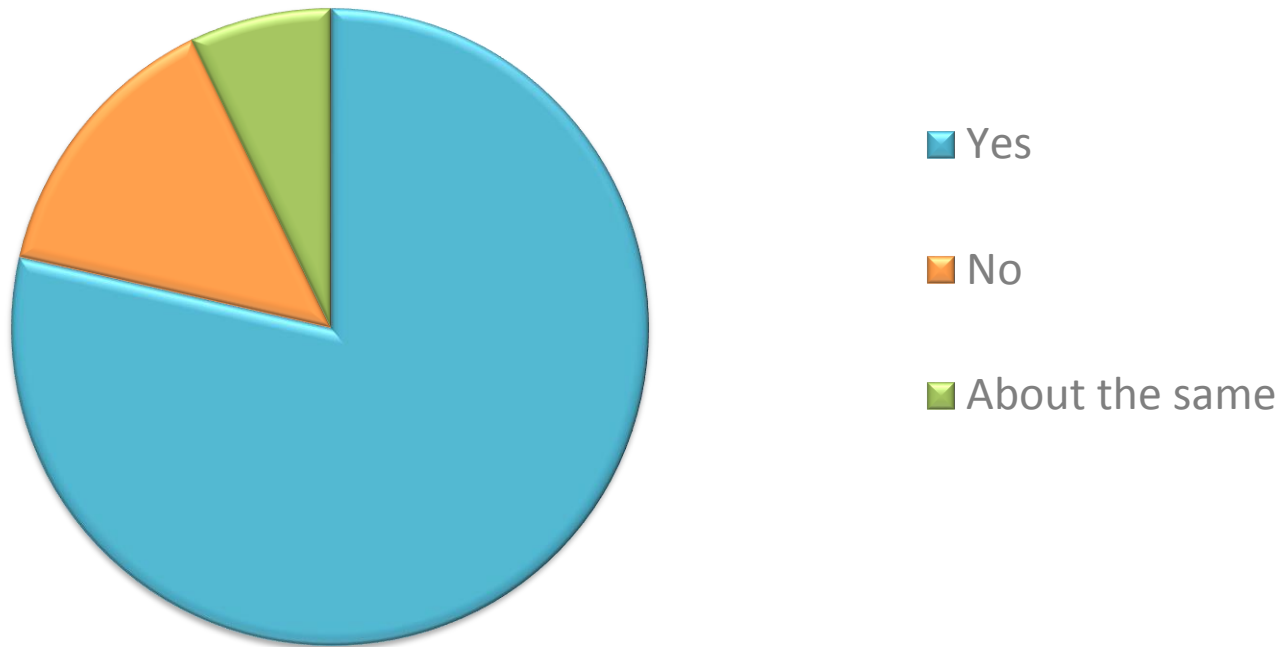
“We are tremendously positive and ‘can do’ about tons of stuff”

“As I was going through the homework reading and looking at all the committees and how many meetings there are, and everything else, it was like “Whoah”. So much of it is about Future Leaders and Gather etc. The bit that doesn’t come out clearly is all that networking, knowing, supporting, helping. The thing I think we are bad at is supporting women through the later stages of their career”

“One of the things about the Club that has really worked for me is the personal side of it. The process side and what’s expected of me has not worked for me at all. That’s the irony. I get enormous strength and support from the network I have managed to generate but, as one of the few client side people with a global job with enormous travel commitments, I find it incredibly stressful to have to meet the requirement. It causes me stress, it does not enable me”

What did we say in 2016?

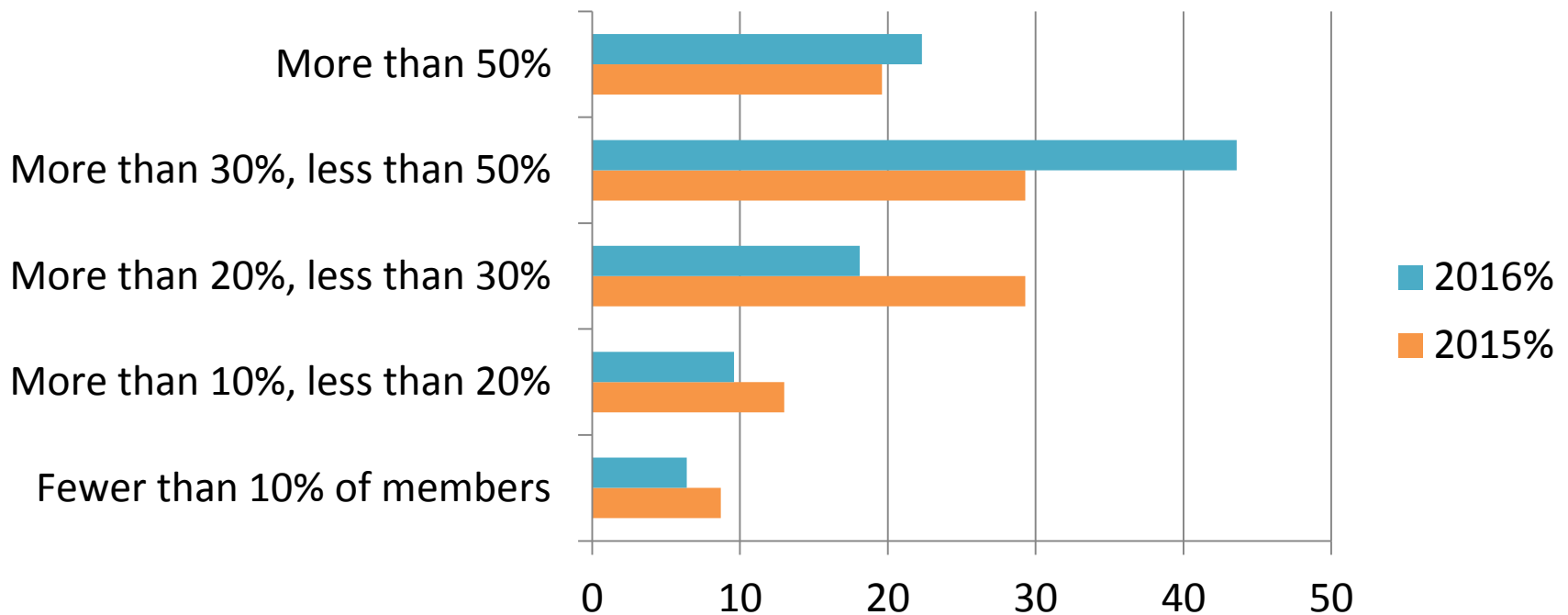
Do you feel more connected to other WACL members than you did this time last year?



Source: WACL members' research 2016

And how well did we know each other in 2016?

70% of WACLers know 30% (up from 49%)



Source: WACL members' research 2016

WACL

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Something from 2009 on this subject

1 The support network that wac1 offers is the organisation's core strength

wac1

- ⊗ There is no doubt that amongst members, notably for the established members, the **internal support network** is perceived to be the main benefit of wac1
- ⊗ The **network/mentoring groups** in particular provide welcome advice and help for members
- ⊗ **Members only evenings** also provide a chance to build friendships and therefore support networks

Validated as one of the largest spontaneous mentions in our quant study



What did we say in 2004?

When WACL lives up to expectations, its great.

- "It facilitates in the most stylish and enjoyable way, the meeting of like minds in a business not famous for its support of women"
- "I felt that a lot of my issues were shared and everyone was always happy and willing to help."
- "A useful and supportive network of impressive women"
- People have made friends, met role models
- Shared and exchanged ideas
- Good for entertaining if you have the need
- A good mix of events always to a high standard
- Basked in the warmth of response in times of need
- Feeling the more you put in the more you get out

Feeling not everyone has access to this

What we said in 2002

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What we do

In order of importance:

- Networking (via dinners and events) – ranked most important by 75%
- Providing inspiration and aspiration via events that give back to younger women eg Forum, Workshops – ranked first or second by 54%
- Influencing our industry regarding women's issues
- Influencing broader women's issues at work
- Fundraising

Other elements of what we do :

- Inspiration and stimulation for its own members
- Providing a social setting for meeting friends

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What we also said in 2002

wacl

women in advertising and communications london

What our values are

Key values felt to best embody the club:

- Supportive
- Spirited
- Inspiring
- Aspirational

WACL is also about giving, about making a difference, about stimulating others, about having integrity

WACL

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Implications for Valued Member Benefits

- We should continue to embrace and provide for the diversity of benefits as perceived by different members. It is the mosaic nature of the Club that makes it so rewarding (and female)
- We should empower members to create and manage their own 'special interest' groups more (e.g. NEDS, Agile Workers, Returners, Speak and Share sessions etc)
- And find ways to overtly value and support those groups (e.g. via Facebook page, finding venues to meet)

NB there no need for the Executive Committee to micro-manage internal member events; but it should ensure initiatives like Postcode Parties and other good stuff continues by giving members a nudge

4. Charity Fundraising

WACL Fact: Our charitable giving has tripled in 9 years (average of +20% per year). VERY Impressive, said our respondents, BUT:

- It is NOT our main purpose, and it's distracting
 - Increasing perception that it's *"got out of hand"*; *"become a Presidential competitive sport"*
- General consensus that NABS needs us (single biggest donor) and we must continue to support them
 - and some say link their spending to WACL's female purpose
- FLA funding seems increasingly apposite to some
 - *"it validates being a women's only club"*
- Some respondents feel we should make more of our achievements; others like that it is discreet and unique

Fundraising Comments: Positive

“It's part of our purpose - our members are amazing women who are all grounded.

“Together we can make the world a better place and fundraising is one of the ways we do this”

“Supporting the industry charity and the President's choice of charity adds to our purpose”

“We fucking rock!”

“I am hugely impressed by and proud of the amount”

“I felt proud of the contribution we've made to charity. I would like it to be more linked to our purpose. But what I feel prouder of is Gather, the FLA, things that drive our purpose... I think if we were much more single-minded about what we really want to be, couldn't we make better use of our charitable funds?”

“The President being able to choose their own charity I think is very good. The President does a lot for the Club”

“I'm very proud of our contribution... but we need a purposeful use for it”

“I like the model of Future Leaders where we raise money to invest in women in our own industry”.

Fundraising Comments : Negative (1)

“While impressive and laudable I think it distracts from having a higher perhaps more definitive purpose. Also perceptually it keeps WACL in the ladies who lunch category”

“We put too much time and energy into it and it is typical of what women used to do it the olden days ... raise money for good causes. We are not a charity and the pressure on fundraising should not be so acute.

“When I was the AGM, it felt like it was a competition to raise more money than we did last year. That’s a huge pressure on the members. At the Christmas party I went early because I didn’t want to do the silent auction”

“We need to decide where we focus our charitable giving. NABS do a huge amount for a lot of people, we shouldn’t stop that but should focus what we do based on our values as a Club. I’ve always felt really uncomfy about the charitable giving we do outside of our mission, which I thought was to help women through the industry, to bring women back in. One of the things the charities have helped with in the past is with speakers because they often have networks to bring that in. Now it’s a downside because people can’t understand why we’re a female Club and we’re supporting dementia or children’s charities”

Fundraising Comments : Negative (2)

“It’s been skewed by ‘we’ve got to get more for the charity’. It’s one-upmanship.”

“The President’s charity choice is a perk for the President. The problem is, it has got terribly competitive. It wasn’t that long ago where we were happily getting £25,000”

“We give too much to charity. We need to use the money to run the Club and for our agenda – a voice for and on behalf of women”

“Seeing those numbers, you’d think that was the Club’s purpose”

Fundraising Comments: Queries?

“How do we evaluate success? Is it by the sum of money we raise, or the effect that money has in terms of delivering benefits? What is our social purpose?”

“There’s no measurement of success for the money we give”

“Are we a charitable organisation? I hadn’t realised we gave so much to charity”

“Mind you, I know NABS rely on us so I would be concerned about how we worked with them to explore new fundraising avenues. I also realise it is the one thing that's in it for the President as a benefit for all their hard work. But there must be a way we can find a perk for being President that is equally fulfilling?”

“Are we here to fundraise? If we are, what does that mean?”

Questionnaire results on Fundraising

Charitable Giving: Of all our industry dining clubs, WACL is the only one that raises funds for charity. Over the past 10 years alone, the club has raised £1.5m for NABS and 10 other national charities. Aside from (hopefully) being terribly impressed, what are your thoughts?

It's a good thing (+ve) - **15**

It's too much (-ve) - **5**

NABS needs us – **8**

Give it to the FLA/Dump Prez choice - **6**

Strong sentiments echoing those of the 4 groups

Clubbiness fundraising feedback - Feb 2017

Areas mentioned that we should stop doing:

- 1. A questioning of the role of charity support. This was on the basis that, worthwhile though it is (especially in the case of NABS), it was a hangover from the early days of the Club when that's what middle class ladies did, but it had no particular relevance to the aims of the Club today. Further it was very time consuming for the officers.*
- 2. Stop 'obsessing with goodie bags for the Gala'*

(Marilyn Baxter write-up)

What did we say in 2004?

Findings

- Most respondents believed they had a clear idea of what WACL was prior to joining
 - Yes I had a clear idea: 78%
 - No I did not have a clear idea: 22%
- The main purpose of the club was also fairly homogeneous:
 - Networking 73%
 - Club dedicated to helping senior women stay there 13%
 - Sisterly group for senior women 11%
 - Dining Club 3%
 - **Charity Fundraising 0%**

Driving purpose is 'a club for meeting and supporting senior women'

Conclusions re WACL's Charitable Fundraising

- Fundraising is a distinguishing, rewarding, successful and important part of the Club's activities, and therefore **should continue**
- We rightly support NABS – their stats prove that NABS help far more women than men - but consider whether more money could be directed to initiatives or contributions that support women
- We should assess the Club's appetite to redirect other fundraising to causes that align with our Purpose, namely to support women
- While a key function of both Gather and the Christmas Gala is fundraising, should it be clearer that neither is a competition?



5. Concerns about Membership Size

- Club has grown 50% in 11 years (Full)
 - *“How big do we get before we get bad?” (Jay Chiat)*
- This has impacted in 4 key areas:
 1. Administrative issues
 2. Ambiance/Atmosphere
 3. Intimacy
 4. Dilution/Fragmentation
- And led to calls for setting a ceiling among some of our respondents

Size comments: When Big is Bad (1)

*“Take sentimental and emotional support, that’s going to be hard to do for 177 people. You can also do a more professional and formal support network. It’s cooler, more functional, but it’s possible. It used to trouble me that people worry about somebody coming in and not knowing what to do. These are senior women, they’re **supposed** to walk into a room and know what to do”*

“Comparing WACL with MGGB, the MGGB is a dining club, four star, no friendships, no activities. There are no committees or expectation that you should be friends. You can do that with large numbers. We’re stuck in the middle. When it’s getting towards the 250 side, that raises a real challenge”

“The President would greet everybody at dinners, it’s an impossibility now”

Size Comments: When Big is Bad (2)

“I think it should be no larger than 150 people. I also think it should not include “upcoming” members, only people who have risen to the top of the industry. Once you include one woman with ‘high potential’, I have no idea how you decide who should join. I would start a second, bigger division of the club for more junior women”

“We don’t know everybody. That’s the disadvantage”

“When you go to dinners, you’re not aware the Club is as big as that. I look at the list and go, ‘there’s not that many members here this evening, because there are members entertaining. So although we’ve got big numbers, it’s the degree to which the members are actually meeting. Obviously the AGM we’re meant to go, so is that the biggest time we’re ever together?”

Size Comments: Why Big is Necessary (1)

“I was encouraged by the growth. If our numbers are going up in terms of senior women, that’s a good thing”

“It was a surprise to me. A few years ago when I joined it was very exclusive, it was in danger of taking itself too seriously and being too elitist. I’m glad its embracing the female stars in the industry”

“I guess it depends on what we end up agreeing is the purpose of the Club and would suggest that the larger the scale of the purpose, the larger the Club should be. On the other hand, I would like to see all members really active and my concern is the bigger we get the more places there are for inactive members to hide”

“I’m proud that change in our industry means that our numbers can swell regularly”

Size Comments: Why Big is Necessary (2)

“If we’re interested in having more women in the top jobs in our industry it makes no sense to cap the numbers as women become more successful but we should adjust our criteria as time goes by so that we truly reflect ‘the most senior women in our industry’”

“Complicated. I think as there are more and more senior women in creative industries and even the type of industry represented becomes more diverse and continues to expand, I think membership needs to grow and probably be restructured... For any club to be ‘healthy’ it needs new members on a regular basis to refresh it”

Questionnaire results on Size

Which of the following camps do you fall into? Pick one.

- Come one, come all, providing she meets the criteria for membership: **7**
- I preferred it when we were smaller (e.g. 60-100): **1**
- I think it should be capped at 200: **4**
- There is a recognised 'magic number' for social groups to function effectively which is no higher than 150: **5**
- None of these: **7**

Not unanimous

Clubbiness session on Size - Feb 2017

Other suggestions were to:

- revisit the membership structure and criteria, especially in the light of the increasing number of senior women in our industry;*
- stop having a ceiling on membership (so long as the criteria were maintained)*

(Marilyn Baxter write-up)

What did we say in 2002?

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How large should our membership be?

- 82% felt it was appropriate to grow the membership
- 69% felt 150-200 is the right number, with 58% saying 150
- Only 10% thought we should have unlimited membership
- 12% thought membership should remain at the current level
- If membership is enlarged, need to find a way of retaining intimacy
- Ensure new members are absorbed before we grow too much

Implications on Size of Membership

- As per the external voice, membership size goes hand with the Club's purpose – once we have a clear purpose, we can be clearer about the Club's size and growth strategy
- There needs to be a quantified assessment of the Club's appetite for 'come one come all', and the physical (structural and logistical), philosophical and emotional implications versus the scientifically proven 'magic number' (150 Full members) where 'intimacy' can be maintained
- Explore membership segmentation/tiering to enable the latter 150 option to function effectively, and be able to offer meaningful membership for life to all our members (see Nettle 6, Associates)

6. Associate Members

- An often overlooked subject
- Criteria for membership have evolved with the times, but still some confusion/opacity among our respondents
- No clear strategy or positioning for Associate Members
- Perceived by some Full Members as 2nd class citizens but not by the Associates themselves. This appeared to act as a barrier to transfer for some whose career status would qualify them
- Acknowledged as an underutilised yet highly valuable expert resource (viz Club's purpose)

Associates: What did the groups say?

“Some people feel, as they get older, the Club’s less interested in them and would like them to become Associates but that seems to be really hard for some people. You’ve got to be lucky to be accepted to become an Associate”

“Some people have asked in the past and been told ‘no, it’s a privilege’”

“Is there something we can do to enhance the Associates? There’s so much talent, personalities and experience there, and they’re almost disregarded”

“We’ve got a lot of confusion because we have retired Associates who are the patrons of the Club and support the Club enormously. Then we’ve got the working Associates, who are often still in high profile roles”

“Once you join, you’re in and you move on and up or you take a career break. You’re still a WACL member. If people want to stay Full members, fine, but if being an Associate meant more than it does now and people thought ‘That’s where I should be because I’ll be able to do this, it’ll be interesting, there is stuff organised for me’. By moving through naturally, you’d create space for new Full members”

Questionnaire results on Associates

Which of the following statements fit with your understanding and perspective of Associate membership within WACL? Tick as many as apply:

I know there are two kinds of Associate status; working and retired: **15**

I feel Associates should be given more opportunity to contribute to the Club than they currently are: **10**

I think if your current job status no longer qualifies you for Full Membership, you should (be allowed to) transfer to Associate status: **9**

I think some Associate Members feel like second class citizens within the Club: **9**

I have no idea how the Associate Membership is works within the Club: **4**

I don't understand how you transfer to Associate Member status: **3**

There is a ceiling on the number of Associates the Club has at any time: **1**

I don't know why we have Associate Members: **1**

Anyone can progress to Associate Member status if they wish to: **0**

What did we say in 2004?

Current Criteria Assessment

- Should participation at other events count?

- Yes 73%
- No 27%

"Involvement does not always mean eating dinner"
"There are so many other competing events it makes it difficult"
"Formal dinners are less relevant these days"

- There should be a minimum (1/2 formal dins) but it should be a mix of events
- Work on committees and attendance at the lesser events should be included
- Need to keep it simple and transparent
- You need to enforce it

- Do you know what to do if regular attendance becomes a problem?

- Yes 58%
- No 44%

- There is little understanding of associate membership status

Implications on the Role of Associates

- There is clearly a massive opportunity here to grasp several nettles at once, depending on our purpose:
 - Size/Growth
 - Need/Role of Associates within the Club
 - Inclusivity vs Cliquey-ness
- Consider new definitions e.g. (Working) Associates and (Retired) Patrons or Emeritus, each with their own goals, objectives and, potentially, activities
- Should WACL membership be for life, for active members, as careers progress and evolve naturally?

7. New Members: Two main areas of discussion

1. Recruitment

“Shouldn’t the new members strategy be linked to our purpose?”

“How do we decide who gets in anyway?”

- Have we made it too complicated? It has never been easy; it has always been controversial:
 - Subjectivity (Will they fit in? Do we like them?)
 - Opacity
 - Diversity
 - Criteria ambiguity
 - Slow (embarrassingly so sometimes)
 - Lack of a transparent acceptance strategy?

2. Induction – how to navigate the Club, how to create a softer landing

- How do we integrate them better, faster? Do we need a ‘formal’ induction?

New Members: What did the groups say? (1)

“Nobody sat me down and told me what they wanted me to do”

“The information that was sent to me still didn’t really answer for me quite how it all works”

“We don’t get an induction”

“There is a buddy system and there has been for decades but it just doesn’t work”

“I don’t know the history of the Club”

“I wasn’t aware there was a buddy system”

“There should always be a new member on the Exec”

“Maybe we should do inductions for new members”

“Some people join the Club and don’t understand why”

New Members: What did the groups say? (2)

“The profile of membership, it felt like a dark art...when you turn up at your first event and, as a new member you’re like ‘how is this going to be?’ but actually it’s a lot warmer than you anticipate”

“There’s definitely a sense that everyone knows each other and I am coming into a group that I haven’t spent much time with”

“I don’t have an understanding about how to contribute. It’s all about transparency. You want people to contribute as much as they’re able to. How do you make it easy to do so”

“A club ‘introduces’ new members, like at a golf club but not at WACL”

Questionnaire Results on New Members

New members: Do you think an obligatory, formal induction process for all new members, designed to encourage a better understanding of the Club and engagement early on rather than the informal buddy system would be a good idea?

Yes - 20

No – 3

Don't know/Not sure - 1

Pretty unanimous

Clubbiness Session – April 17

- How do we provide a support system/safe space for new members who don't know the Club yet?
- Class Of 2017 - give them a project and have them report back to the Executive Committee
- Each member standing up and introducing themselves at the AGM is not helpful
- Needing to know each other better
- Introduce Club member badges at dinners?
- We must work harder to embrace and induct new members

Something from 2009 on this subject

2 The buddy system and induction process could be strengthened, particularly for newer members

wac1

Buddy System

- ⊗ Currently the buddy system is not working as effectively as it could
- ⊗ Potentially a very powerful tool to get access to the full membership

Induction Process

- ⊗ Currently considered quite informal and unstructured
- ⊗ Can result in lack of knowledge of certain benefits
- ⊗ Etiquette / 'rules' of wac1 not well known

Consider :

- Raising profile of buddy system at induction stage
- Buddying with an unknown member
- 2 buddies including an Associate who has more time to devote?

Consider :

- Integration committee who are responsible for inducting all new members and formalising induction process
- 'Class of 2009' where all new members who joined that year meet each other

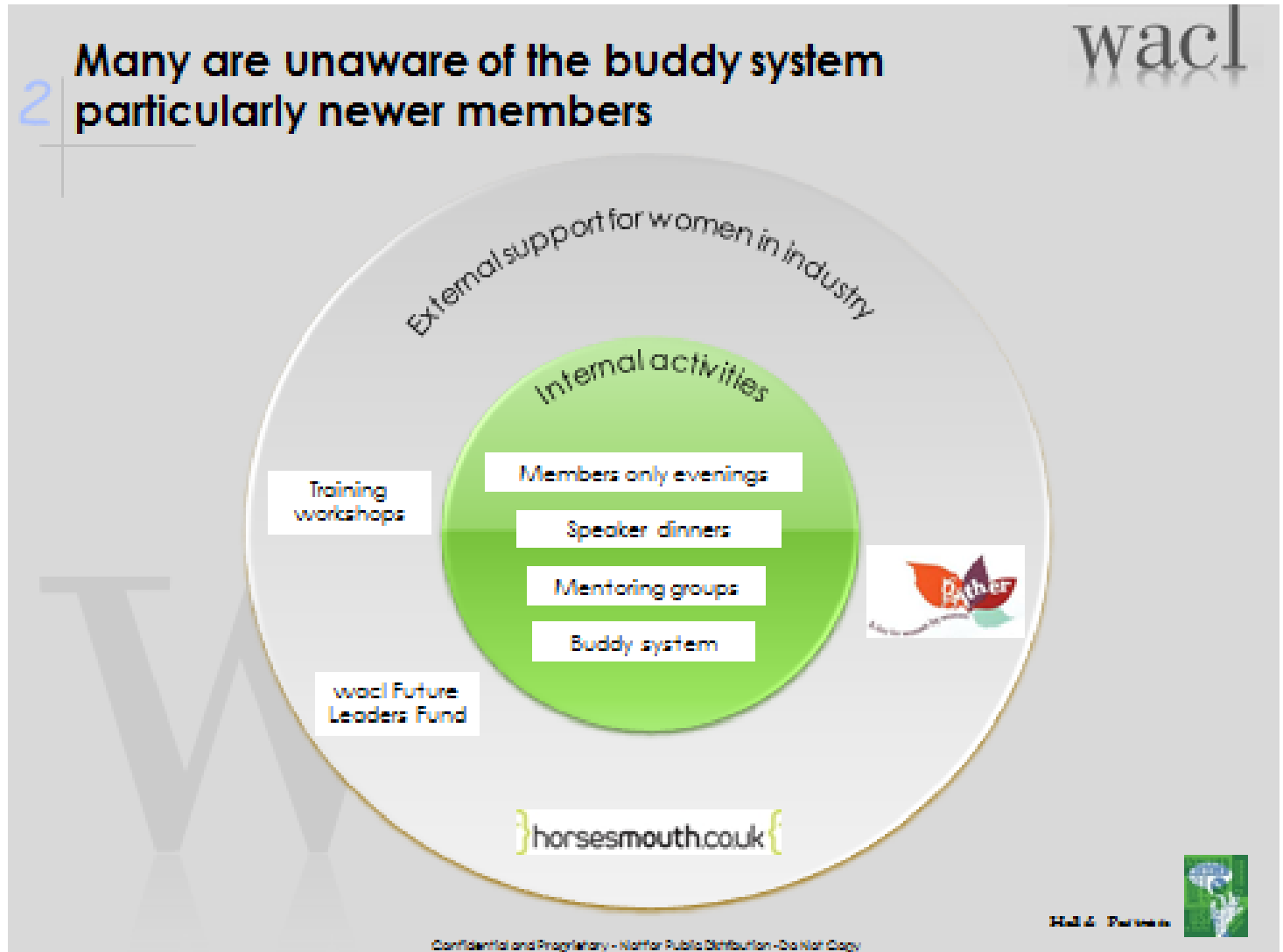


More from 2009 on this subject

2

Many are unaware of the buddy system particularly newer members

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WACL Future



What did we say in 2004?

Why did members join?

Often passive reasons for joining
Entertaining 'others' is not main priority

Implications on Recruitment and Induction of New Members

- Subsequent to agreement of the Club's purpose and the follow through on other related Nettles, the Executive Committee - via the Members' Committee - could redraw the qualifying criteria, method and style of recruitment where necessary
- It would seem that a) the Buddy system (still) ain't working, b) feeling intimidated and c) lacking understanding of Club are still issues. An obligatory formal and social induction is seen as a welcome improvement, along with other initiatives to be discussed
- For example, each Sub Committee to endeavour to invite a new member onto their sub-committee where possible
- Group activities in a 'Class of 2017' stylee could really help

8. Club Engagement/Contributing

- Most members, even newbies, understand that the more you put in, the more you get out
- Barriers to contribution are created by the sense that there's an 'in crowd' and that some committee tasks require specific access to resource or skill, or are due to simply not knowing how to volunteer
- Despite being senior professional women, some still find it hard to put their hands up and wait/expect to be invited/asked. Can this ever be overcome?
- Confusion hangover from the '3 Dinner' attendance rule (amended to 'Events' in 2005). Some people still think it's only dinners that count.
- Naming and shaming non-compliance is not Club-like and doesn't work (much as some would like 100% engagement properly enforced!)
- Popular initiatives fall by the wayside unless actively managed e.g. Postcode Parties

Engagement: What did the groups say? (1)

“Is it too many activities? It’s not that I don’t want us to do brilliant things but when you read about it, are they all aligned to our greater purpose?”

“I go to every NED lunch I can and yet it doesn’t count towards my participation to the Club”

“There are people who have amazing networks but will never bother to sit on a sub-committee. There will be people who speak at Gatherings, help get new speakers for breakfasts or dinners. That should count as your 3 dinner allocation... You get points for doing things”

“The three dinner rule is not necessarily a good measure. I have not managed to make three this year yet have contributed in other ways and heavily in previous years. Perhaps other factors like Gather and Gatherings should be taken into account”

“Some (committee roles) are more onerous than others”

“I believe our model is based on a very old-fashioned view of participation that is out of line with our purpose. And modern life”

“If you can’t get onto a Committee, you can’t get into the arteries of the Club”

Engagement: What did the groups say? (2)

“It should not be a hard measure – individual circumstances should be borne in mind”

“Getting involved and doing things should be important as well.. (the rule) seems harsh and super formal. It could be 5-6 or more events if it included things like the cinema screenings or the Grazia lunch”

“I think everything you do to contribute should count. Being on a committee, attending any events, helping to find speakers, being on panels. It should be just be about being involved. And if people don’t do anything to contribute they should be chucked out”

“Being asked to help with the mentoring and Christmas Ball allowed me to participate – which I enjoyed. I find that being “asked” I helped and joined in rather than putting myself forward. I’m not sure what the process is for that”

“As we get older, the Club is less interested in you. Feels like it’s all about younger people”

“The (speaker) dinners are the place where I least make connections. I can’t network. I can’t create new relationships at the event”

Questionnaire results on Engagement

Member engagement with the Club: Is the '3 dinner rule' (as it is known rather than actually defined) a good measure of a member's annual support of and engagement with the Club?:

Yes - 11

No - 8

Don't Know/Not sure – 5

Not unanimous

Clubbiness Session on Engagement – April 17

- We want all our members to be 100% engaged and for there to be some checks and measures in place which are attitudinal and behavioural (and if you're not 100% engaged you are out)
- Noblesse oblige – privilege brings responsibility (to contribute)
- Being role models
- Providing thought leadership
- Open honest conversations about hard stuff to talk about, e.g. mental health, bereavement, family crises
- Collection and publishing of useful stats about unconscious bias
- WACL North
- Let's do 100 Deeds (for our cause) by our 100th Year
- WACL Wednesdays – a monthly place and time to come together informally

Voted most popular* soap box at Clubbiness session

- “If I could get WACL to do one thing more it would be to create a membership of 100% engaged, active and responsible members...
- As with all clubs, there are some very active participants and then there are those that do what they can to get by. For some, ‘getting in’ to the WACL is as good as it gets and, as long as they attend 3 events annually, they feel they have earned their stripes. Perhaps we could discuss ways of making membership mean something. I feel it more as I have to chase a lot of payments and there are many members who feel no responsibility in that area – passing on the issue to PA’s or finance departments.”

*among an audience of 23 fully engaged members!

What did we say in 2004?

Current Criteria Assessment

- About half said they were unaware of it when they joined.
“Who has time to read constitutions?”
- Although all are now aware
- Some were made aware in unpleasant ways
- Also none are sure what to do when it becomes difficult to attend
- Some believe it does not apply to them
- Some also questioned how this was applied as they see the figures at the AGM and it seems a lot of people do not fulfil the criteria yet stay in the club
- So is it really the criteria?

What else did we say in 2004?

What do you think of the events?

- When attended, the events are largely enjoyed however there is a reluctance to attend in the first place.
- All events are seen to have a role to play
- 'Members only' are the events which are universally enjoyed
- Smaller events mixed but generally positive
- Forum is great

- Big dinners receive a highly polarised response:

Negative

Positive

"It is a duty more than a pleasure"

"Are really excellent"

"Hate them! – I don't go"

"Backbone of the club"

"Very daunting"

"Good value for money"

"Difficult to network"

"I love them"

- Formal dinners are only actively appealing to those who have to entertain or are very social.
- Therefore less inclusive as the basis for active membership

And another thing (in 2004)

Attendance criteria

Should there be an attendance requirement?

- Yes 80%
- No 20%

"WACL is only as good as the value members bring to it"
"The more I get to know people the more I like it"

Were people aware of the attendance requirement when they joined?

- Yes 91%
- No 9%

The three formal dinners a year rule

- Too high 36%
- Too low 0%
- About right 64%

Overall about right. However, the feeling 'it is too high'.
reflects attitudes to formal dinners themselves

Implications on Club Engagement/Participation

There are various (potentially controversial) ideas suggested for discussion:

- Create a wider list of what should count. From Speaker dinners and breakfasts to speaking at Gatherings, participating in Gather, providing goody bags/silent auction prizes, sponsoring events, Grazia lunch, BYO's/Agile workers/NEDs, postcode parties, etc
- More members-only, informal (and lower cost) events that allow greater opportunities for members to get to know each other/network
- Attendance/participation to be monitored and dealt with by the Executive Committee/Hon Sec and not published to the membership
 - Consider annual self reporting for qualifying – admin wise, it's a nightmare
 - Attendance lists to no longer be handed out at AGM
- Make some of our formal events less 'formal' – business dress versus black tie – thus more accessible

9. Cliquesy-ness

Perception?

- Even if it is a perception, it feels very real to many people, especially new members
- (Shades of the netball team and school friendships)



Reality?

- This subject has been rolling around for over 20 years
- Truism - the more you put into the Club, the more you get out. *"Get in there!"*
- The group dynamic/time together – still works; we saw it in action at the sessions where people who had not met/spoken before were fast friends by the end

Questionnaire results on Cliquey-ness

Cliquey-ness within the Club: Do you believe that ‘cliquey-ness’ or feeling excluded is a real issue within the Club membership and needs to be formally?

Yes it’s a real issue = 12

No it is not = 5

Don’t know/not sure = 7

Tending to a “Yes” – it exists

Cliquey-ness – What did the groups say? (1)

“More informal events... less Savoy dinners . More mixed tables at events. Members only tables are a good idea and shouldn't feel like they are just for singles, i.e. those not taking a guest”

“If I am asked, I will get involved... it seems ridiculous to feel intimidated by not being in the know when everyone is SO NICE!”

“It's an unfortunate result of the Executive Committee structure which basically encourages this kind of cliquey-ness. I'm not sure how you address that”

“It feels less so than in previous years but sometimes I walk into a room and I feel like I am being checked out for seniority/usefulness. Since I have taken a less high profile role. At the recent Grazia event there was no seating plan and members were saving great swathes of seats for their buddies”

“Although I have been a member for quite a few years now I am still fairly (admittedly pathetically) intimidated walking into a roomful of WACL women feeling that everyone else knows each other. I say pathetically particularly as everyone I have ever met is nice, everyone is friendly so I feel this is more about me and getting over my own issues!”

Cliquey-ness – What did the groups say? (2)

“It improved when we focused on it. We need to work hard at it each year with different initiatives: postcodes, blind dating, WACL walk, informal member only events. dance cards, etc etc. The less we bring it out into the open and actively work on it, the worse it gets”

“I guess perception is reality and while I genuinely don't think there is any cliquey-ness I know others do. More member only events could go some way to reduce this perceptions “

“The president should be proposed and elected by the members of the Executive. It looks like the role is passed amongst friends. Every member of the Club should have to join a committee or activity. No passive members. Committees should advertise for members to join - explaining who is chair, its purpose, how often they meet etc and people vote to rank their preferences. Appointments announced at AGM. Suppers with president and a few members of the Exec in 'batches' when new people join”

Cliquey-ness – What did the groups say? (3)

“Cliquey-ness? Exclusivity is not a dirty word. It can be aspirational”

“Feels like a very cliquey Club. How is WACL helping young women to get a leg-up?”

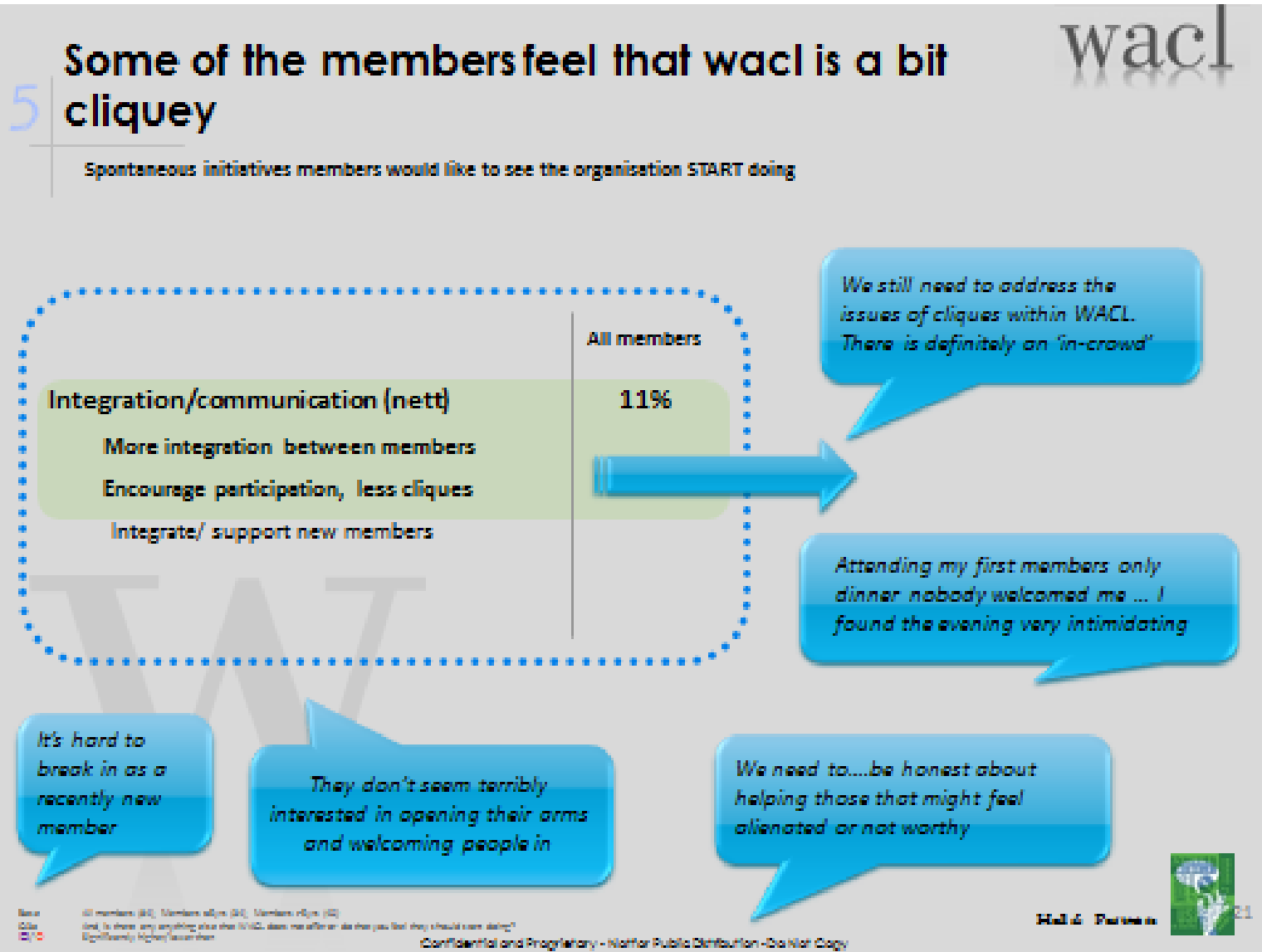
“Can often feel like it is an “in” and “not in” crowd”

“Exclusivity is OK so long as we are reaching out with a purpose”

“There have been lots of great initiatives over the last few years - AGM random table placements, postcode parties, 30% - all great and we need to keep doing these. We also need a new members programme. We need to ensure at least one new member is on every committee. More members Only evenings - panels like Gatherings for us to learn from too”

“I'm a newish member and I don't feel like I've scratched the surface of who are members. It's not a clique per se but hard to find those occasions to really have proper conversations and make friends”

Something from 2009 on this subject



Something else from 2009

6 wacI needs to find better ways to help connect members

wacI

It is evident that the processes in place don't lend themselves to openly navigate members (particularly newer members) around the organisation and encourage active participation: 11% mentioned a desire for better integration

*I think I've got a buddy
but I'm not sure*

*It's hard to access those higher up in
the pecking order for mentoring*

*I disconnect completely
beyond events*

*If you join a committee you
will definitely get more out of
WACL but I just don't know
who to ask*

There is a strong need for wacI to not only connect with its members more, but also connect its members together via its communication tools. Develop a close knit, bonded community

WACL

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HAL E. PERKINS



What did we say in 2004?

When WACL lives up to expectations, its great.

- "It facilitates in the most stylish and enjoyable way, the meeting of like minds in a business not famous for its support of women"
- "I felt that a lot of my issues were shared and everyone was always happy and willing to help."
- "A useful and supportive network of impressive women"
- People have made friends, met role models
- Shared and exchanged ideas
- Good for entertaining if you have the need
- A good mix of events always to a high standard
- Basked in the warmth of response in times of need
- Feeling the more you put in the more you get out

Feeling not everyone has access to this



Implications on Addressing Cliques-ness

- The Events Committee could re-instate and actively manage all those clever **informal** Clubbiness initiatives – Post Code parties, blind dates, 30% rule, WACL walk - and make new ones
- Have more and varied informal events, from members-only dinners through to informal interest groups – give people permission to do stuff they like doing without the stranglehold or delay of passing it through the Executive Committee for approval
- Communicate that friendships \neq cliques and the easiest way is to jump in and form your own friendships
- Invite a random member to join each monthly Exec meeting
- See above Nettle on new members

10. The Executive Committee (and sub-committees)

- Perception among some in the groups that the WACL Executive Committee are a cliquey elite of friends versus feelings of relief among others that there are members who are prepared to step up and do all of the hard graft on behalf of the Club
- Furthermore, there's both guilt and gratitude among those who acknowledge they have yet to put their hands up and contribute to the running of the Club since joining. Reasons varied – ignorance to shirking to logistics to time pressure
- Some view both the Executive and the Sub-committees as inaccessible or hard to get 'in' or onto
- Some – mainly new members – have no idea how you become a member of the Executive or the sub-committees and/or feel they don't have a good grasp of what they do/what it entails

Exec Committee: What did the groups say?(1)

“It’s cliquy. It’s inevitable because the Execs get to know each other so well. The rest of us muddle along with who we know”

“When the Exec was taking itself too seriously, the Exec was always a power elite. What I think is good now about the Exec, is it has a mixture. It has people who are not in the top big corporate jobs, some who have gone part-time, some who work for themselves, and that’s good and it has made a difference”

“The Exec for me is the key bit of the Club. They feel like a group of friends that just hang out. The rest of the Club has also been warm and welcoming”

“They spend so much time together. I don’t feel they’re exclusive in a bad sense. Well done them for putting all the hours in”

“You’re not quite sure when they change. When do they get an new intake?”

Exec Committee: What did the groups say?(2)

“There are some activities in the Club – Gala, Gather, FLA - where you need very focussed sub-committees. You can’t wait until July to start organising the Gala.”

“There are certain roles you need someone to take on for 2 years, or pass the baton. If we’re going to undertake these big things, having a sense of how it works is really useful. There’s stuff that needs focus and attention, and then activities that don’t need to go through this. Just go and do them, and the Exec has no involvement at all”

“The thing about being a WACL President or Vice President, it’s onerous, and you’ve got a big job, so you don’t need more big things”

“The way the Club comes across is incredibly friendly but very undemocratic”

“The Executive feels like the inner sanctum. You get in and you’re like ‘There’s the Exec Committee’”

Exec Committee: What did the groups say?(3)

“I don’t think anyone assumes that you’ll go straight into the Exec. You help out here and there”

“You can’t just have someone in the organisation and say ‘can you do all this extra stuff?’ now. I’m feeling really grateful for these people on the Exec”

*“Why do we need their approval for simple events. Does **everything** need to be rubber-stamped by the Exec??”*

“The Exec recruits itself. People don’t choose the next President”

“I have no idea how to apply to be a member of the Exec. There needs to be more transparency around Exec roles”

“One reason that people don’t put their hands up for the Exec is ‘how will it fit into my life?’ They do so much”

“I think the WACL Exec is too cumbersome at 16 members. It’s too big. “

Questionnaire results on the Executive Committee

24 person survey results:

- Yes, I have a clear grasp of how to join: **11**
- No, it needs reviewing: **8**
- Don't know not sure: **5**

Not unanimous

What did we say in 2004?

Why not join a committee?

- People are reluctant for a number of reasons
 - Time and work load issues
- But
 - They do not think they will get in as it appears to be made up of 'institutional' wac members
 - They would if they were asked/enticed
 - The committees all seem to work to a tried and trusted formula
 - The committee seem to maintain the status quo and not want new blood
- Some had been on committees and did not want to do it again : mixed effect
- Other thought it important for everyone to serve on a committee at least once in the first three years so embed in the club
- Committee participation was not the only way people felt they could contribute . A number said that they would be happy to help in a limited capacity but have been either rejected or ignored
 - Volunteered to do one off events
 - Happy to help as have free time but no one contacted them
- Low level of awareness of what committees there are and how they work

Implications on The Exec and Sub-Committees

- Purpose refocus aside, there is a need to spend some time reviewing the mechanism of Executive Committee to ensure that it can function both effectively and inclusively. Potential discussion points include:
 - How the President is chosen
 - What roles should, for practical reasons, be co-opted (Christmas Gala, Communications)
 - Number of roles / positions that should be elected
 - How the different interests in the Club are represented on the Executive Committee
 - How to ensure that ALL members understand the roles of the Executive Committee and what they entail, and how volunteering to participate should be undertaken
 - How to ensure that all offers to participate are taken on board and actioned
 - Whether the current WACL Constitution is fit for purpose for a modern Club that is about to enter its second century

Next Steps

- **Please give us your initial thoughts and comments** about the findings and implications that you've just read – feel free to be candid; **we really want to know what you think!**
- Look out for an All-Member Survey that will be coming your way in the next month and, when it arrives, please take a few minutes to complete it. We will be proposing some changes as a result of this project and it's important that your views are considered when those proposals are being developed
- In the meantime, a small team of Executive Committee members, supported by the Clubbiness Committee, is preparing a revised statement of WACL's Purpose to present to the Club at the AGM on 4 July 2017 for consideration and discussion
- If the Club are supportive of this proposal (taking on board any agreed amends that are required following this consultation), a very short EGM could be held at the President's Drinks in September 2017 to approve and adopt the revised WACL Purpose
- The Executive Committee will review the other findings and implications from the project that require further consultation or work streams, or can simply be enacted to address member concerns