

# 3SC Membership Survey Results Report

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## 1. Introduction

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In May 2021, 3SC launched our first 3SC Membership Survey. 3SC's Membership Scheme provides advice and support to improve social business and help them be successful in winning and delivering public sector contracts either as an individual organisation or as part of a 3SC supply chain. This helps members access, be contract ready to win and also successfully deliver, both large and small public sector contracts.

There are two levels of membership:

- **Full Membership:** Full membership carries a small cost. The cost of membership depends on the size of the organisation. Full membership includes regular learning events, advice and support to improve social businesses, a place on the 3SC preferred provider list, a range of supporting documentation and toolkits, information on tender opportunities and an opportunity to deliver on contracts 3SC win alongside a full range of sector-specific advice and support.
- **Associate Membership:** Associate membership is free and includes sector updates, access to funding opportunities and access to member events for a small fee.

Alongside the valuable support services, 3SC membership also offers an opportunity to join an influential group of charities and social organisations providing a united voice in challenging the current issues within public procurement processes that provide a barrier to so many third sector organisations.

3SC has supported and enabled the third sector to access more than £84million since its inception. We have always been committed to delivering public services through SMEs primarily local, passionate, mission driven, social organisations who deliver the crucial social impact and outcomes that are needed in person centred public services.

### 1.1 The Survey

The aim of the survey was to ascertain Members' views on the contents and benefits of the 3SC Membership offer. The views expressed in the survey will help ensure we are getting the membership offer right and that we can identify any areas where we can improve and enhance our membership offer going forward.

The survey was made up of a series of questions that asked members about their thoughts and use of various aspects of the membership offer. Some of the questions were in the form of statements that asked members to provide a response of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Not Applicable (N/A). Some of the statements also offered the option of stating that the respondent had not made use of the membership aspect the question related to. Where statements asked for these

responses, they were worded so that responses of Strongly Agree/Agree were positive responses to the statements and Disagree/Strongly Disagree were negative responses to the statements.

After each question, members were asked to comment on their response especially if they disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements. Members were also asked which aspects of their membership offer they have found most useful and whether there is anything else they would like to see included in the full member offer. The final question asked members to provide any comments or thoughts that will help us to improve our offer to members.

### **1.3 Responses**

The survey was sent via email with a link to the on-line survey to 98 members. This was made up of 55 Associate Members and 43 Full Members. Two of the emails were undeliverable indicating they are no longer in use.

The total response rate for the survey was 40%. This is made up of a response rate of 44% of Associate Members and a response rate of 33% of Full Members.

## 2. Survey Results

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### 2.1 Summary Results

The responses to statements that required a positive response of Strongly Agree/Agree, a negative response of Disagree/Strongly Disagree or Not Applicable (N/A) were mostly positive and highlighted which aspects of the membership offer are utilised well.

- 63% of responses were from Associate Members and 37% of responses were from Full Members.
- 50% of respondents have been members for 1-2 years.
- 100% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree that they find communication with 3SC useful.
- 78% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree that the Member Events have been useful and informative.
- 82% of respondents who are full members Strongly Agree or Agree that the Full Membership cost provides good value for money.

### 2.2 Results in Detail

Results for each question of the survey can be found below.

#### 2.2.1 Questions 1 and 2

Question 1 asked respondents to state their name and Question 2 asked respondents to state the name of the organisation they represent. Respondents were informed that they did not have to provide this information if they preferred to remain anonymous.

For Question 1, 31 of the 38 respondents provided their name of which 2 respondents provided their first name only. Seven respondents skipped this question.

For Question 2, 30 of the 38 respondents gave the name of the organisation they represent. Of these only one organisation provided responses from two representatives. Eight respondents skipped this question.

For the purposes of confidentiality, the names of the respondents have not been provided. Table 1 shows the names of the organisations the respondents represent.

**Table 1: Name of Organisation**

Name of Organisation
Groundwork Cheshire Lancashire and Merseyside
15 Billion EBP
YJG Counselling Services
Tower House Horses CIO
Red Ochre
Tomorrow's Women Wirral
Beacon Centre for the Blind
Step Together Volunteering
Zems Academy x 2
Element Society
PossAbilities
S J Teal Consultancy Ltd
Jones and Jones Consultancy Ltd
Cornelly Development Trust (CADDT)
A Band of Brothers
Belina Consulting Ltd
Elite Supported Employment Agency
Citadel Academy
The Sapphire Community Group
Successful Mums
KPC Youth & Community
TJ Training & Consultancy Ltd
Derventio Housing Trust
JAGS Foundation
Workforce Development Consultancy
Seeds for Growth
Ongo
Access Training (SW) Limited
Parenting Together

### 2.2.2 Question 3

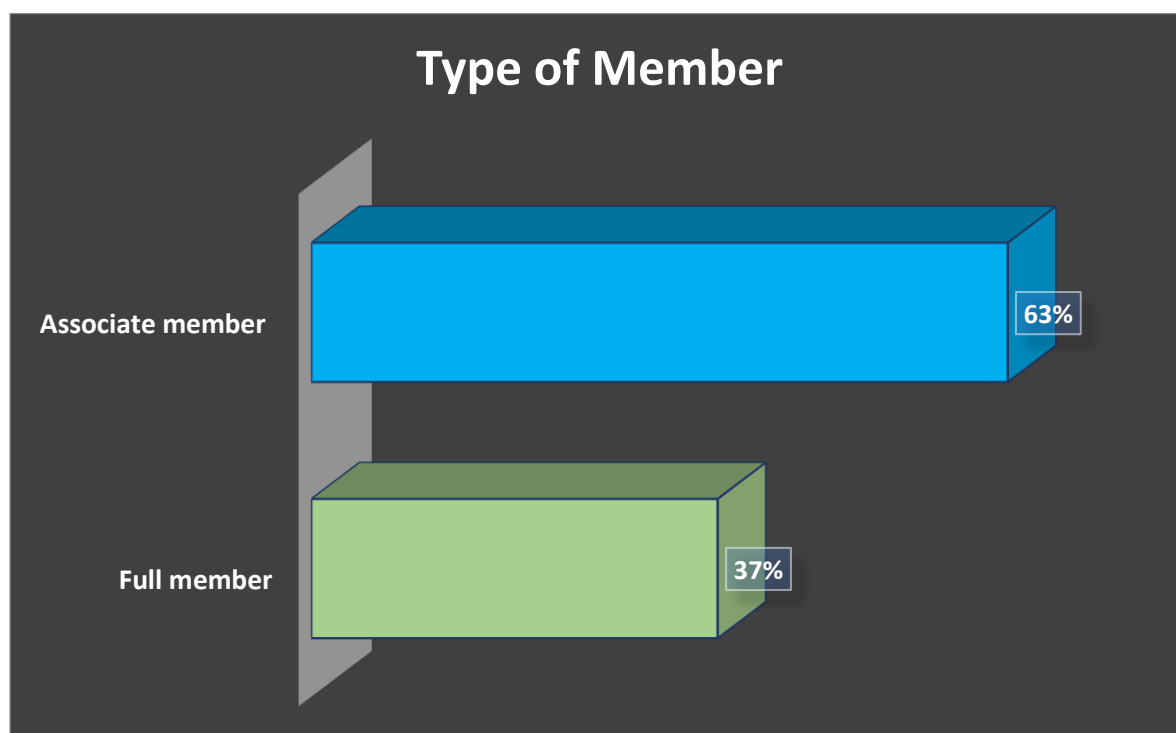
Question 3 asked respondents whether they are a Full Member or an Associate Member.

- Full Membership carries a small cost. The cost of membership depends on the size of the organisation. Full membership includes learning events, advice and support to improve social businesses, a place on the 3SC preferred provider list, a range of supporting documentation and toolkits, information on tender opportunities and an opportunity to deliver on contracts we win alongside a full range of sector-specific advice and support.
- Associate Membership is free and includes sector updates, access to funding opportunities and access to member events for a small fee.

All respondents answered this question. The majority of members who responded to the survey were Associate Members.

Chart 1 below shows the breakdown of types of membership in detail.

**Chart 1: Type of Member**



### 2.2.3 Question 4

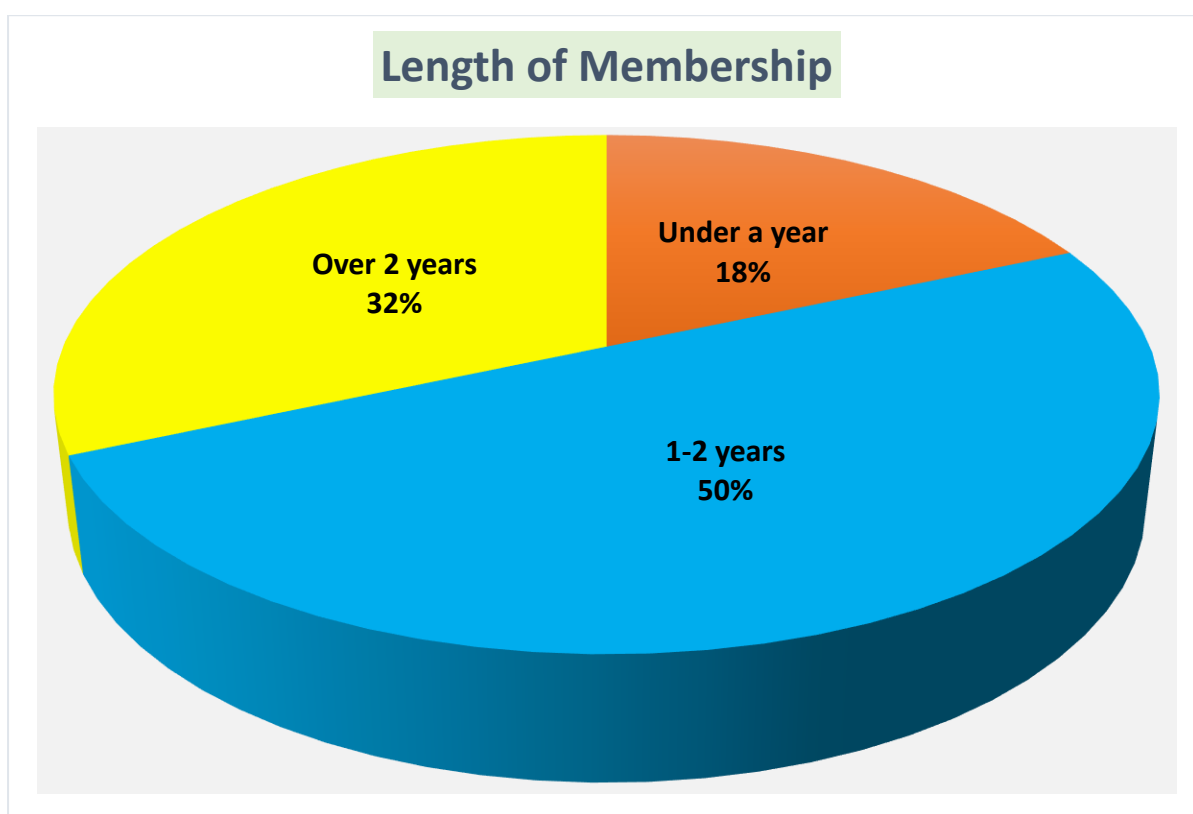
Question 4 asked respondents how long they have been a member. The options offered were:

- Under a year
- 1-2 years
- Over 2 years

All respondents answered this question.

Chart 2 below shows the breakdown of the length of time respondents have been a member in detail.

**Chart 2: Length of Membership**



### 2.2.4 Questions 5

Question 5 asked respondents whether they find communications from 3SC useful. These communications contain tender opportunities, articles on key issues and other news for the third sector. All respondents answered this question.

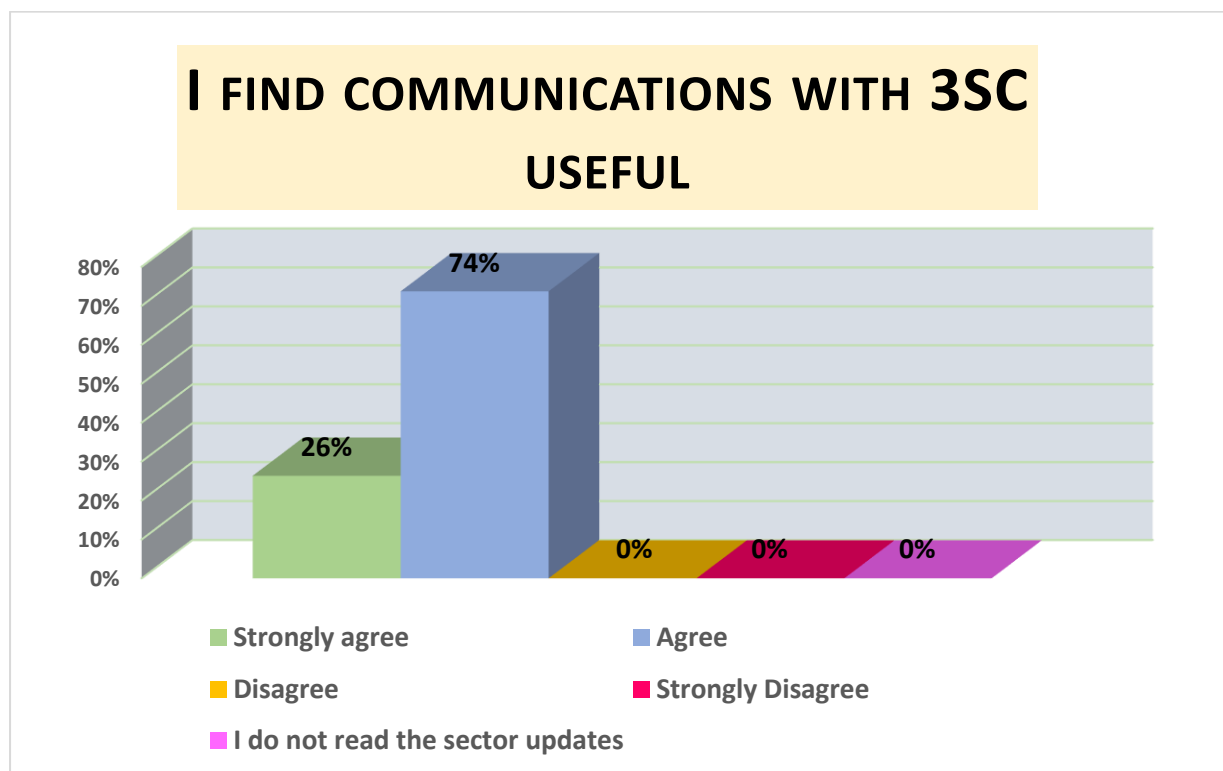
Respondents were given five options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or I do not read the sector updates. Respondents were asked to comment on their response, especially where a response of Disagree or Strongly Disagree had been given to the statement.

- 100% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree that they find communications from 3SC useful.

Charts 3 show the responses to the statement in detail.



**Chart 3: Communication with 3SC**



**Four comments were received:**

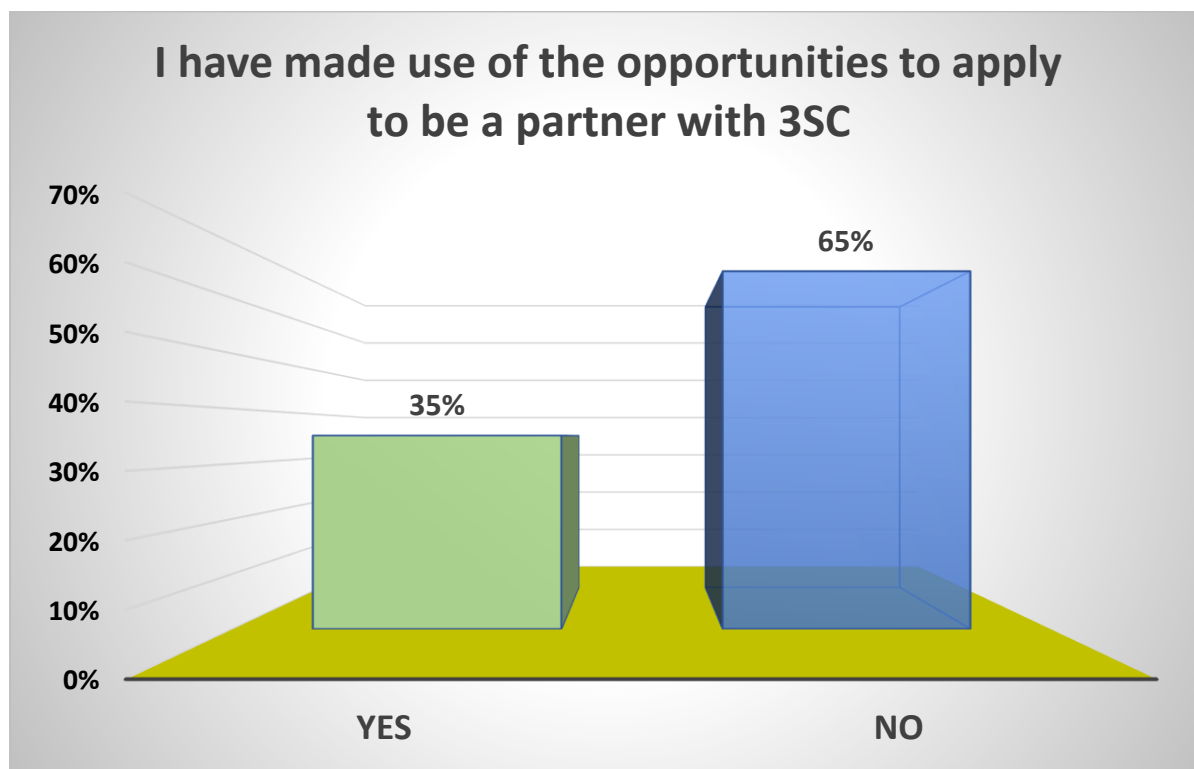
- 3SC provides a very useful service.
- Felt very supported by 3SC and listened to.
- It gives our organisation just that little extra when it comes to other opportunities with other organisations.
- They are relevant to our organisation and sector.

**2.2.5 Question 6**

Questions 6 asked respondents whether they have made use of the opportunities to apply to be a partner with 3SC to deliver new tender and contract opportunities. Respondents could respond with either yes or no. Respondents were also asked to comment on their response to give 3SC an understanding of what may be preventing members from making use of opportunities. One respondent skipped this question.

Chart 4 shows the responses in detail.

**Chart 4: Opportunities to be a partner with 3SC**



**Seventeen comments were received:**

- Need to reach out for more support from 3SC.
- We have bid for work in the past, nothing in the last few years.
- Nothing in our geographical area.
- I would if something appropriate or pertinent to our organisation became available.
- Working on the neuro diversity project.
- Not in a position at the moment, as we have a big contract to deliver.
- Nothing suitable has come up yet, though have made several enquiries.
- We previously delivered SES with 3SC but have not undertaken anything else since.

- Not as yet as we want to deliver on the funding we do have.
- No opportunities of relevance to us so far.
- Tried to apply but was not successful.
- Are willing and have been part of a partnership that was not successful.
- Have not found any open opportunities to date.
- This was through a client's training company who was a member.
- Have been a subcontractor.
- Not very helpful.
- Nothing suitable has come up yet, though have made several enquiries.

### **2.2.6 Question 7**

Question 7 asked respondents about whether the self-assessment toolkit has helped them to identify areas where they can improve the business. Full Members can access the self-assessment toolkit to check if they are contract/bid ready and identify areas they need to work on to pass the due diligence process. All respondents answered this question.

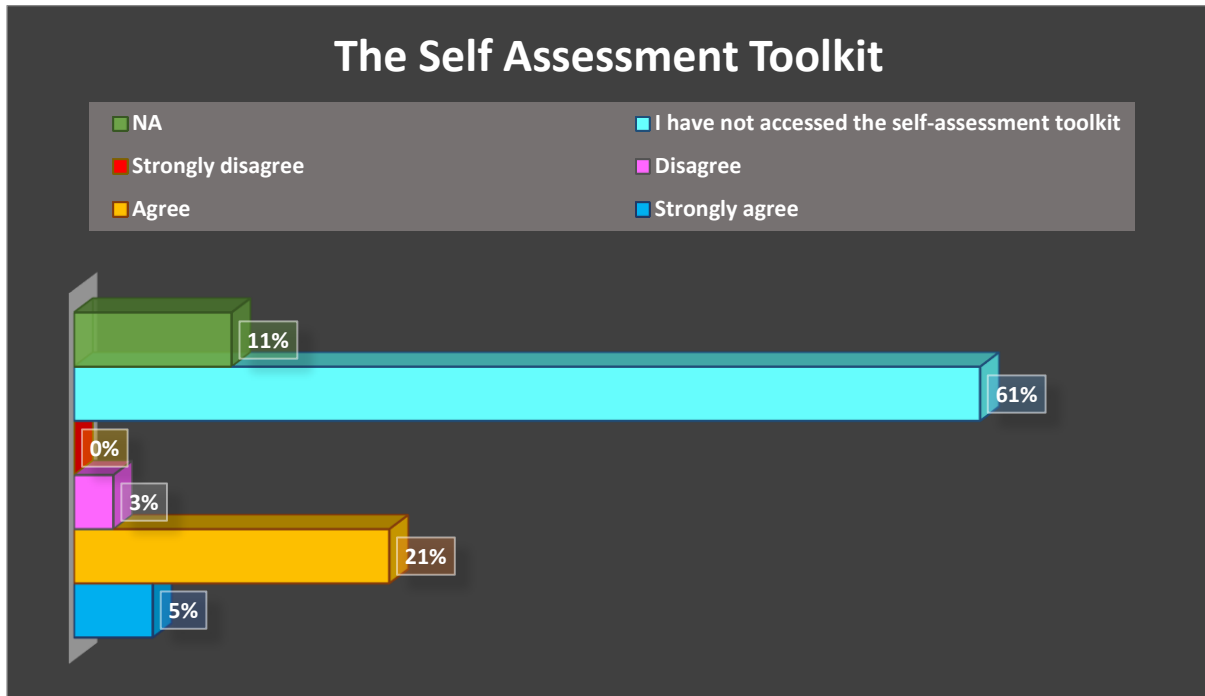
Respondents were given the option of responding with Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Not Applicable or I have not accessed the self-assessment toolkit.

Respondents were asked to comment on their response, especially if they Disagree or strongly Disagree with the statement.

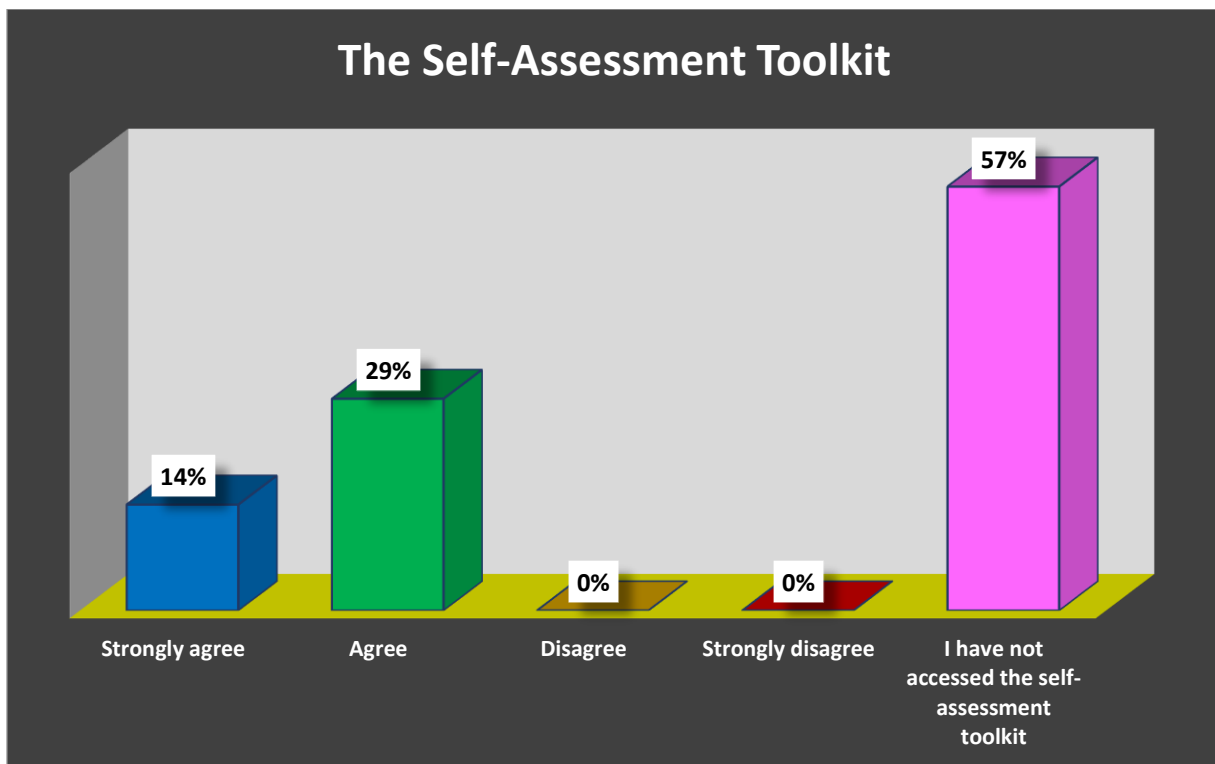
Chart 5 shows the responses to the statement including both Full and Associate Members.

Chart 6 shows the responses to the statement with responses from Associate Members removed. This is to help 3SC gain a greater understanding of whether those Full Members who can access the self-assessment toolkit have found it helpful.

**Chart 5: The Self-Assessment Toolkit - all responses**



**Chart 6: The Self-Assessment Toolkit - Associate Members removed**



**One comment was received:**

- It gives us a better understanding of our stability.

**2.2.7 Question 8**

Question 8 asked respondents about whether they have found the Member Events useful and informative. Member Events include regular forums, learning and networking sessions, such as webinars and lobbying events. One respondent skipped this question.

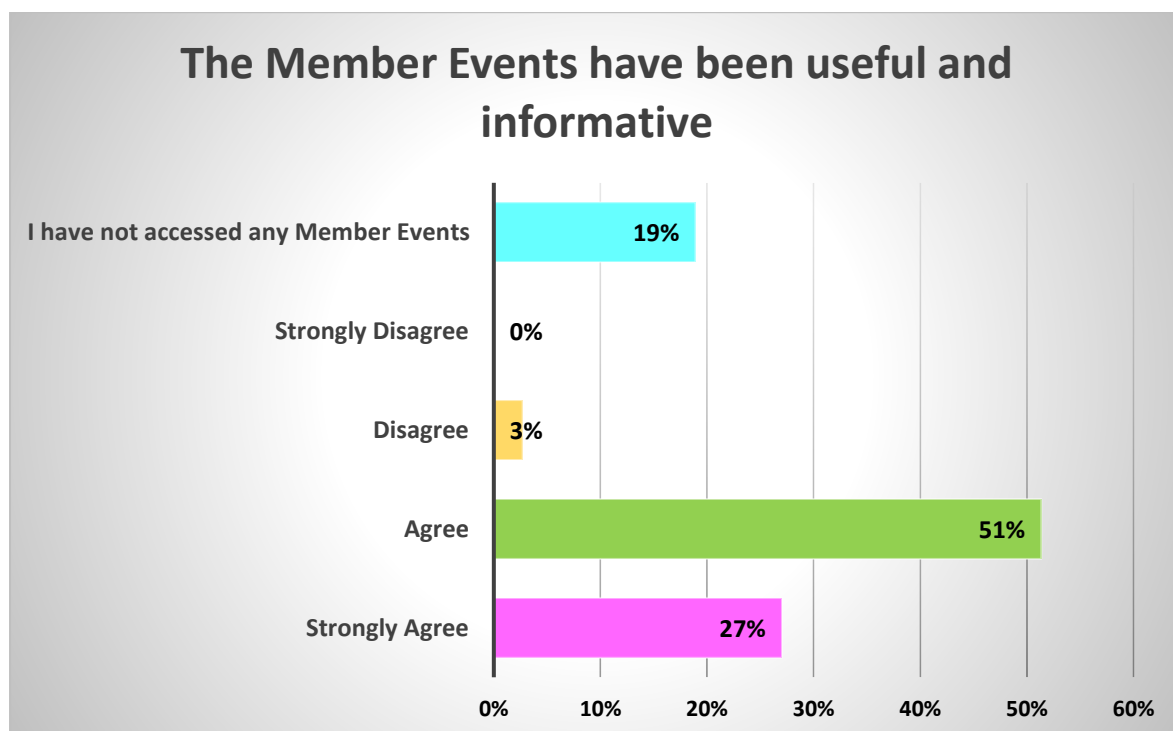
Respondents were given the option of responding with Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or I have not accessed any Member Events.

- 78% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree that the Member Events are useful and informative.

Respondents were asked to comment on their response, especially if they Disagree or strongly Disagree with the statement.

Chart 7 shows the responses in detail.

**Chart 7: Member Events**



### Ten comments were received:

- I have had the opportunity to attend events during lockdown, which were very useful.
- I have chosen the most relevant for me to attend and they have been extremely useful.
- Good networking opportunity.
- Only attended one event which was ok but did not tell me anything new.
- Have not been able to log onto the 'Teams' software - most people use zoom.
- Great speakers - and good topics relevant and useful.
- Find it useful.
- The recent one about Hybrid Working was excellent.
- The funding one was excellent.
- Politically prejudice.

### 2.2.8 Question 9

Question 9 asked respondents whether they think the Full Member cost provides good value for money. Two respondents skipped this question.

Respondents were given the option of responding with Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Not Applicable.

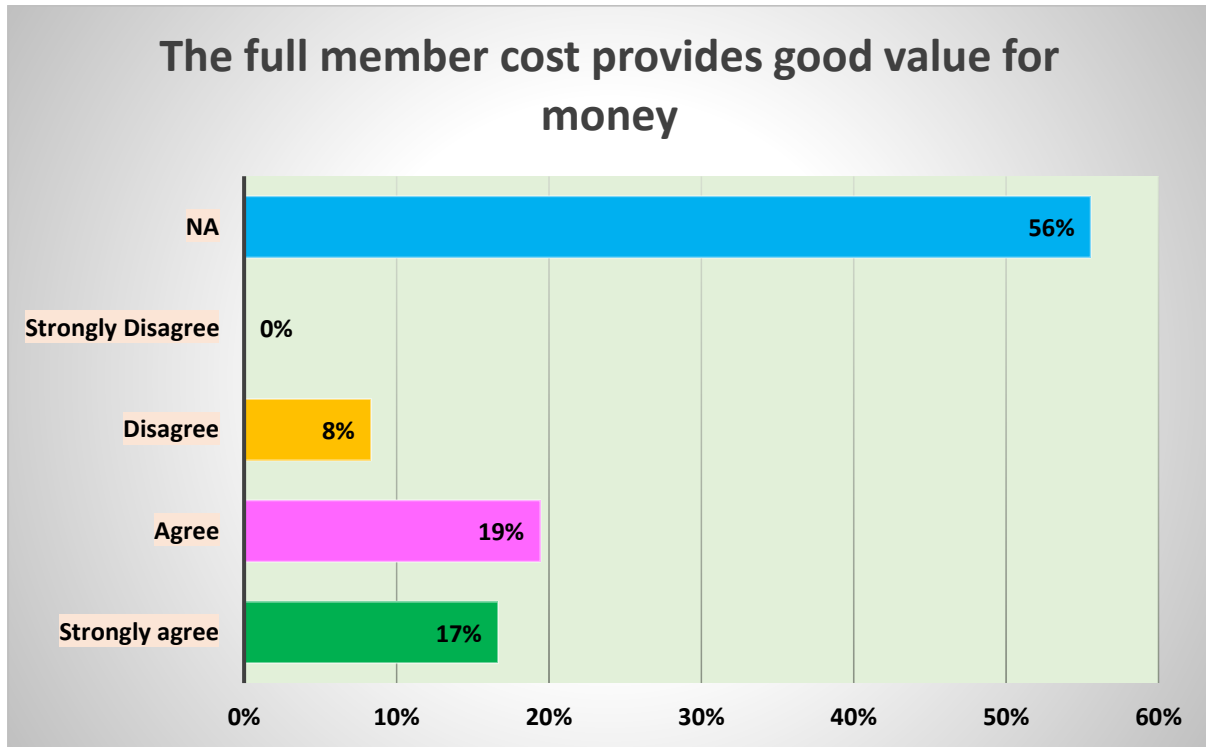
Respondents were asked to comment on their response, especially if they Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the statement.

- 92% of full members Strongly Agree or Agree that the Full Member cost provides good value for money.

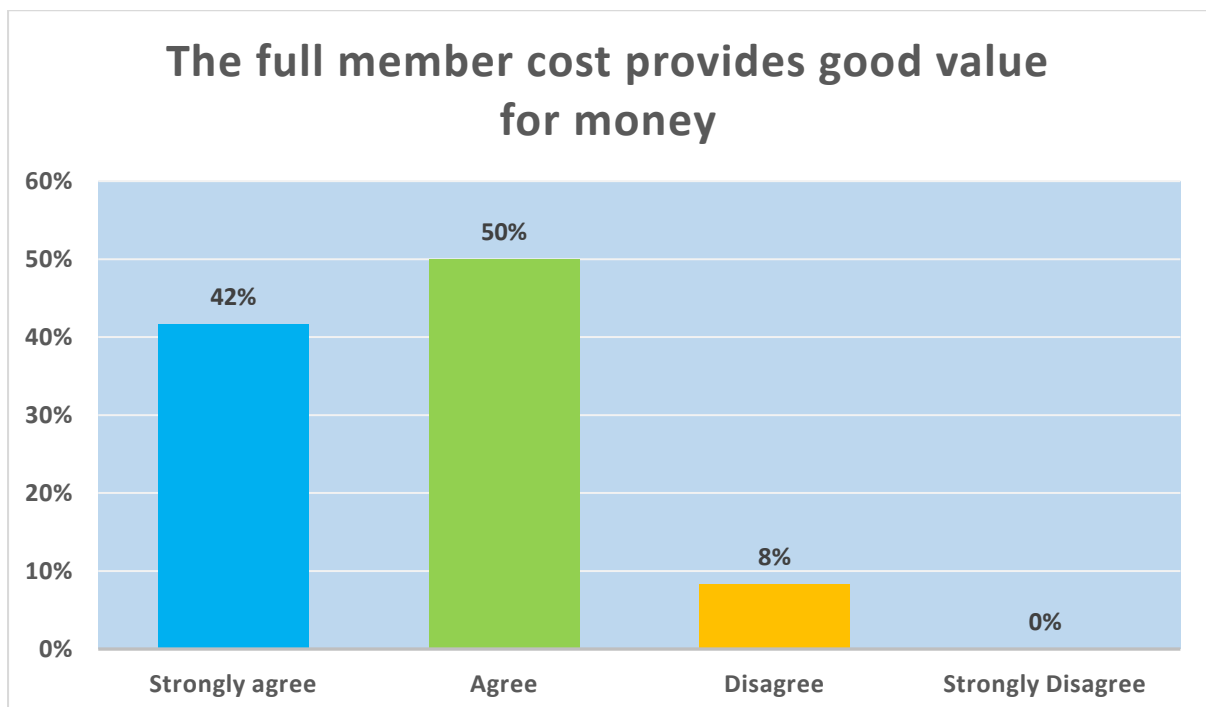
Chart 8 shows all responses in detail.

Chart 9 shows responses of Full Members only to give 3SC a better understanding of whether they feel they are receiving value for money in relation to their membership cost.

**Chart 8: Membership Costs - all responses**



**Chart 9: Membership Costs - full members only**



### **Five comments were received:**

- Any issue that I have presented has been listened to and actioned by your staff.
- As a charity unable to fund membership costs.
- Value for money.
- Expensive for what is available as much is also available elsewhere. Seminars have generally been good but don't make membership fee value for money on their own.
- Information is always useful.

### **2.2.9 Question 10**

Question 10 was specifically directed at Full Members. The question asked what aspects of the Full Membership offer they have found most useful. Respondents were asked to rank each of the aspects of the full membership offer from 1 to 10, with 1 being most useful and 10 being least useful. If respondents were not a Full Member, they were asked to skip to Question 11.

Some respondents did not rank all of the 10 aspects of the offer choosing to rank only those aspects they have found most useful. Some Associate Members also responded to this question.

For the purpose of gaining clarity about the question from a Full Members perspective only those results from full members have been included in Table 2 below. Results included:

- The Sector Updates - containing tender opportunities, articles on key issues and other news for the third sector was identified as being the most useful by five Full Members. This aspect received more rankings of 1 than any of the other aspects of the membership offer.
- Member Events - regular forums, learning and networking sessions plus lobbying events was identified as being most useful by three Full Members. This aspect received the second most rankings of 1.



**Table 2: Full Membership Offer Rankings**

Full Member Offer	Rankings (1 = most useful aspects and 10 = least useful aspects)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sector Updates – containing tender opportunities, articles on key issues and other news for the third sector	50%	20%	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%
Access to a section of the 3SC website which includes: toolkits; information; member events and news about future funding opportunities	9%	18%	36%	0%	9%	9%	0%	0%	9%	9%
First access to be a partner to deliver new tender and contract opportunities	11%	33%	11%	0%	11%	0%	22%	0%	0%	11%
A place on the 3SC Preferred Provider List (after pre-assessment and due diligence checks)	0%	0%	33%	33%	0%	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%
A Self-Assessment Toolkit to identify areas where you can improve your business, check if you are new contract/bid ready and/or areas you need to work on to pass due diligence processes and be a preferred provider	0%	17%	17%	17%	33%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
A suite of policies and procedures which can be downloaded and tailored to your organisation	0%	0%	13%	25%	25%	25%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Member Events – regular forums, learning and networking sessions plus lobbying events	30%	10%	10%	0%	10%	20%	10%	10%	0%	0%
Individual advice and support, for example, advice on funding, business development issues and/or signposting to additional cost (discounted) support services including social impact evaluation, marketing	13%	0%	0%	13%	0%	25%	13%	0%	25%	13%
Marketing opportunities – the opportunity to be profiled on our website, be part of news articles and events	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	43%	43%	14%
Marketing support – providing copy that can be used by Full Members on their websites	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	14%	0%	14%	57%

### 2.2.10 Question 11

Question 11 was specifically directed at Associate Members. The question asked what aspects of the associate membership offer they have found most useful. Respondents were asked to rank each of the aspects of the associate membership offer from 1 to 3, with 1 being most useful and 3 being least useful. If respondents were not an Associate Member they were asked to skip to Question 12.

Some respondents did not rank all of the three aspects of the offer choosing to rank only the aspect they have found most useful. Some Full Members also responded to this question.

For the purpose of gaining clarity about the question from an Associate Members perspective only those results provided by associate members have been included in Table 3 below. Results included:

- The Sector Updates - containing tender opportunities, articles on key issues and other news for the third sector was identified as being the most useful by nine Associate Members. This aspect received more rankings of 1 than any of the other aspects of the Associate Membership offer.

**Table 3: Associate Membership Offer Rankings**

Associate Membership Offer	Rankings (1 = most useful aspects and 3 = least useful aspects)		
	1	2	3
Sector Updates – containing tender opportunities, articles on key issues and other news for the third sector	53%	29%	18%
Access to new tender and contract opportunities for associate members	31%	44%	25%
Member Events – regular forums, learning and networking sessions plus lobbying events	22%	22%	56%

### 2.2.11 Question 12

Question 12 asked respondents whether there anything else they would like to see included in the full member offer. 12 responses were received of which five were N/A, No or a dash. The remaining responses included:

- Contracts valuable for AEB.
- Very happy with everything.

- No, it's got everything we need for the moment.
- Help for 3rd sector start-ups.
- Introductions, meetings with local providers.
- To send out more tender messages.
- I would like to speak to someone about the possibility of utilising the associate membership.

### **2.2.12 Question 13**

The final question asked respondents to provide any further comments or thoughts that will help us to improve our offer to members. We received seven comments of which two were N/A or a dash.

The remaining comments include:

- Maybe an opportunity to meet Face-to-Face in the future.
- Great initiative even when it is not always applicable to us.
- Nothing springs to mind.
- No not at this time.
- Widely available and relevant to varied member organisation.

## 3 Opportunities for Improvement

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### 3.1 Opportunities

Although overall, the feedback received from the survey about the 3SC membership offer was positive, there were some areas that 3SC need to look at to see what improvements can be made to the membership offer.

One member notes that they are not able to attend member events such as Webinars as they do not have access to Microsoft Teams. We will look at the possibility of using other sharing platforms such as Zoom to ensure as many members as possible are able to access 3SC Member Events. We will also continue to gain feedback from members following webinars including asking for suggestions for future sessions that will be of interest to them.

One member states they would like to speak to someone about the possibility of utilising the Associate Membership. We will contact the individual concerned to discuss their comment and see how we can help to move this forward.

One member notes they would like the opportunity to meet face-to-face. Prior to Covid restrictions the member events were held face-to-face. Although members valued this opportunity to meet it did mean that there was some limitation to who could attend depending on the location of the event, however, the online events have allowed members to attend no matter where they live. We will look at whether we will hold a mix of face-to-face events and online events once Covid restrictions are lifted.

### 3.2 Response Rate

The response rate for the survey of 40% is lower than we would have liked but the responses have been useful in helping us to look at what more we can do to improve our membership offer. The response rate from Associate Members of 44% was greater than the response rate of 33% for Full Members.

The survey was only available online and we were reliant on members responding to the email request for them to complete the survey. For our other surveys Contract Performance Managers have been able to encourage their delivery partners to respond during meetings with them. However, we do not have the same contact options with 3SC Members as we need to remain compliant with the data protection requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.

For future surveys we will consider attaching a 'Word' version of the survey when we send out the on-line link to give members an alternative means of completing the survey. This can then be returned to the 3SC Risk and Quality Manager.

## 4 Overall Summary

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### 4.1 Summary

Responses and comments about membership with 3SC were mostly positive.

Where Full Members had accessed the self-assessment toolkit they Agreed or Strongly Agreed that it has helped them to identify areas where they can improve the business. No Full Members gave a response of Disagree or Strongly Disagree. However, 57% of full members who responded to the survey have not yet accessed the self-assessment toolkit.

Responses about communication with 3SC were overwhelmingly positive with 100% of respondents stating they Agree or Strongly Agree that they have found communication with 3SC useful.

97% of respondents who have accessed Member Events Agree or Strongly Agree that Member Events have been useful and informative. However, 19% of respondents have not yet accessed the Member Events.

It was pleasing to see that 92% of full members Agree or Strongly Agree that the Full Member cost provides good value for money.

### 4.2 Key Messages

- Overall, all members find communications with 3SC useful. Members commented that they have felt very supported by 3SC and listened to, and that communication is relevant to their organisation and sector.
- Both Full Members and Associate Members find the Sector Updates, containing tender opportunities, articles on key issues and other news for the third sector, a useful aspect of their membership. With Marketing Support and Marketing Opportunities being the least useful for Full Members.
- The majority of Full Members feel that the cost of their membership provides good value for money, and comment that the information provided is always useful.
- The vast majority of members who have accessed the Member Events have found them useful and informative. Members comment that some specific events are excellent, with good topics that are relevant and useful.