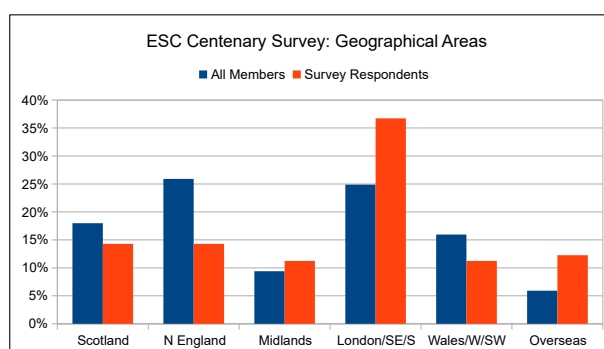
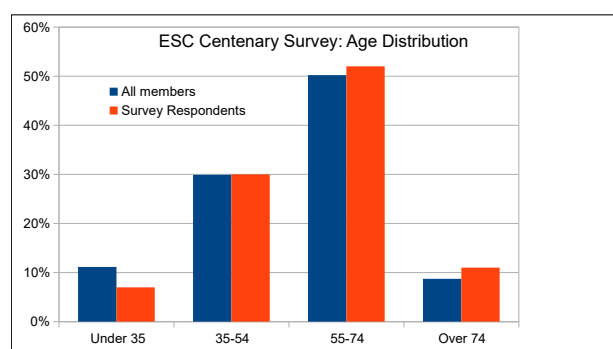




ESC 2025 Centenary Plans Survey Results

This survey was carried out between 12 August and 23 September 2023 and was intended to assess the interest in various suggestions for events and activities to celebrate the club's centenary in 2025. 105 members responded (7% of the membership) which was disappointingly few, but probably includes the more active and engaged members. The age and geographical distribution of respondents did broadly follow that of the membership as a whole, with under-35s somewhat under-represented and older members slightly over-represented. The north and west were under-represented, with the south and overseas members over-represented.

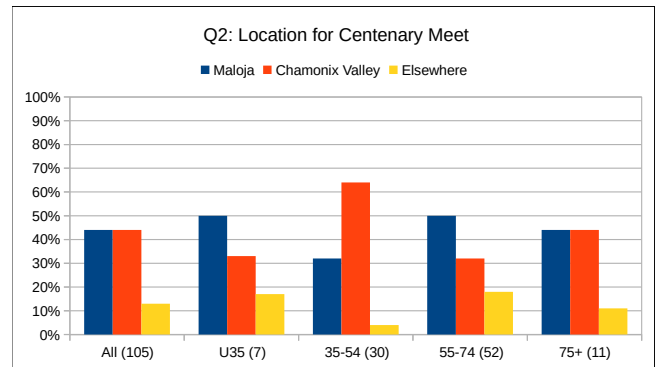
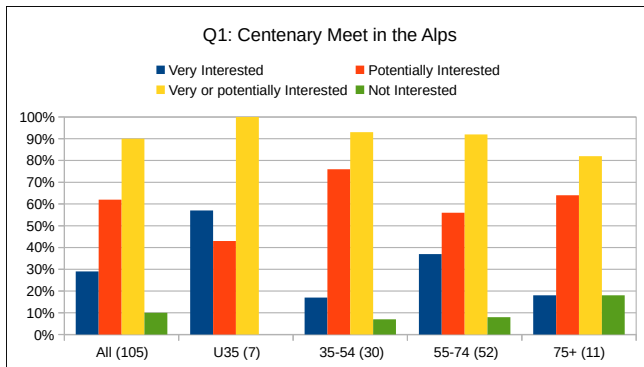


Not all respondents answered every question, and in the analysis below those who did not answer particular questions have been excluded from the percentages shown.

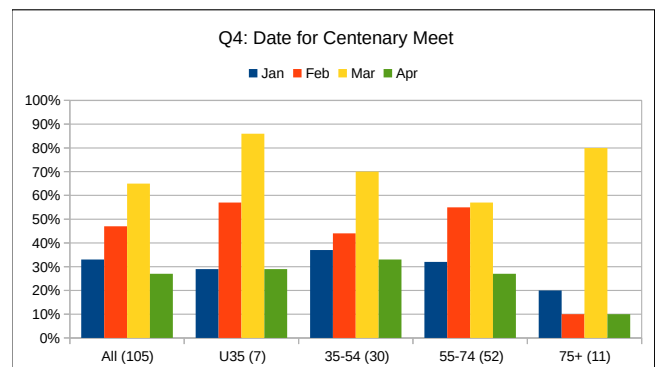
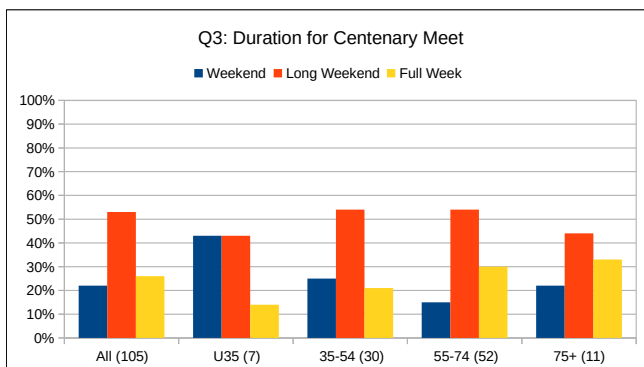
Alpine Meet (Questions 1-6)

This is envisaged as an expansion of the existing Argentiére meet which has proved popular over the last several years. Remaining in the Chamonix Valley is clearly one possibility, with the advantage of accessibility. Returning to the club's birthplace at Maloja (where there was a dinner to celebrate the club's 75th anniversary in 2000) is another, though it is difficult to reach quickly, which might deter attendance. Grindelwald was the club's base between the early 1930s and late 1960s and the 50th anniversary was celebrated there in 1975.

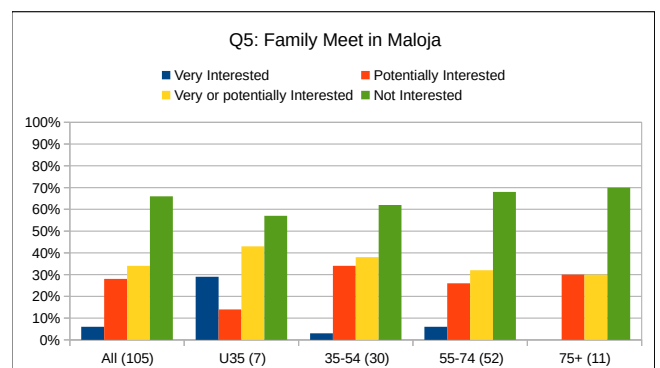
There is clearly significant interest in a meet, most pronounced among younger members. One respondent said they would only attend if they could conveniently combine it with another tour; another commented that the event needs to have touring objectives; a skimo race was also suggested. Answers about location were more ambiguous, with an almost even split between Chamonix Valley and Maloja. Under 35s (N.B. small sample) and 55-74s seem to prefer Maloja, with 35-54s preferring Chamonix Valley. There was little consensus for other venues, with suggestions: Chamonix, Not Chamonix, Grindelwald, Zermatt, Western Switzerland, Bivio, somewhere with train access (e.g. Bourg, Modane), 'French Alps near where I live'.



There was a clear preference for a long weekend in all age groups, except for the U35s (N.B. small sample) who put that equal with a simple weekend, presumably due to work/time pressures. One respondent suggested a week-long event would give flexibility for people to dip in and out, though recognised it might be an organisational nightmare. There was a clear preference for March across all age groups (percentages add up to more than 100 as respondents were able to select multiple months).

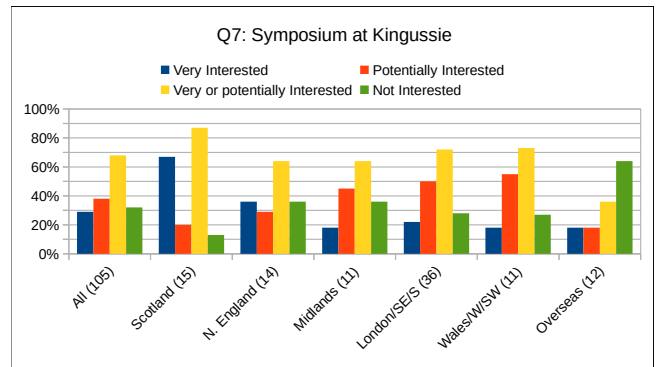
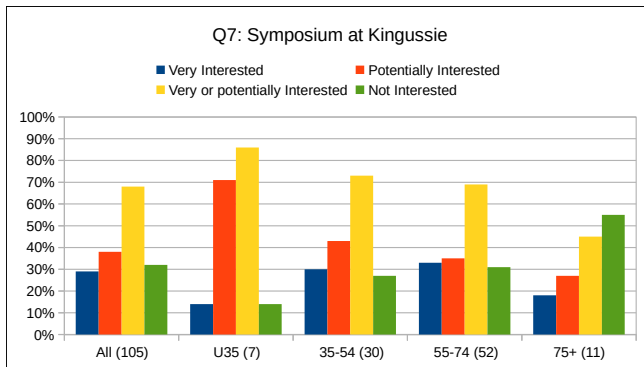


There was relatively little interest in a separate event at the club's birthplace, which might be organised in conjunction with the local Ski Club Maloja, who have a particular emphasis on encouraging children to ski. Interest was greatest among younger members. Two respondents suggested that such a meet could be held in the summer. It was pointed out that family participation would be likely to require access to good piste skiing, which is limited at Maloja (as indeed is the touring – hence a suggestion of relatively nearby Bivio, though that rather defeats the idea of an event at the club's birthplace).

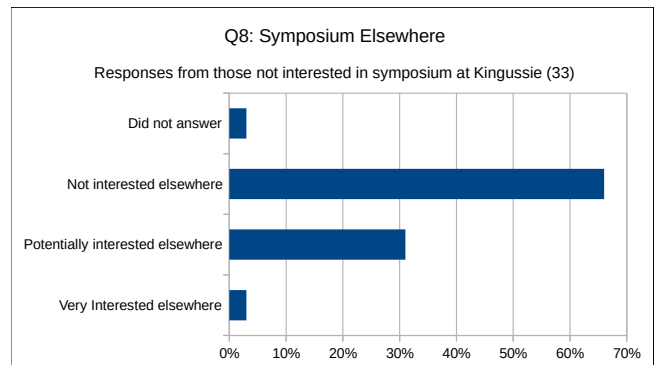


Symposium (Questions 7-9)

The opportunity to secure an exclusive booking at the Duke of Gordon Hotel in Kingussie for the weekend of 15/16 November 2025 arose during the preparation of the survey, and so the survey directly asked about interest in this. There is a high level of interest across all age groups except the over-75s, and whilst interest is, as expected, greatest among Scottish members, more than half of the respondents from all regions except overseas were interested or very interested.

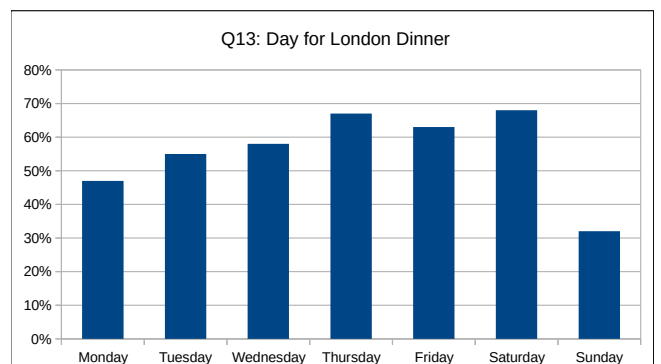
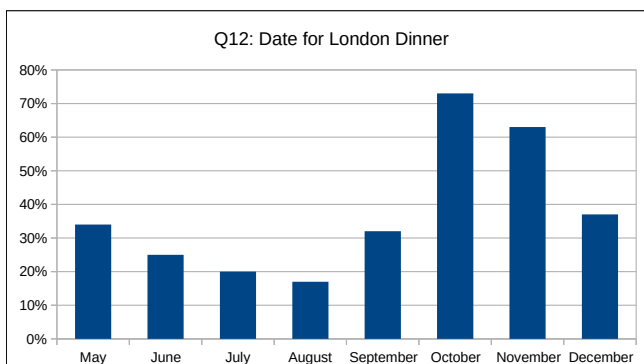
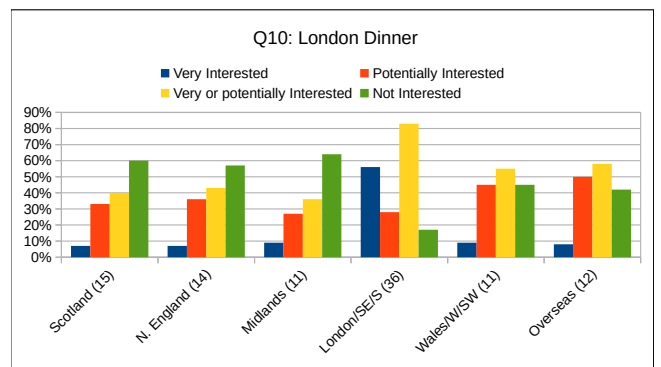
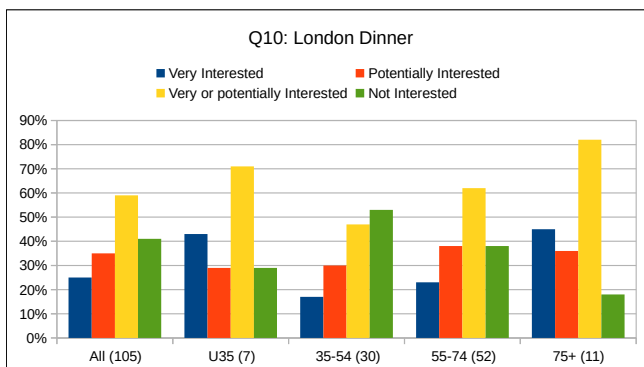


A particularly encouraging result in respect of the proposed Kingussie location (arguably likely to discourage attendance from England and Wales) is that, when the responses from those who are not interested in attending a symposium at Kingussie are examined, two thirds would not be interested in a symposium elsewhere, and only 6% very interested.



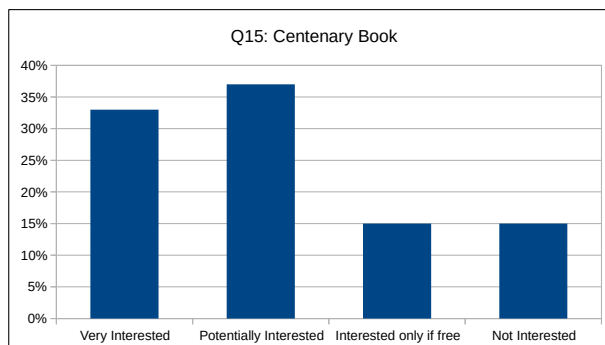
London Dinner (Questions 10-14)

There is clearly interest in this, though not as marked as for an Alps meet or a symposium. As might be expected, interest is greatest from southern English members. The average price that members would be prepared to pay was £64, with less-affluent under-35s averaging £50. Contrary to stereotypes, the most parsimonious were not the Scots (£66), but the Welsh (£44), and overseas members seem to have the greatest understanding of London restaurant prices, being willing to fork out £79. There is a clear preference for holding the dinner in October, and towards the end of the week. Comments suggested that it shouldn't be too informal, and raised the issue of accommodation for out-of-town attendees.



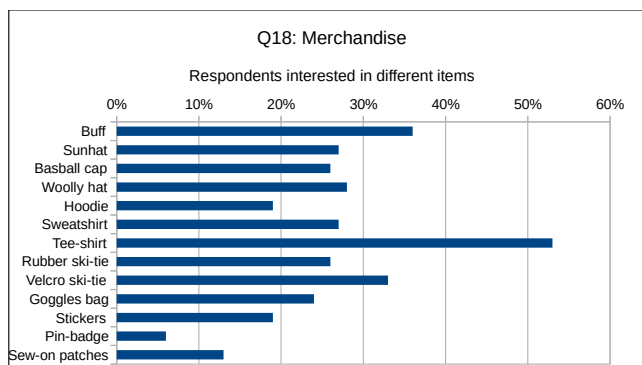
Centenary Book (Questions 15-17)

Once again there is clear interest in this, though the comments suggest a diversity of views on what it should contain. The most popular ideas seem to involve some historical aspects including accounts of previous club expeditions and the people behind the evolution of the club. Other suggestions were for articles on the future of ski touring and adapting to climate change. Some people wanted lots of photographs, including contemporary ones. The average maximum that people would be prepared to pay was £19, though the main committee has suggested that it would be willing to subsidise the cost from the club's reserves. One respondent thought that whole idea was an expensive waste of paper, others wanted high production standards in hardback, and one felt that an electronic version would diminish the value of a paper one.



Merchandise (Questions 18-19)

The interest in items listed on the questionnaire is shown right; other suggestions included water bottles, mugs, bags for items like repair/first aid kits, and prints of a specially-commissioned picture of an alpine scene. For clothing a performance fabric was suggested "so it can actually be used", and sustainable production was also mentioned in comments.



John Barnard
Centenary Planning Working Group
12 Nov 2023