

Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs: Board Ready Training Survey Report



AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND MARINE

Women in Agriculture: Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs: Board Ready Training Survey Report



Acknowledgements

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List of Acronyms

- SAYFC – Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs
- WIA – Women in Agriculture
- RESAS – Rural and Environmental Science Analytical Services

Highlights

Why was the research needed?

In their final report, the [Women in Agriculture Taskforce](#) (2019) recommended that training should be provided to women and new entrants in agriculture to address the skills gap they face and build their business skills and confidence.

The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) is a membership organisation for young people who live and work in rural Scotland. Its national board has responsibility for the organisation, its reputation and finances. There are around 14 people on the board each year and membership changes yearly. This research was requested by the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs to find out what training would benefit new board members and inform the development of a tailored board training programme. It was also felt that behavioural and cultural changes were required to make the organisation more inclusive.

What did we do?

The purpose of the research was to understand the training needs of Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs board members. In August 2022, we carried out an online survey of current and previous board members about the training they have received, and the types of training they felt would have helped them in their role. A 64% response rate was achieved from a sample of 28 people. The survey received a total of 18 responses (it is important to note the small sample size).

The survey focused on a range of topics, including their motivations for becoming a board member, their confidence and level of experience before joining the board, and the kinds of training they would like to receive in the future.

What did we learn?

We learned that young people on the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs board are passionate about the organisation, and their role within it. The majority of current and previous board members who completed the survey felt clear about their role before joining the board, but welcomed the idea of further training.

Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs board members rated the training they have received highly. Survey respondents highlighted the usefulness of mentoring and would like to receive more of this type of support. Areas of concern highlighted by respondents included a lack of experience before joining the board, clarity over the role and managing their board role alongside other commitments.

Next steps

The research findings will inform the creation of a tailored training programme for current and future Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs board members.

Executive Summary

Introduction

This research was carried out to inform the creation and delivery of a bespoke training programme for current and future members of the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) board. In their final report, the [Women in Agriculture Taskforce](#) (2019) recommended supporting women and new entrants into agriculture and providing training to address the skills gaps they face. A [2017 report](#) on women in farming and the agriculture sector found that new entrants who were women and who accessed continuous professional development training through their employer were able to apply these new skills on their farms.

The (SAYFC) is a membership organisation for young people who live and work in rural Scotland¹. Its vision is to ensure that young people in rural Scotland are supported to reach their full potential. The SAYFC asked the Scottish Government to carry out a survey of young people who currently or have previously sat on their national board. The board has responsibility for the organisation, its reputation and finances. There are around 14 people on the board each year and membership changes yearly (see section 1.2). Young people aged 14 to 30 are eligible to join the board.

The purpose of the research was to understand the training needs of SAYFC board members. Previous board members were included in this research to find out what training they felt they would have benefitted from whilst in their role. This information will be used to create a tailored training programme for current and future board members, to give them the skills they need to succeed on the board, and to support their own personal development. SAYFC board membership changes every year, and it is important to understand the board's training needs to allow future members to feel fully supported.

Methodology

A short online survey was sent to current and previous SAYFC board members (from 2021/22, 2020/21 and 2019/2020). The survey was sent to a small population of 28 members who were all 18 years or older. A total of 18 responded, achieving a 64% response rate. Respondents were provided with a privacy notice (Annex A) to ensure they understood how their data would be used. The data was collected and analysed and is presented in section 4 of the report.

¹ [Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs \(SAYFC\) website.](#)

Key Findings

Respondent profile

The majority of respondents to the survey were current Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) board members (72%) and just under a third (28%) were previous members from 2021/22 or 2019/20. Current respondents are part way through their time on the board as its membership changes yearly.

Over half (59%) of respondents were female and just under half (41%) were male. The majority (78%) of respondents were aged 26-30.

Board roles and motivations for joining the board

Respondents held a range of roles and the survey was broadly representative of the board. The most common motivations respondents gave for becoming a SAYFC board member were for personal development and networking. For example, the majority (92%) of current board members saw joining the board as an opportunity to develop themselves, whilst previous board members saw it as an opportunity to socialise (50%) or network (100%).

SAYFC board members felt passionate about being part of the board, as a way for them to give back to the organisation and continue its legacy. However, half (50%) of the survey respondents felt that their role on the SAYFC board did not meet their expectations. Reasons given for this included: over-reliance on board members, the challenges of managing a voluntary role alongside other commitments and difficulties working with SAYFC staff.

Confidence when joining the board

Before starting their roles, current and previous board members mostly felt 'slightly clear' on what being on the board would involve (41%).

Just over half (53%) of respondents felt they had 'a little' experience that prepared them for becoming a member of the SAYFC board. This was through their own previous experiences, for example at work, or in other SAYFC roles. Just under half (41%) of respondents felt 'prepared' when taking on their role on the SAYFC board.

Current and previous board members were most likely to feel 'slightly confident' (41%) when starting their role on the SAYFC board. Almost a third (29%) felt 'not very confident', and around a quarter (24%) felt 'confident'. Only 6% felt 'very confident'. Training, mentoring and previous experience helped respondents to feel confident.

Survey respondents highlighted issues such as clarity about their role before joining the SAYFC board and managing the role alongside other commitments.

Training

Respondents rated the training they have received while on the SAYFC board highly, and the majority (75%) felt it had a positive impact. All previous SAYFC board members had received support from SAYFC staff (100%) and the majority (69%) of current members have also received staff support so far. Respondents identified that further training on a wide range of topics, for example leadership training and managing difficult conversations, would be helpful. Throughout the survey, mentoring was mentioned as something respondents found helpful and would like more of.

Overall, the results show the passion that both current and previous respondents have for the SAYFC, and that they feel contributing through the board is an important way of giving back and continuing its legacy. Board members want their opinions to be heard and would benefit from training that will further develop them in their SAYFC board roles but more widely in terms of their personal development. Training provided to board members was generally received well and board members are keen to receive more. Mentoring is popular, with most who received it finding it helpful and others wanting more of it.

However, respondents did raise concerns about their experiences of sitting on the board, including managing their role alongside other commitments. The SAYFC board's over-reliance on members operating on a voluntary basis also posed a challenge. Respondents would like to engage more with SAYFC staff and work more closely with them.

Next Steps and Recommendations

The survey results will be utilised by the SAYFC to create a training programme for current and future board members, taking into account their views and training needs. Further issues raised by respondents, including the role of voluntary board members within the organisation, should also be considered and acted on appropriately.

To support this, training for SAYFC board members should aim to equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge and support to fulfil their roles on the board, feel confident and empowered to take on responsibility, make decisions and act as leaders. Going forward, young people on the board will benefit from learning from other board members' experience, contracting tailored training courses and utilising the experience of SAYFC staff.

To support this work, the SAYFC should think about developing a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure any training that is provided is relevant and of use to current and future board members.

The skills that young people gain in taking on a board role within the SAYFC should enable them to progress their careers, and contribute more widely to their lives and work in rural Scotland.

1. Introduction

In their final report, the Women in Agriculture Taskforce recommended increased opportunities for women and young people in agriculture to access training².

This report outlines the findings of research carried out to understand the training needs of Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) board members. The organisation has highlighted a need for a training programme for young people taking on a board position.

An online survey of current and previous board members was carried out in August 2022. The survey was commissioned by the SAYFC to inform the development of a training programme for new SAYFC board members in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The survey was carried out by researchers within the Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services (RESAS) division of Scottish Government and designed in consultation with SAYFC members and the Women in Agriculture policy team. This report details results from the survey, which asked respondents questions on their training and personal development needs, including the types of training they have found helpful, what support they have received, their levels of confidence and the types of training they would like to see offered in the future.

This research provides evidence to inform the future SAYFC training programme, and outlines recommendations for its delivery.

1.1 Policy Context

This research contributes to several wider Scottish Government policy aims, including support for young people and women in agriculture. Previous research commissioned by Scottish Government in 2017³ provided evidence of the barriers that women face in agriculture, including access to training. In 2019, the Women in Agriculture Taskforce published its final report, with a series of recommendations to progress women's role within the industry, including training for women and new entrants to develop their confidence, business and leadership skills.

This report will progress commitments set out in the 2021-22 Programme for Government⁴, including providing more support for women in agriculture and for new and young entrants in farming.

² [Women in Agriculture Taskforce: summary report - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/women-in-agriculture-taskforce-summary-report/pages/summary-report.aspx)

³ [Women in Farming and the Agriculture Sector 2017](https://www.gov.scot/publications/women-in-farming-and-the-agriculture-sector-2017/pages/women-in-farming-and-the-agriculture-sector-2017.aspx)

⁴ [A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/a-fairer-greener-scotland-programme-for-government-2021-22/pages/a-fairer-greener-scotland-programme-for-government-2021-22.aspx)

1.2 The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs

The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC)⁵ is a membership organisation for and run by young people from across rural Scotland. It aims to ensure that young people in rural Scotland are supported to reach their full potential. The SAYFC national board is made up of the National Chair, the National Vice Chair, and all Chairs from the National and Regional Committees. In addition to these voluntary roles, there are also five permanent members of staff on the board. The purpose of the board is to be responsible for the organisation, its reputation and finances. The board also holds legal responsibility to safeguard and protect the organisation. There are around 14 people on the board each year and membership changes yearly. Young people aged 14-30 are eligible to join. The following roles can be held on the SAYFC board:

- National Chair
- National Vice Chair
- Past National Chair
- West Region Chair
- East Region Chair
- North Region Chair
- Agri & Rural Affairs Chair
- Comms & Marketing Chair
- Competition & Events Chair
- Development & Wellbeing Chair
- Finance Chair
- International Chair
- President
- Vice President
- Ex-officio

New training for board members is currently being developed and will be provided in the 2022/23 financial year. Training for both the current and 2023/24 boards is planned to begin in early 2023. This is so the current board can implement training in their term, and the 2023/24 board is prepared for taking post in March.

To ensure the correct training is in place for the SAYFC board, an online survey was carried out in August 2022. The survey was sent to current and previous board members (from 2021/22, 2020/21 and 2019/2020). It focused on a range of topics, from their motivations for becoming a board member, to the level of experience they had before joining the board, how confident they felt joining the board, and the kinds of training they would like to receive in the future.

This report presents the main findings from the survey and outlines several recommendations for the development of SAYFC board training.

⁵ [The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs | SAYFC](#)

1.3 Methods

A short online survey was created in collaboration with the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC). The survey was created on Questback and tested, before a web link was distributed by email to current and previous board members (from 2021/22, 2020/21 and 2019/2020).

The survey was live for two weeks in August 2022. It was sent to a total of 28 people, and respondents were asked 15-20 questions depending on their answers. The questionnaire is in Annex B. Respondents were made aware in the privacy notice (see Annex A) that their responses would remain anonymous. Six questions were open text response. The survey was routed for two groups of respondents; those who are current SAYFC board members and those who were previous board members. The survey received a total of 18 responses, giving a response rate of 64%, however it is important to note the small sample size.

The survey also included a set of standard equalities questions which collected data on age, sex, trans history, sexual orientation, disability, religion and ethnicity. These questions were voluntary, and due to the small sample, most of these could not be reported on due to anonymity concerns.

2. Survey Results

Summary

- This chapter reports the main findings of the survey.
- Most respondents were current board members (72%).
- The majority of current board members joined the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) board for personal development (92%).
- 41% of all respondents felt 'slightly confident' when joining the board, and mentoring, induction and support from the SAYFC helped board members feel confident.
- Training provided to the SAYFC board has been positively received by all respondents, with the majority (75%) stating that it had a positive impact.
- Current board members felt that balancing the voluntary role with other commitments was the most challenging part of being on the SAYFC board (54%) and previous board members found time commitment and managing workload the most challenging (75%).
- Half (50%) of all respondents felt that being a member of the SAYFC board did not meet their expectations. Reasons for this included over reliance on volunteer board members and feeling that the yearly turnover of board members makes it hard to bring about change.

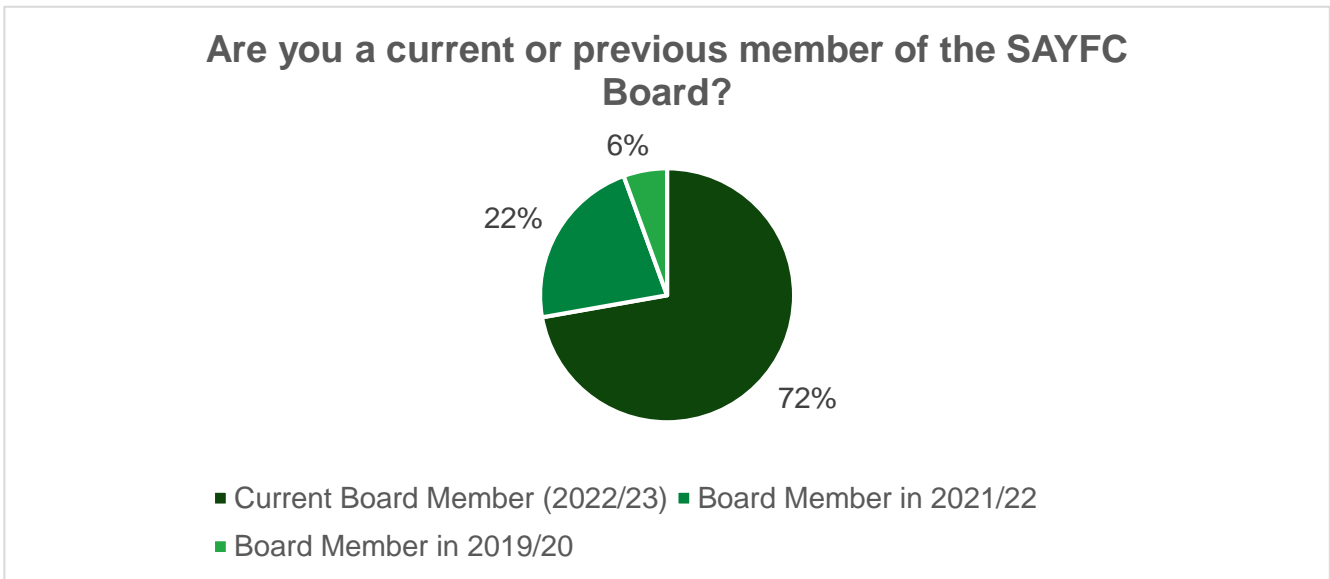
This section of the report presents the main findings from each question of the survey⁶. Findings have been presented under the following sub-headings:

- 2.1 Respondent profile
- 2.2 Motivations for becoming a SAYFC board member
- 2.3 Preparing for the SAYFC board
- 2.4 SAYFC board training
- 2.5 Challenges and expectations
- 2.6 Further training and development

⁶ The survey received 18 responses. Not all respondents answered every question. In general, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2.1 Respondent Profile

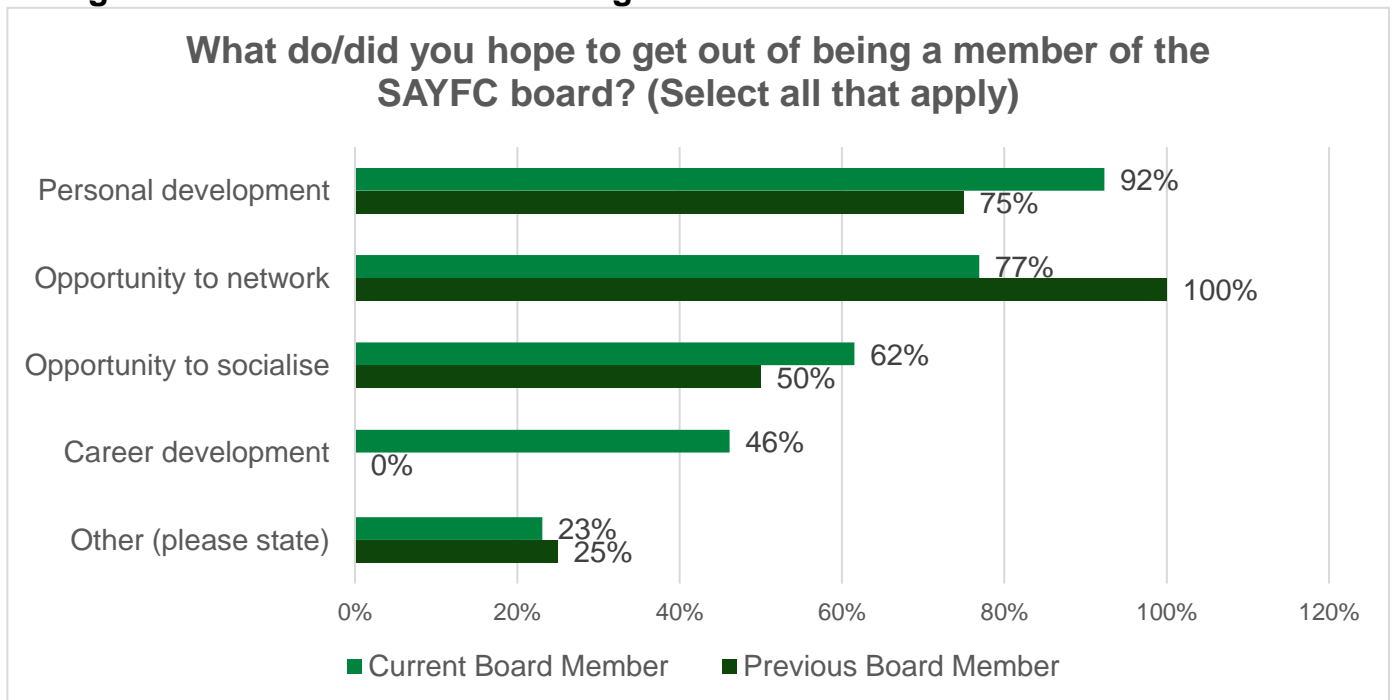
Figure 1. Current and previous board members



The majority of survey respondents were current members of the SAYFC board (72%). Just under a third (28%) were previous members. There were no respondents from 2020/2021. There are a range of roles on the SAYFC board (see section 1.2). Current and previous SAYFC board members who responded to the survey have held or currently hold a range of roles and the results are therefore broadly representative (10 out of 12 roles are represented in responses).

2.2 Motivations for Becoming a SAYFC Board Member

Figure 2. Motivations for becoming a SAYFC board member



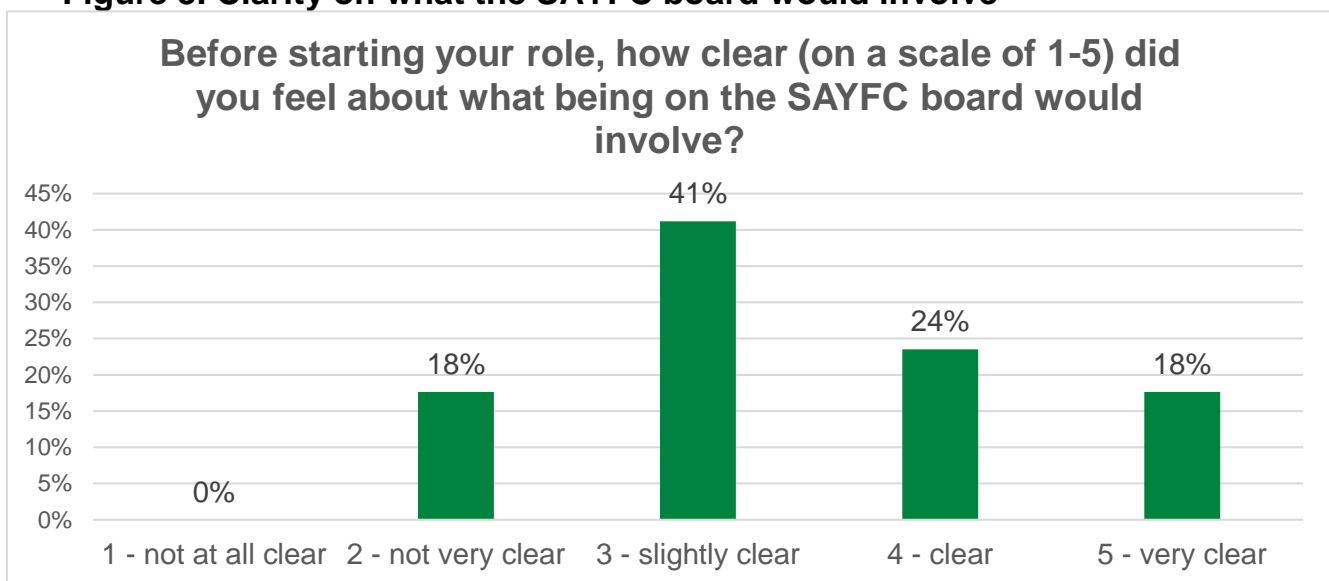
The majority of current SAYFC board members became members for their own personal development (92%). Just under half saw it as an opportunity for career development (46%). All previous SAYFC board members (100%) saw the experience as an opportunity to network, and half (50%) saw it as an opportunity to socialise. There were differences in motivations between the two groups. For example, whilst just under half (46%) of previous board members were motivated by career development, no current board members selected this.

Around a quarter (23% of current board members and 25% of previous board members) selected 'Other'. The reasons they provided for joining the SAYFC board included:

- To give back to the organisation
- To make a difference
- To improve the organisation

2.3 Preparing for the SAYFC Board

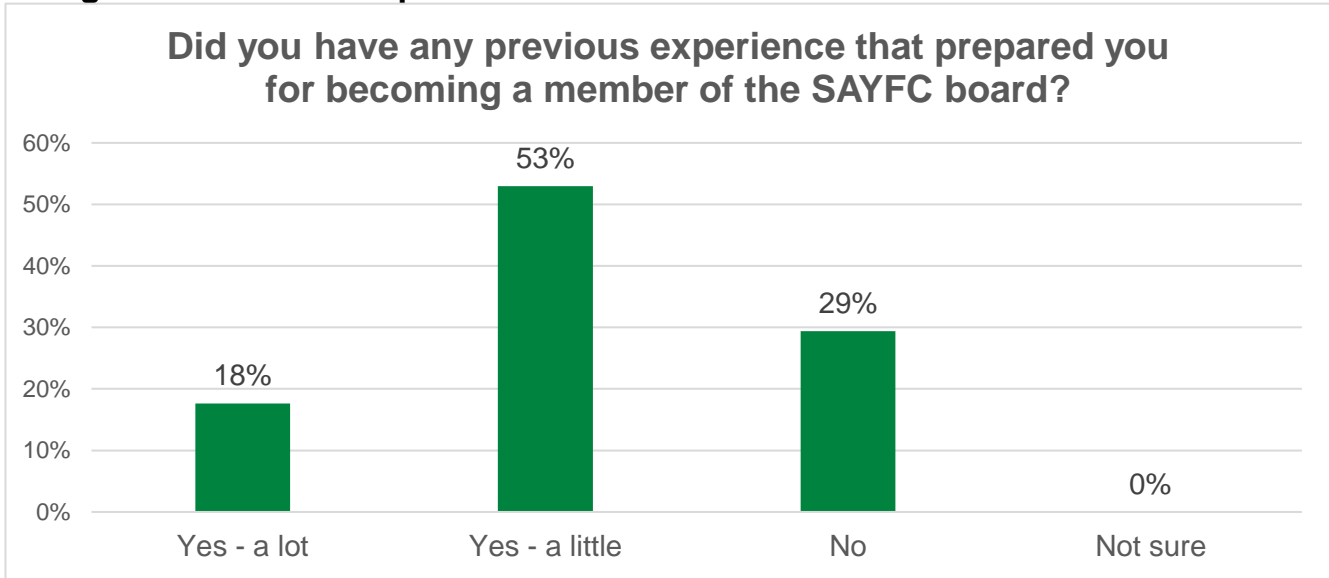
Figure 3. Clarity on what the SAYFC board would involve



Current and previous members were most likely to say they felt 'slightly clear' on what being on the SAYFC board would involve (41%). Just under a quarter (24%) felt 'clear' and just under a fifth (18%) felt 'very clear'.

Whilst just under a fifth answered 'not very clear' (18%), no respondents felt 'not at all clear'.

Figure 4. Previous experience

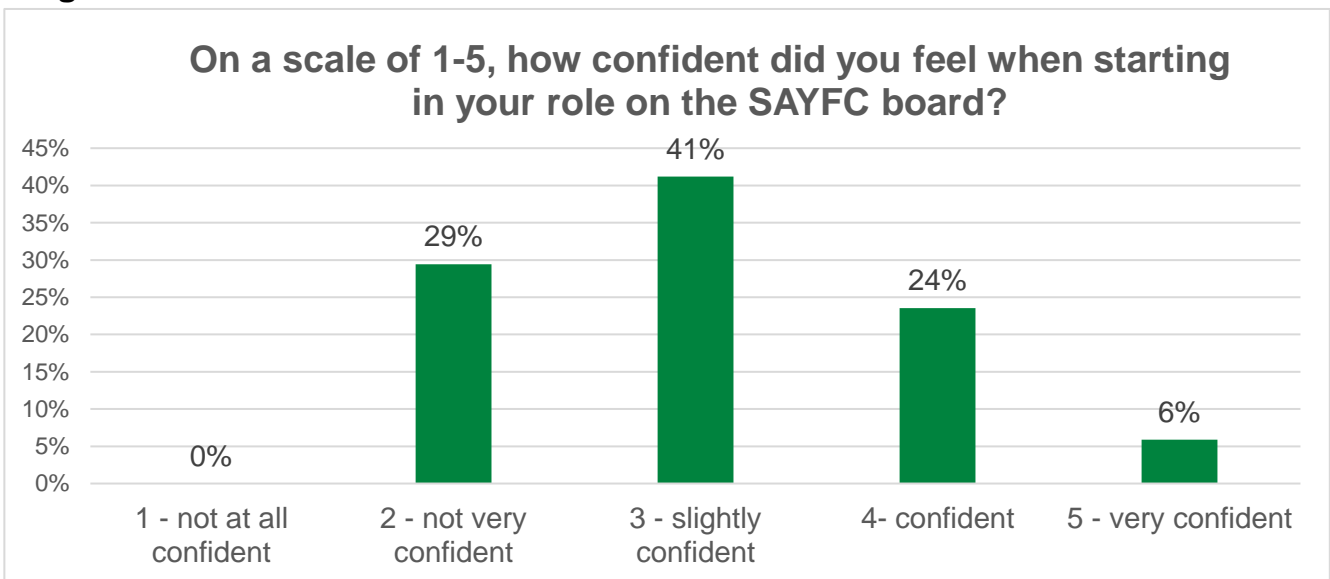


Over half (53%) of current and previous SAYFC board members felt they had ‘a little’ experience that prepared them for becoming a member of the SAYFC board. Just under a third of respondents (29%) felt they had no experience to prepare them. Almost a fifth (18%) said ‘yes – a lot’. No respondents said, ‘Not sure’.

Respondents were asked to explain their responses to this question. Below are examples of the type of experience respondents had:

- Sitting on other boards
- Holding other positions within the SAYFC
- Experience from their own career

Figure 5. Confidence



Current and previous SAYFC board members were most likely to feel ‘slightly confident’ when starting their role on the SAYFC board (41%). Just under a third

(29%) felt 'not very confident' and almost a quarter (24%) felt confident. Only 6% of respondents felt very confident. No respondents felt 'not at all confident'.

Respondents were asked to explain their responses to this question. Below are reasons for their responses.

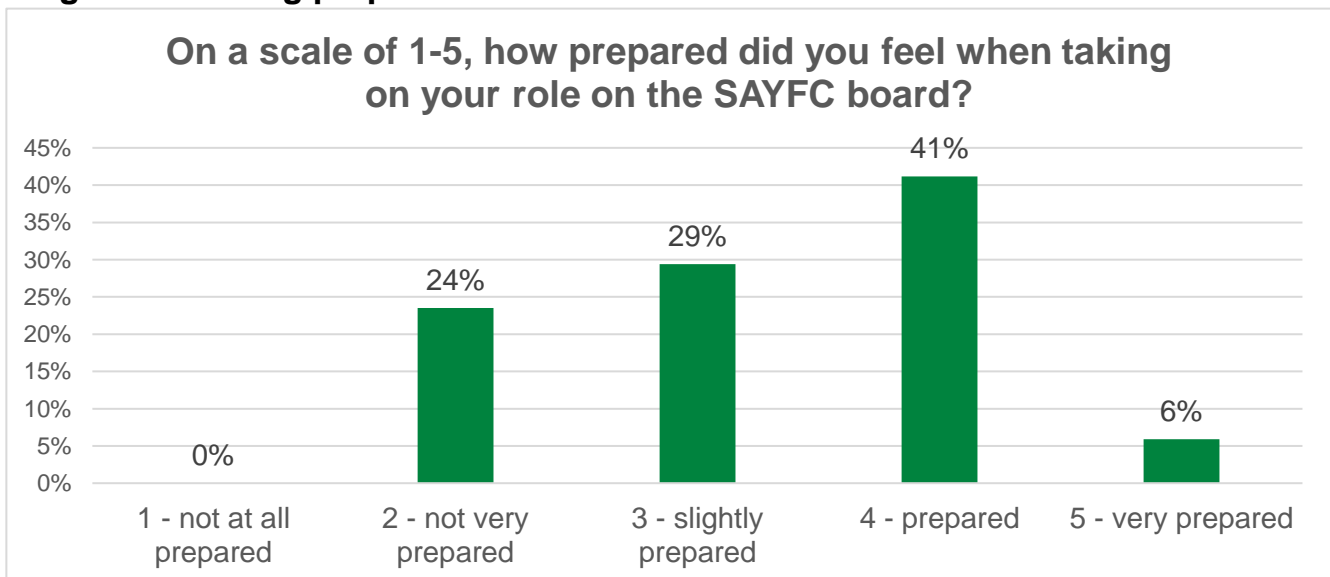
Why respondents did feel confident:

- Having a mentor
- Previous experience provided confidence
- Being a naturally confident person
- Being prepared by previous SAYFC board members
- The SAYFC provide a supportive network
- Induction sessions were helpful

Why respondents did not feel confident:

- Being new to the role can be daunting
- Allowing a wider network to attend SAYFC board meetings would provide insight into what being on the SAYFC board is like
- Pre-board training could be tailored more to prepare for the expectations of a board member and relevant activities (for example, report writing)

Figure 6. Feeling prepared



Nearly half (41%) of all current and previous SAYFC members felt 'prepared' when taking on their role on the SAYFC board. Just under a third of respondents (29%) felt 'slightly prepared' and almost a quarter (24%) felt 'not very prepared'. Only 6% felt very prepared. No respondents felt 'not at all prepared'.

Respondents were asked to explain their responses for this question. Below are reasons for their responses.

Why respondents felt prepared:

- Having held previous positions on the SAYFC board and knowing how the organisation works
- Previous work experience helped

Why respondents did not feel prepared:

- Staffing and resourcing may mean aims might not be achieved
- Induction was helpful, however more in-depth training would help
- Pushing themselves out of their comfort zone
- Training was not what was expected – key training was not provided (for example, accounts training, finances, difficult conversations, leadership training)

2.4 SAYFC Board Training

Figure 7. Average rating of training received



Respondents were asked to rate the training they have received throughout their time on the SAYFC board. These courses have covered a range of topics, from media skills and public speaking, to the roles and responsibilities of a trustee.

Respondents were asked to rate this training on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'Very Poor', 2 'Poor', 3 'Okay', 4 'Good' and 5 'Excellent'. Respondents were also given the options of 'did not receive this training' and 'can't remember'.

Overall, current and previous SAYFC members rated the training they have received whilst on the SAYFC board relatively highly. Figure 7 presents the average scores. Respondents rated training on 'communication' the highest (4.65) and training on 'understanding charitable structures' the lowest (3.41).

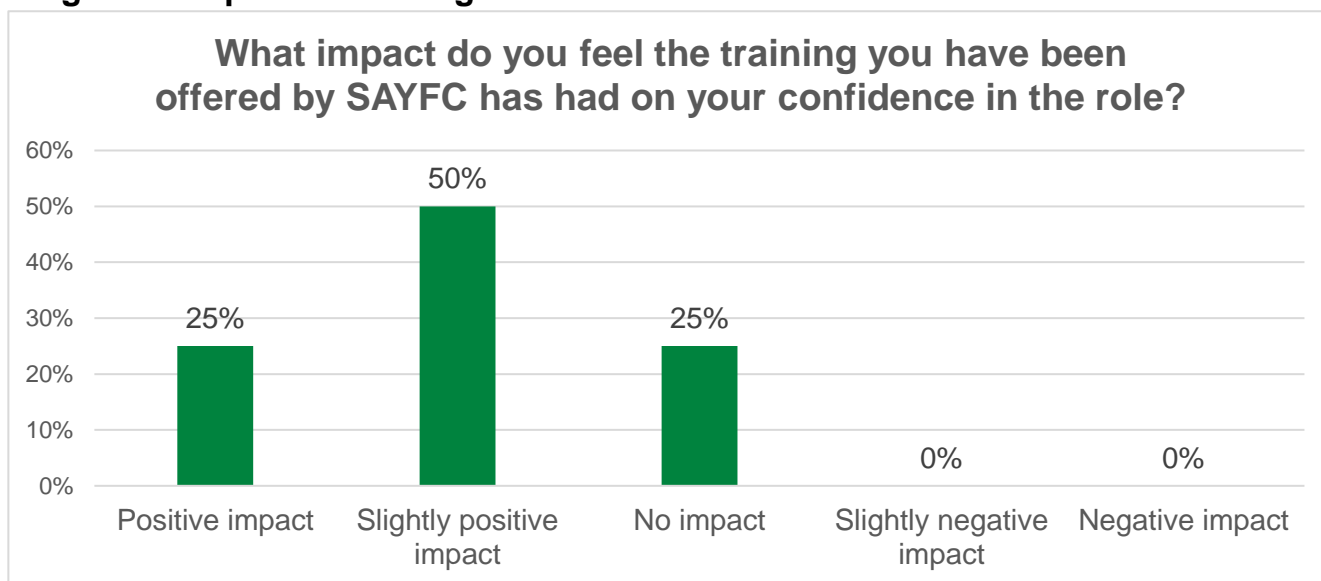
Training with the highest average score:

1. Communication – 4.65
2. Managing expectations – 4.53
3. Setting targets – 4.35

Training with the lowest average score:

1. Understanding charitable structures – 3.41
2. Your role and responsibility as a trustee – 3.59
3. Your liability as a trustee – 3.65

Figure 8. Impact of training



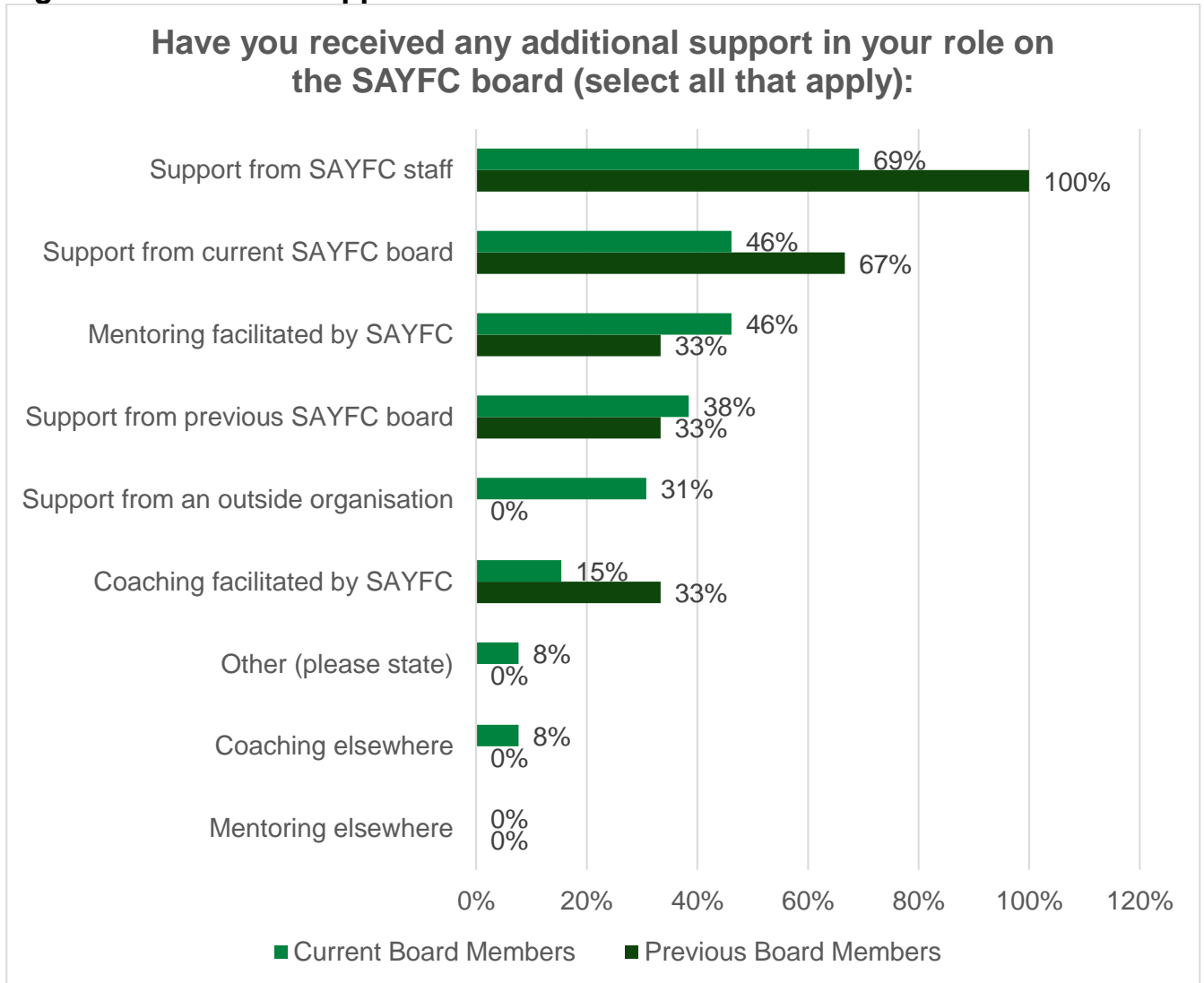
Half (50%) of current and previous SAYFC members felt that the training offered by SAYFC had a 'slightly positive impact'. A quarter (25%) felt it had a 'positive impact' and a quarter felt it had no impact (25%). No respondents felt that the training had a negative impact.

Respondents were asked to explain their responses to this question. Below are some explanations for the impact of the training:

- Training outwith the SAYFC had a positive impact
- Mentoring has been positive and helped with development
- Minimal board training before joining the board officially
- Training helped boost confidence

- Training has had benefits outside of the SAYFC board role also
- Training should be targeted to those less confident (for example, leadership training)
- Learning on the job is sometimes the best
- No training received by SAYFC

Figure 9. Additional support

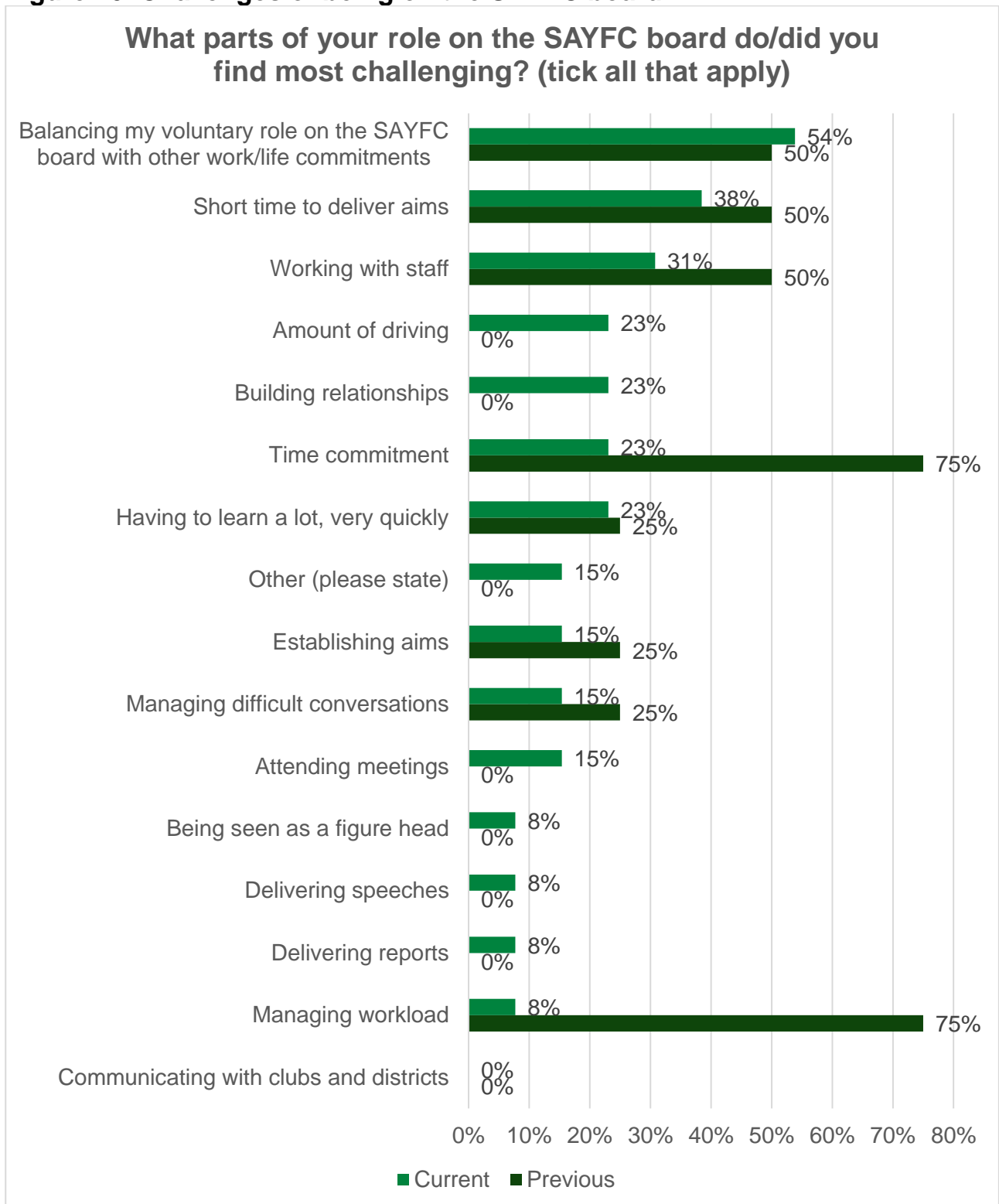


All previous SAYFC board members (100%) reported receiving support from SAYFC staff and, so far, the majority of current members reported the same (69%). Almost half (46%) of current members received additional support from mentoring facilitated by the SAYFC, which has had a positive impact, as mentioned above.

No current or previous SAYFC board members reported receiving mentoring elsewhere. No previous SAYFC board members reported receiving coaching elsewhere or support from an outside organisation. Current members mentioned receiving support from the Chairs of other organisations for young farmers.

2.5 Challenges and Expectations

Figure 10. Challenges of being on the SAYFC board



This survey question highlighted the challenges of being on the SAYFC board.

The areas current board members found most challenging were:

- Balancing the voluntary role with other commitments (54%)
- Short time to deliver aims (38%)
- Working with staff (31%)

Current respondents who provided further feedback felt that some challenges lay in the commitment and willingness of other SAYFC board members, and others felt their opinions are not heard.

The areas previous board members found most challenging were:

- Time commitment (75%)
- Managing workload (75%)
- Working with staff (50%)
- Short time to deliver aims (50%)
- Balancing the voluntary role with other commitments (50%)

The areas current board members found less challenging were:

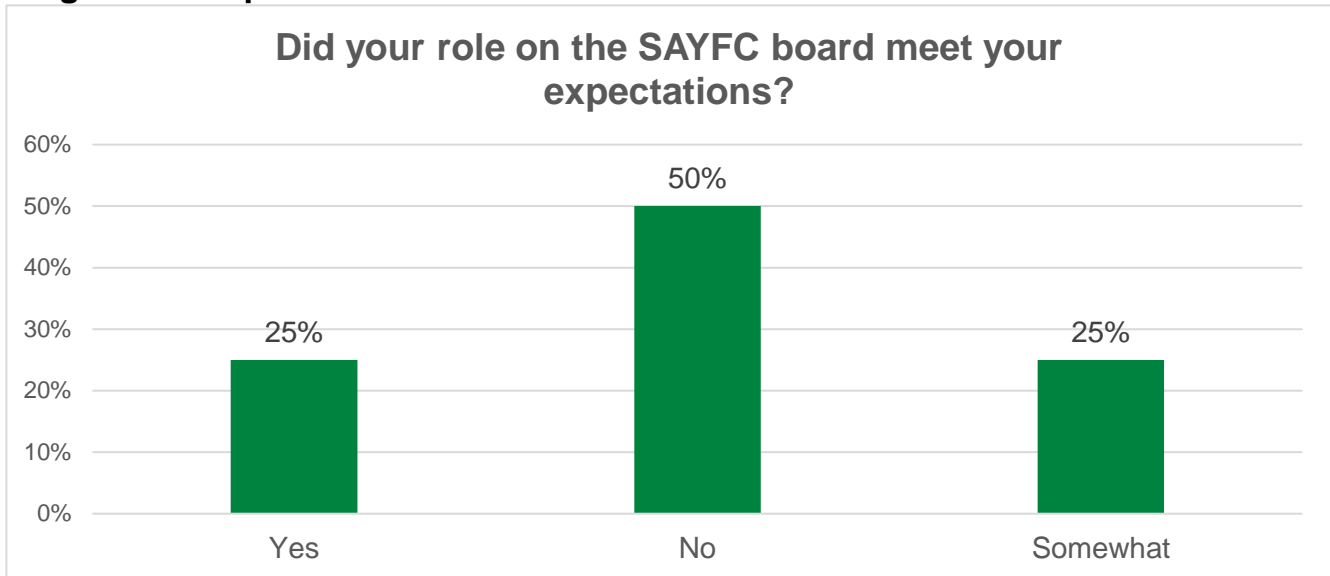
- Being seen as a figure head (8%)
- Managing workload (8%)
- Delivering reports (8%)
- Delivering speeches (8%)

No current board members found communicating with clubs and districts challenging.

No previous board members found these aspects challenging:

- Communicating with clubs and districts
- Being seen as a figure head
- Amount of driving
- Delivering speeches
- Delivering reports
- Building relationships
- Attending meetings

Figure 11. Expectations



Half (50%) of respondents felt that their role on the SAYFC board did not meet their expectations, while a quarter (25%) felt it did and 25% said 'somewhat'.

Respondents were asked to explain their responses to this question. Below are some of the reasons they provided:

- Difficult to balance the role with their own career
- Perceived issues in the organisation, including over-reliance on volunteer board members, which can cause tension with paid members of staff, and staff being slow to act or not fulfilling their own role/s (for example, volunteer board members being asked to run entire events)
- Adequate time not given to tasks
- Issues raised are not taken seriously
- Personal relationships can get in the way (favouritism)
- Lack of gratitude for hard work
- A need to rebrand
- A year in the role is not long enough to bring about real change

Some respondents felt that these issues have impacted their own views towards the organisation and their commitment to its aims.

2.6 Further Training and Development

In this section, respondents were asked to provide details on further training or development opportunities they would be interested in, and any further comments.

What further personal development or training opportunities would you be interested in?

Respondents were asked what further training opportunities they would be interested in. Below is a list of topics which respondents would like training in:

- Public speaking – *‘it’s such a big part of the role’*
- How to follow and implement strategy
- Chairing meetings – *‘how to make sure everyone feels comfortable and include all in the conversation’*
- HR/staff appraisal training – *‘we lack knowledge on how to run this committee in the best possible way’*
- Training for specific roles
- Leadership training
- How to manage difficult conversations
- Mentoring
- Knowledge exchange with other organisations
- Personal development skills
- Team effectiveness training – *‘I don’t feel the board are currently working together as much as they could do’*
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Social media training
- Handover training
- Career and business-related training

Leadership training, managing difficult conversations and mentoring were the most common training opportunities which respondents stated that they would like to have in the future.

Respondents were asked if they had any further comments about how SAYFC board members can be supported before starting their new role, and suggested:

- More training (including from outside sources)
- More support for new members
- Support for the new board structure
- Leading and chairing meetings
- Training in managing difficult conversations
- How to manage progress

Many of the respondents mentioned mentoring as important in supporting new members, including a better mentoring structure, and more mentoring overall.

3. Conclusion

Summary

- This report has outlined the findings of research into the training needs of Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) board members.
- The survey has collected feedback from both current and previous SAYFC board members and highlights a number of factors for the organisation to consider in developing future training.
- Overall, young people on the SAYFC board want to make a difference and contribute to the organisation.
- Survey respondents highlighted challenges they have experienced during their time on the SAYFC board, and this points to areas to address in order to make a positive and productive difference.
- SAYFC staff should engage with prospective board members early and provide supportive interventions to allow board members to make the most of their time in their role.
- Mentoring stood out as an opportunity board members feel they would really benefit from, and SAYFC staff should take this into consideration in the future.
- Whilst it constitutes a small sample, this survey has provided an insight into the demographics of the SAYFC board. There are more females than males on the board (59% compared to 41%), however all respondents were white, and the majority (89%) do not have a disability. Moving forward, the SAYFC should think about diversity and inclusion on the board.

This report has outlined the findings of research into the training needs of SAYFC board members. The results of this survey will inform a new training programme for future SAYFC board members.

This research provides an insight into the motivations of respondents in taking on SAYFC board roles, the training they would like to receive and how they feel about being a board member.

In terms of their motivations for taking on a board role, the majority (92%) of current board members who responded to the survey were motivated by personal development. All previous board members (100%) saw it as an opportunity to network. This survey shows the range of motivations board members had, including seeing it as an opportunity for personal development, to network and to give back to the organisation and continue its legacy.

In terms of confidence before starting their role, most current and previous board members felt 'slightly confident' when starting their role on the SAYFC board (41%). Only 6% felt 'very confident'. Training, mentoring and previous experience helped respondents to feel confident.

Overall, the research shows that SAYFC board members want to make a difference to the organisation and to develop themselves, whilst making friends and other connections.

There is a strong feeling of positivity from the survey respondents in terms of how they feel towards the organisation, however some important issues were also highlighted such as: a need for further training, how to make all board members feel included and creating a better working relationship with SAYFC staff. It is important for the SAYFC to consider the issues raised by board members in this survey, including practical aspects in terms of the organisation's expectations of those on the board and the type of work it involves. Coming up with solutions and including board members in this process will also provide a positive outcome.

As half of the survey respondents (50%) felt that the role did not meet their expectations, it would be useful for SAYFC staff to engage with board members early on, and to support them in managing the workload of the SAYFC board alongside their own commitments. Early interventions, such as engaging with upcoming board members, offering training to increase their confidence, and creating a better atmosphere for team working would help overcome some of these issues.

Respondents also provided information that would help boost the confidence of board members. Mentoring was the most common response.

When asked about further training and development opportunities, and what has helped them in their SAYFC board role, respondents stated that mentoring is extremely helpful, and they would like to have more of it. Respondents would also benefit from having a structured training programme, tailored to their needs. The programme should take into account the feedback provided here on training that respondents would find most useful. Topics which respondents indicated would contribute to their development on the SAYFC board included: mentoring, leadership training, managing difficult conversations and how to manage the administrative side of the role.

Whilst the sample size of this survey was small by design, it has also provided an insight into the current demographics of the SAYFC board. There are more females than males on the SAYFC board (59% compared to 41%). This gender split is fairly even; however, it is important to note that many women are taking up key roles on the board. In terms of diversity and inclusion, all respondents were white, and the majority (89%) do not have a disability. The SAYFC may want to think about their recruitment strategies in order to create a more diverse board.

4. Recommendations and Next Steps

Summary

- This section sets out a number of recommendations for the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) staff to take forward.
- Providing training will allow SAYFC board members to make the most of their time on the board, learn and develop their skills.
- A tailored training programme should be developed for all board members with a focus on helping those who may feel less confident in different areas. SAYFC staff should also develop a monitoring and evaluation framework that will allow them to ensure the training programme is having a positive outcome.
- SAYFC staff should engage more with board members to create better working relationships.

Based on the survey findings presented in this report, the following recommendations can be made:

1. To ensure that SAYFC board members are able to fully contribute and make the most effective use of their time on the board, providing training on the topics mentioned above (for example, leadership) would be helpful.
2. SAYFC staff should target specific training at building confidence, to help those who are less confident on the board. Training and mentoring will help with this, but also creating a supportive and encouraging environment where people feel they can raise concerns and voice their opinions. Some respondents felt they had 'natural confidence'. Asking those members to provide in-house training or peer support may help others to develop their confidence.
3. Future SAYFC board members would benefit from early engagement, in terms of information on what the role will involve, the time commitment of taking on a board position and the type of work it requires. The opportunity to meet with current board members so they can have a clearer understanding of the role would also help future board members to feel more prepared.
4. Having a clear mentoring programme for new members of the SAYFC board will allow members to develop their skills and set their own personal goals in terms of what they want to achieve during their time in the role. The SAYFC board could set up a peer mentoring programme, or a buddy system for new starts.
5. The SAYFC should review any training provided and develop a monitoring and evaluation plan. This will ensure that any revised training plan is suitable, useful and has positive outcomes.
6. Permanent SAYFC staff should aim to develop good working relationships with volunteer board members to establish a productive and effective working environment.

Annex A: Privacy Notice

Privacy Notice: Women in Agriculture: Young Farmers Board Ready Training

Who are we?

Rural and Environment Science & Analytical Services Division (RESAS) is a Scottish Government department that produces statistics and research on agriculture, food, environment and rural issues.

Researchers working in this Government department have been asked to examine the training needs of Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) board members by the Scottish Government's Women in Agriculture policy team.

What information do we collect about you?

We may collect and process the following data about you:

- Contact details, including your name, email address and telephone number
- Demographic information including your age group, gender and location.
- Information you give during the survey, relating to your own training needs, skills, confidence and experience as a Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs board member

What is our lawful basis for collecting and using your personal information?

Participation in the survey is voluntary and we would like to hear your views about what training you would find or have found useful. The legal basis for processing personal data is the performance of a task carried out in the public interest.

Following recommendations made by the Women in Agriculture Taskforce in their [final report \(2019\)](#), the Scottish Government is setting up a Women in Agriculture Development Programme This programme will deliver training and mentoring to support women in agriculture to build their confidence, enhance their business skills, and develop their leadership abilities.

We are collecting this data in the performance of a public task, under Article 6(1)(e) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), and in accordance with Section 4 of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act 1911.

How will we use your information?

The survey data will be collected and analysed by researchers in Rural and Environment Science & Analytical Services Division (RESAS) and will be used in a report of the research findings. Your personal information will be anonymised. This means any information that can directly identify you, such as your name, email address or telephone number, will not be included in any published reports. We will

share the final report with the Women in Agriculture policy team and the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC). Data may be used for further research & statistical purposes
This research will inform the development of new training for board members in 2022.

Who will we share your information with?

We will not share your information with any other groups. We will publish the final report on the Scottish Government website and share it with Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs and the Women in Agriculture team. The research data will be anonymised in this report.

Will we send your information outside the UK?

No, we do not transfer your information outside the UK.

How long will we store your information?

The survey will be delivered on the online survey platform Questback. The survey data will be stored securely on the Scottish Government electronic Record and Document Management system with access restricted to the project team.

We will retain the data we collect from the survey until August 2023 when it will be permanently deleted. The information will be stored on a secure server and in line with data protection legislation.

What are my rights in relation to the information held about me?

You have the right to request a copy of the personal data that we hold about you. If you would like a copy of some or all of your personal data, you can find more information on how you can do this by visiting <https://www.gov.scot/publications/subject-access-request-form/>

We want to make sure that your personal data is accurate and up to date. You may ask us to correct or remove personal data you think is inaccurate.

Do I have a right to complain about the way information has been used?

If you have any questions about the research or a complaint about how we have handled your personal information, please get in touch with anna.savage@gov.scot or Emily.Harris2@gov.scot.

If this does not resolve your complaint, you can contact our Data Protection Officer by email at dataprotectionofficer@gov.scot.

However, you also have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection matters with the Information Commissioner's Office, who can be contacted by post at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow
Cheshire, SK9 5AF

By phone on 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745.

Visit their website for more information at: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Annex B: Questionnaire

Scottish association of young farmers clubs board ready training survey

If you are a current member of the SAYFC Board (and you have been a Board member in the past also) please answer the survey from your current SAYFC Board role.

1) * Are you a current or previous member of the SAYFC Board?

- Current (2022/23)
- Member in 2021/22
- Member in 2020/21
- Member in 2019/20

2) What is your current role on the SAYFC Board?

- Past National Chair
- National Chair
- National Vice Chair
- West Region Chair
- East Region Chair
- North Region Chair
- Agri & Rural Affairs Chair
- Comms & Marketing Chair
- Competition & Events Chair
- Development & Wellbeing Chair
- Finance Chair
- International Chair
- President
- Vice President
- Ex-officio

3) What roles did you hold on the SAYFC Board?

- Past National Chair
- National Chair
- National Vice Chair
- West Region Chair
- East Region Chair
- North Region Chair
- Agri & Rural Affairs Chair
- Comms & Marketing Chair
- Competition & Events Chair
- Development & Wellbeing Chair

- Finance Chair
- International Chair
- President
- Vice President
- Ex-officio

**4) What do you hope to get out of being a member of the SAYFC board?
(Select all that apply)**

- Personal development
- Career development
- Opportunity to network
- Opportunity to socialise
- Other (please state)

**5) What did you hope to get out of being a member of the SAYFC board?
(Select all that apply)**

- Personal development
- Career development
- Opportunity to network
- Opportunity to socialise
- Other (please state)

6) Before starting your role, how clear (on a scale of 1-5) did you feel about what being on the SAYFC board would involve? (1 being not at all clear and 5 being very clear)

- 1 – not at all clear
- 2 – not very clear
- 3 – slightly clear
- 4 – clear
- 5 – very clear

7) Did you have any previous experience that prepared you for becoming a member of the SAYFC board?

- Yes – a lot
- Yes – a little
- No
- Not sure

8) Please explain your answer

9) On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all confident and 5 being very confident), how confident did you feel when starting in your role on the SAYFC board?

- 1 – not at all confident
- 2 – not very confident
- 3 – slightly confident

- 4 – confident
- 5 – very confident

10) Please explain your answer

11) On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all prepared and 5 being very prepared) how prepared did you feel when taking on your role on the SAYFC board?

- 1 – not at all prepared
- 2 – not very prepared
- 3 – slightly prepared
- 4 – prepared
- 5 – very prepared

12) Please explain your answer

13) Thinking about training you received as a member of the SAYFC board, how would you rate it on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very poor and 5 being excellent):

	1 - very poor	2 - poor	3 - okay	4 - good	5 - excellent	Did not receive this training	Can't remember
Understanding charitable structures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your role and responsibility as a trustee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your liability as a trustee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your role versus that of the professional staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your legal and financial responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Media skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handover procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparing for board meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1 - very poor	2 - poor	3 - okay	4 - good	5 - excellent	Did not receive this training	Can't remember
Participating in board meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unconscious bias	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running online, virtual meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decision making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting targets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14) What impact do you feel the training you have been offered by SAYFC has had on your confidence in the role?

- Positive impact
- Slightly positive impact
- No impact
- Slightly negative impact
- Negative impact

15) Please explain your answer

16) Have you received any additional support in your role on the SAYFC board (select all that apply):

- Coaching facilitated by SAYFC
- Mentoring facilitated by SAYFC
- Coaching elsewhere
- Mentoring elsewhere
- Support from current SAYFC board
- Support from previous SAYFC board
- Support from SAYFC staff
- Support from an outside organisation
- Other (please state)

17) Did you receive any additional support in your role on the SAYFC board (select all that apply):

- Coaching facilitated by SAYFC
- Mentoring facilitated by SAYFC

- Coaching elsewhere
- Mentoring elsewhere
- Support from current SAYFC board
- Support from previous SAYFC board
- Support from SAYFC staff
- Support from an outside organisation
- Other (please state)

18) What parts of your role on the SAYFC board do you find most challenging? (tick all that apply)

- Attending meetings
- Balancing my voluntary role on the SAYFC board with other work/life commitments
- Managing difficult conversations
- Having to learn a lot, very quickly
- Time commitment
- Managing workload
- Building relationships
- Delivering reports
- Delivering speeches
- Working with staff
- Short time to deliver aims
- Amount of driving
- Establishing aims
- Being seen as a figure head
- Communicating with clubs and districts
- Other (please state)

19) What parts of your role on the SAYFC board did you find most challenging?

- Attending meetings
- Balancing my voluntary role on the SAYFC board with other work/life commitments
- Managing difficult conversations
- Having to learn a lot, very quickly
- Time commitment
- Managing workload
- Building relationships
- Delivering reports
- Delivering speeches
- Working with staff
- Short time to deliver aims
- Amount of driving
- Establishing aims
- Being seen as a figure head
- Communicating with clubs and districts

- Other (please state)

20) Did your role on the SAYFC board meet your expectations?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

21) Please explain your answer

22) What further personal development or training opportunities would you be interested in?

23) Do you have any further comments on how we can support SAYFC board members as they start their new role? e.g. training courses, development opportunities, mentoring

Thank you for completing the survey so far.

The Scottish Government is required to collect equality evidence to meet requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. This information is not mandatory and will be used for statistical and research purposes only.

These questions are voluntary and if there are any questions you do not want to answer, please just go on to the next one.

24) What is your age group?

- 16-25
- 26-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 60 and over

25) What is your sex?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
-

This question is voluntary. Answer only if you are aged 16 or over. Trans is a term used to describe people who gender is not the same as the sex they were registered at birth.

26) Do you consider yourself to be trans, or have a trans history?

- No
- Yes
- Prefer not to say

27) If yes, and if you would like to, please describe your trans status (for example non-binary, trans man, trans woman):This question is voluntary. Answer only if you are aged 16 or over.

28) Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Straight/ Heterosexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other sexual orientation, please write in

29) Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

- Yes
- No

30) If 'Yes', does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

- Yes, a lot
- Yes, a little
- Not at all

31) What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?

- None
- Church of Scotland
- Roman Catholic
- Other Christian
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Sikh

- Jewish
- Pagan
- Another religion or body, please write in:

32) What is your ethnic group? Choose ONE section from A-F, then ONE answer which best describes your ethnic group or background.

- A White
- B Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- C Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian
- D African, Scottish African or British African
- E Caribbean or Black
- F Other ethnic group

33) A White

- Scottish
- Other British
- Irish
- Polish
- Gypsy/ Traveller
- Roma
- Showman/ Showwoman
- Other white ethnic group, please write in:

34) B Mixed or multiple ethnic groups. Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, please write in:

35) C Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian

- Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani
- Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian
- Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi
- Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese
- Other, please write in:

36) D African, Scottish African or British African. Please write in (for example, NIGERIAN, SOMALI):

37) E Caribbean or Black. Please write in (for example, SCOTTISH CARIBBEAN, BLACK SCOTTISH):

38) F Other ethnic group

- Arab, Scottish Arab or British Arab
- Other, please write in (for example, SIKH, JEWISH):

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this <statistical bulletin/ social research publication>:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available via an alternative route <specify or delete this text>
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact socialresearch@scotland.gsi.gov.uk for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.



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