

List of contents

List of contents	2
Section 1 – Executive Summary	3
Section 2 - Introduction	5
Survey method.....	5
Responses.....	5
Section 3 - The results	6
Current membership services	6
Comparing membership services	8
Services: journal	11
Services: newsletter	13
Services: website	14
Services: social media.....	16
Interactions with IES Staff.....	18
Membership fees.....	20
Section 4 – Other Comments.....	21

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Section 1 – Executive Summary

The Institution of Environmental Sciences regularly surveys its members to identify trends in how different services are valued and gain members' opinions on potential new services or developments for the future.

Method:

At the end of 2011 an online questionnaire was completed by 100 members, answering questions on the importance of membership services and seeking input onto the current status of publications, staff service and membership fees. These results were aggregated and compared against the results from previous years to identify long-term trends.

Key findings:

All of the services were rated as at least 'important' by more than half of the membership. This suggests that the IES is successfully meeting the needs and interest of members through the current provision of services. Members' opinions on individual services were analysed in further detail:

Post-nominal: 82% of respondents rated the post-nominal as 'important' or 'very important'. This is an 11% increase since 2009, which is to be the result of environmental professionals seeking to demonstrate their personal capability to work in the sector in the current difficult employment circumstances.

Chartership: These opportunities are highly valued by members, with the Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) rated by 82% of respondents as 'important' or 'very important', and 70% valuing the Chartered Scientist (CSci) as such. The rating of the CEnv has declined slightly from previous years, which may be due to the provision of the CSci.

Careers support: These services received their highest ever rating in 2011, which reflects the current economic climate. These services are of high value to members who are recently graduated or seeking work in the sector.

Journal: The journal is highly valued by almost all the membership (93% stated it was 'important' or 'very important'). This publication has been consistently been rated as 'excellent' or 'good' by around four fifths of respondents over the past five years, with the percentage rating it as 'excellent' rising by 21% since 2007. 27% of respondents stated that the journal has improved since 2010, which reflects the well-received redesign in 2011 to make the journal more

accessible and engaging for all the membership, across career stages and sectors.

Newsletter: 80% of respondents rated it as above average, with 22% stating the monthly e-newsletter is 'excellent'. The newsletter has been consistently rated as good, but 2011 presented the best ratings yet. This reflects the efforts to ensure the newsletter is relevant and informative.

Website: The website received its highest ratings since 2007, with 65% of respondents rating it as 'excellent' or 'good'. Use of the website has increased consistently over the past five years, with 75% members now using the website at least once per month. In early 2012 the IES is launching a new website, which will be even more engaging and accessible for members.

Social media: The majority of members belong to at least one social networking site, with over 70% of respondents currently having a profile on LinkedIn. Only 11% of respondents were on Twitter. Social networking sites offer a useful mechanism for engaging members, and so the IES is looking to develop its current strategy through maintaining its Twitter account and investigating other options such as LinkedIn.

Interaction with IES staff: Excellent customer service is of great importance to the IES. Members of rated interactions with the IES staff as consistently high over the past 5 years. 2011 saw an increase 10% since 2009 in the number of respondents rating their interactions as 'excellent' or 'good'. Increased office capacity and the increased expertise of staff has improved the quality of responses in recent years.

Membership fees: The majority of IES members pay their own membership fees (54%), though employers pay the fees of 42% of respondents. The IES has introduced greatly reduced fees for members on maternity leave or currently unemployed to ensure that they remain affordable.

The 2011 IES Membership Survey has demonstrated that services remain highly valued by the membership and are continuing to improve in quality. In 2012 the IES is committed to continue to maintain current standards and develop new services that continue to meet the needs of members.

Section 2 - Introduction

The Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) regularly surveys a sample of its membership to find out how the different services provided are valued. An online survey with a sample size of one hundred responses is used. By comparing the results to previous years the IES is able to assess the uptake of new services and the success of existing ones. The survey also seeks to identify areas for improvement and acts as a feedback tool for monitoring staff performance to determine the effectiveness of the administration and delivery of services.

Survey method

A questionnaire was prepared through a survey website (SurveyMonkey.com) where 100 members could complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was opened to members in December 2011. This report presents the findings of the survey and draws some conclusions for consideration by the Council and the membership. Data from questionnaires from surveys from 2007, 2008 and 2009 is used to add longitudinal data and identify long-term trends. No survey took place in 2010 as a Membership Salary Survey was undertaken instead.

Responses

The 100 responses from members represent the view of 8.5 per cent of the paying IES membership. The membership status of those who responded is shown below. This sample is a good representation of the IES membership in December 2011 (when the survey took place).

Membership Grade	2011 total membership	Survey Respondents		
		2011	2009	2008
Fellows	2%	3%	4%	2%
Members	75%	80%	77%	77%
Associates	19%	15%	16%	20%
Affiliates	3%	2%	3%	0%

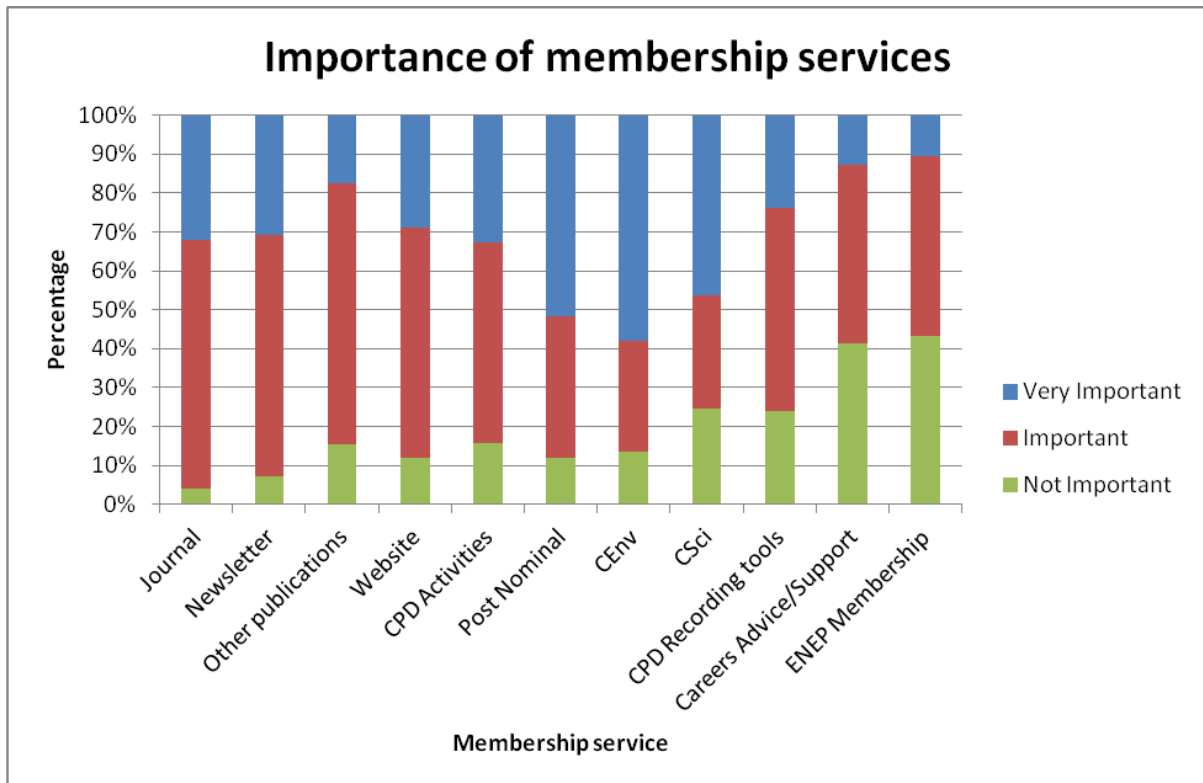
Student members were not surveyed.

As shown in the table above, the demographic of survey respondents is comparable with the representation of membership grades in previous surveys.

Section 3 - The results

Current membership services

Members were asked to rate the importance of current membership services offered by the IES.



Abbreviations: CEnv: Chartered Environmentalist; CSci: Chartered Scientist; CPD: Continuous Professional Development; ENEP: European Network of Environmental Professionals.

Findings

All the membership services were considered at least 'important' by more than half the respondents. Publications such as the journal and monthly newsletter were considered 'important' or 'very important' by almost all of the respondents (e.g. 93% respondents valued the journal as 'important' or 'very important'). Comparatively fewer members valued the post-nominal and Chartership opportunities so highly; 82% of respondents identified the post-nominal as important or very important, 82% for CEnv, and 70% for CSci. However, these three categories were identified as very important by a greater percentage of members than any other category.

Conclusions

All the services were viewed as important and which is indicative that the IES is currently successfully providing services of value to its membership. The career support required by the different membership grades can vary greatly. For example, some members may be unemployed and seeking high levels of career support, others may be working and looking for career development and Affiliate members usually belonging to the IES for personal interest rather than professional development. It is therefore crucial that the IES monitors the provision of services to each membership grade. These results suggest that the IES is successfully providing valued services to all the membership grades.

Publications are a service provided to all members, and they appear to be of interest to all membership grades. When preparing publications, the IES seeks to ensure that a balance is achieved between the different audiences within its membership. These results demonstrate that the majority of members consider publications to be an important membership benefit. Similarly, the website is considered to be of value by the vast majority of respondents; the website is designed to be informative and useful for all membership grades.

Chartership opportunities are only available to Full Members and Fellows. This may be the reason that these services were identified as not important for some members. For those respondents that did place value on Chartership, these services are of great importance. In response to the high demand and value placed on Chartership opportunities, the IES is committed to continuing to provide regular 'CEnv in a Day' workshops and to promote the opportunity to become a CSci. The IES launched the CSci in October 2010, and so its high value within such a short period demonstrates that this was a beneficial service to launch. It is possible that fewer members place a high value on the CSci than the CEnv because the CEnv designation is perceived to be more closely aligned with the work of most IES members. Whilst this may be the case for many members, there are common misconceptions surrounding qualifications for the CSci. The IES is committed to continue to promote the eligibility of its members for this service.

Careers advice received the second lowest rating of importance, after ENEP membership. In January 2011 the IES launched two schemes ('Back to Work' and 'Into Work' Schemes) to support unemployed members and recent graduates in finding work in the environmental sector. There are currently 37 members in total on these schemes. Careers advice and support is therefore a highly valued service by a smaller subset of the IES membership. The IES considers it important to continue investing in these services, especially in the current economic market and will continue to develop careers support for those seeking work in the environmental sector.

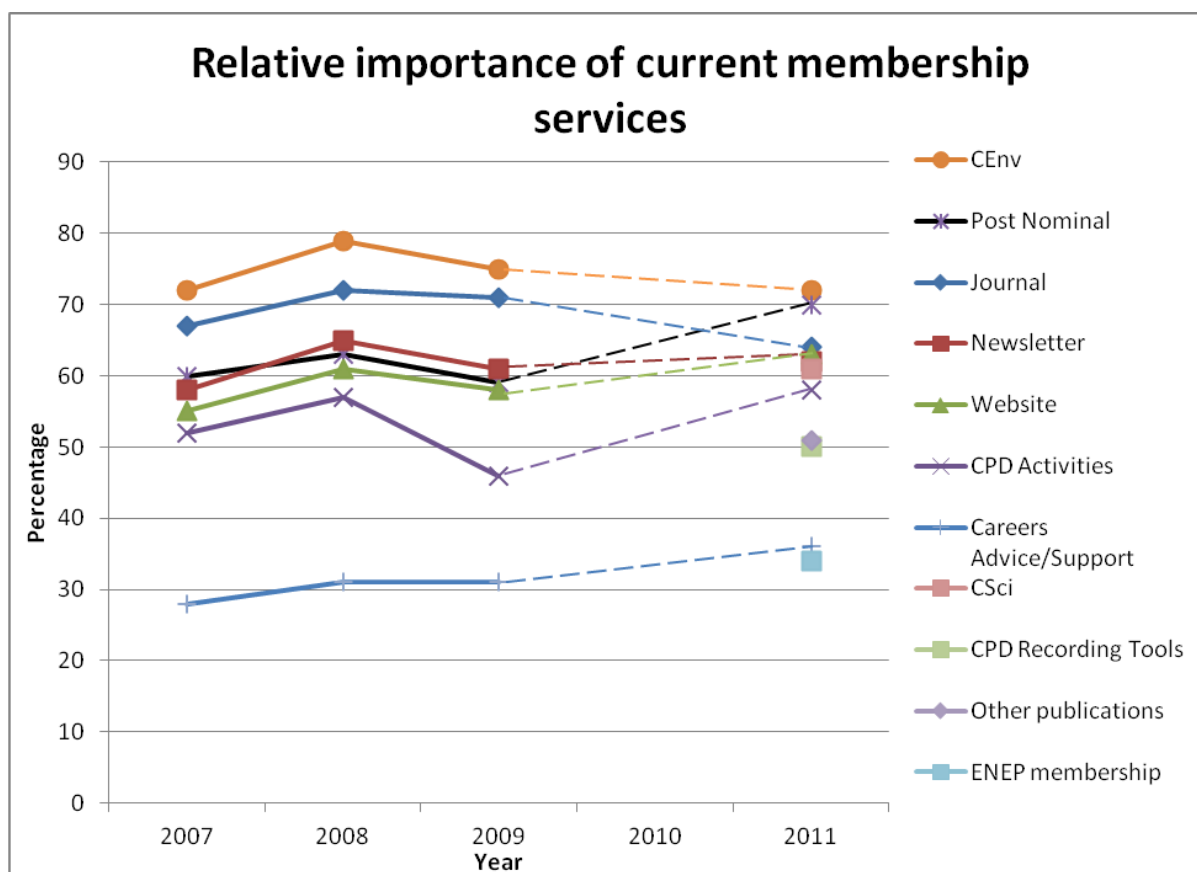
Comparing membership services

It is useful to compare how services rate against previous years.

To calculate the rate of each services we:

- Multiplied the number of people who listed it as very important by two.
- Add this to the number of people who rated it as important.
- Express this as a percentage of the maximum possible score (total responses to that question multiplied by two). If all respondents had stated that a service was very important, then the theoretical maximum would have been 200 for each service.

An overview of the changes of ratings of the past five years enables an understanding of the trends in how the membership values different services.



No data was collected in 2010.

Four services were included in the survey for the first time in 2011: CSci (because this was the first year this service was offered); CPD recording tools; other publications (e.g. reports); ENEP membership. There is therefore only one data point for each of these services. Future surveys will provide the opportunity to identify trends in the rating of these services. The results are also displayed in table format.

Service	Relative Importance (%)			
	2007	2008	2009	2011
CEnv	72	79	75	72
Post-Nominal	60	63	59	70
Journal	67	72	71	64
Newsletter	58	65	61	62
Website	55	61	58	63
CPD Activities	52	57	46	58
Careers Advice/Support	28	31	31	36
CSci	-	-	-	61
CPD Recording Tools	-	-	-	50
Other publications	-	-	-	51
ENEP membership	-	-	-	34

Findings

There is only a slight variation in the valuation of the majority of services. There has been a slight decline in the value of the CEnv and journal. The newsletter and website have remained consistent in their rating by respondents. Since the previous survey in 2009, the post-nominal, CPD activities and careers advice/support have increased in their perceived value. The rating CPD activities increased by the highest percentage, rising by 12% since 2009; the second highest was the post-nominal which rose by 11%.

Conclusions

The membership consistently places a high value on the services provided by the Institution. Access to the CEnv designation continues to be the most highly rated service provided. The slight decline in its may be due to the introduction of an additional Chartership designation, CSci. This will need to be tracked over several years in order to determine whether this marks a consistent change in values.

The post-nominal is at its highest rating since these surveys were started, with a steep increase taking place over the last two years. This may be in response to the difficult employment market; the post-nominal is a mark of professional competence which is of higher value when professionals are seeking to distinguish themselves to employees and clients. The IES is committed to continue to raise the profile of the organisation in the public and professional

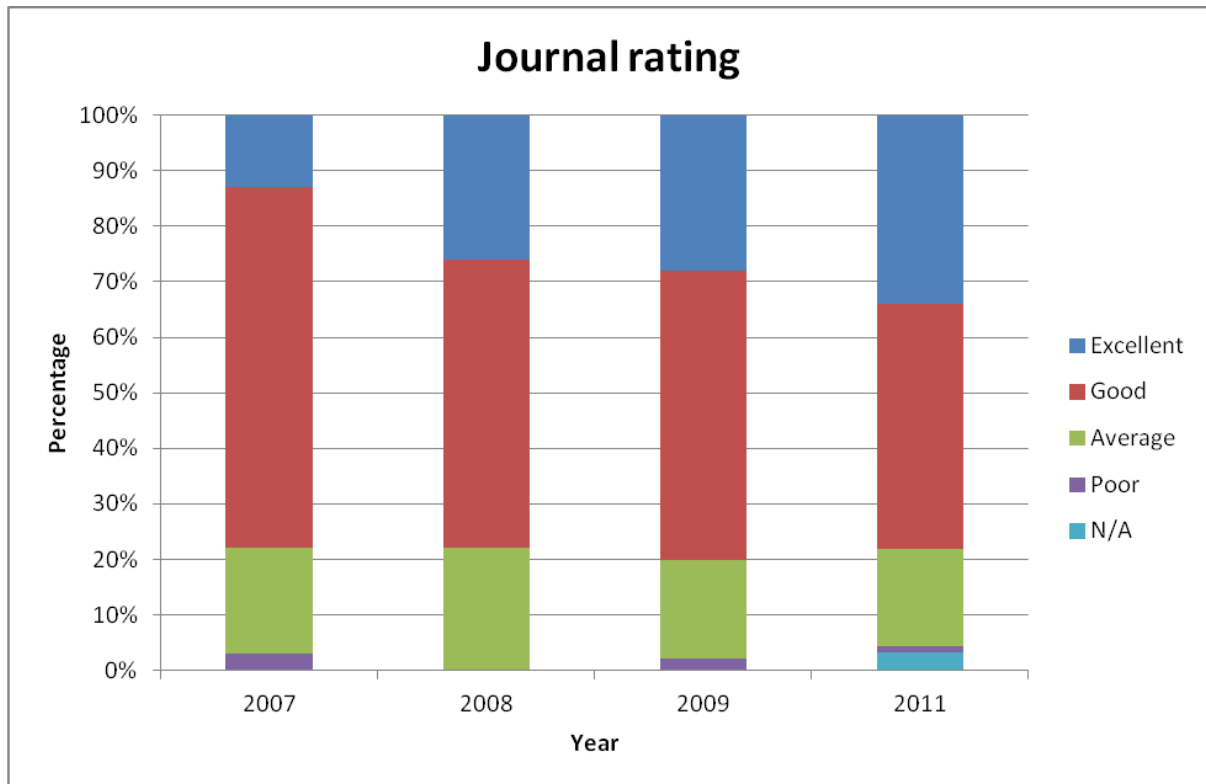
domain. As it does so, the professional recognition that membership denotes should remain high or increase in value to members.

Careers advice has increased in rating since previous years. This may be in response to members encountering increasing difficulties in securing employment in the environmental sector. It is likely that it rates low in comparison with other membership services because it is primarily targeted to a subset of members seeking work, and student members (who were not surveyed). The IES expanded its career support services in response to the current employment challenges.

The provision of CPD activities was at its lowest rating in 2009, but in two years has risen to their highest rating since the surveys began. There has been an historical trend of the need to undertake CPD activities becoming more embedded in professional careers; and professional bodies are the appropriate promoter for this. In 2009 the IES launched its mandatory CPD scheme requiring professional members to complete 30 hours of CPD activities per year. The concept of ongoing learning and training is an integral aspect of Chartership. The higher rating of CPD activities by the membership suggests that the importance of CPD has been successfully communicated to the IES membership.

Services: journal

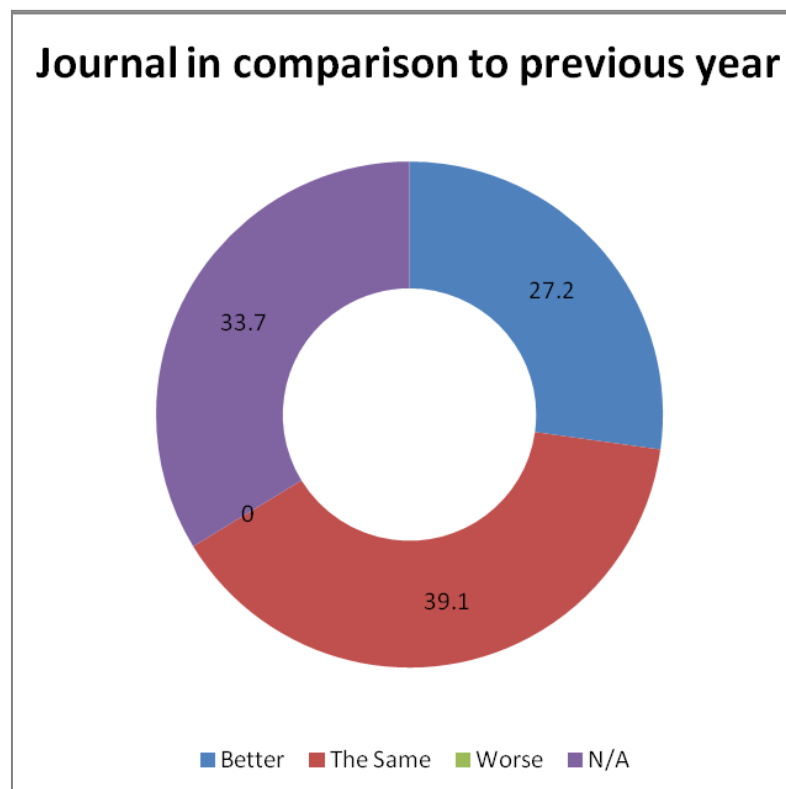
Members were asked how they would rate the IES journal, *Environmental Scientist*. These results were compared with those for the previous years.



Members were also asked to compare the quality of the journal with the previous year.

Findings

The percentage of respondents rating the journal as excellent or good has remained consistently high at approximately four fifths of the membership. The percentage of respondents rating it as excellent has continually increased over the last five years, rising from 13% in 2007 to 34% in 2011. Of the respondents, 27% felt that the journal had improved in quality since 2010.



The journal underwent a redesign in August 2011 in an effort to improve to make it more engaging for the readership. Respondents were invited to comment on the journal and in particular its recent redesign:

- *Bolder, brighter, sharper, better*
- *Much clearer, use of more colour makes it a more inviting read*
- *It is much more professional looking*
- *More accessible - the problem I have is a lack of time to read it so most remains unread - I would like an executive summary of important news and information in the publication*
- *Really happy with the redesign, it has really made the magazine more eye-catching and engaging*
- *Provide full electronic copy and members could choose to suspend paper copies in order to save paper*
- *Now brighter and more readable. Could do with progressing further in the same direction*
- *Bit concerned about loss of 'edge' in the science content*
- *Journal is very dry - would be better to have a news snippets type section at the front*
- *Journal may be better online (save paper/postage, etc.)*

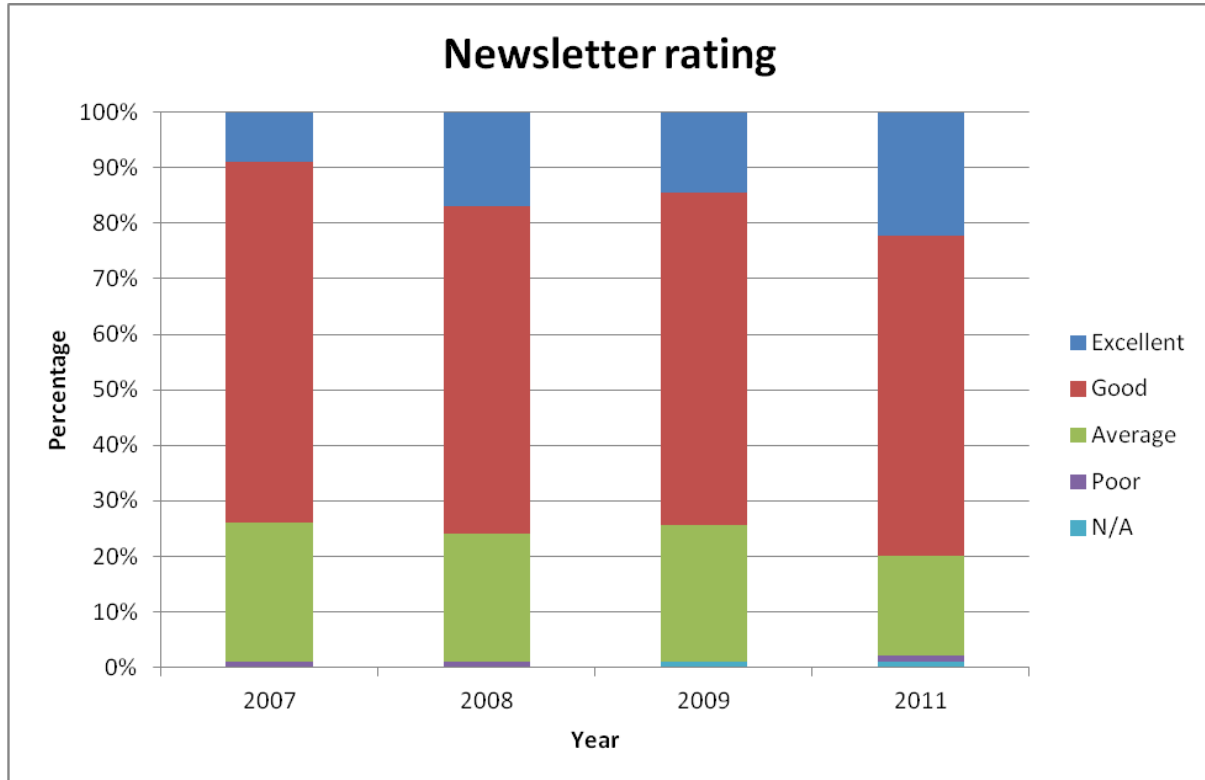
Conclusions

The *Environmental Scientist* is the flagship publication produced by the IES. It remains popular and highly valued by members, with nearly all members stating that the journal was at least important to them. For this reason, the IES has continued to invest in improving and developing the journal, ensuring that it is engaging for all areas of the membership whilst retaining the technical aspect as a scientific publication. Based upon the comments above and the 27% of members who felt that the journal had improved, this redesign appears to have been a positive step. Given the high value of this service, continued improvement of the journal remains a priority for the IES in 2012.

Each issue of the IES journal is themed around a particular issue within environmental science. This sector covers a broad spectrum, with the IES membership representing professionals from numerous and varied fields. The IES seeks to ensure that the journal remains of interest for the whole membership whilst investigating a particular topic in depth in each issue, ranging from the more 'scientific' topics to contemporary issues such as environmental justice. The comments above reflect the need to achieve a balance within this publication whilst retaining its scientific roots.

Services: newsletter

Members were asked to rate the monthly e-newsletter, *EnviroSci News*. The newsletter contains news relating to the work of the IES and the environmental sciences sector as a whole, along with events, jobs, articles, book reviews and profiles of IES members.



Findings

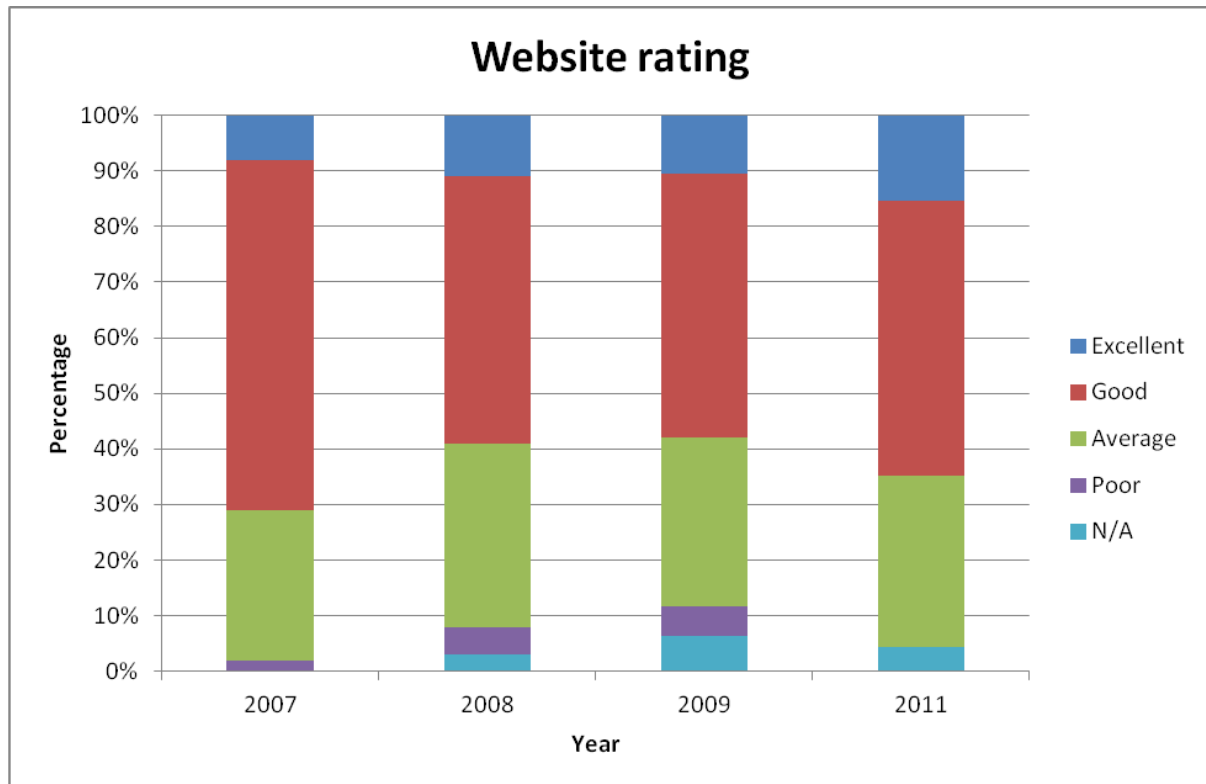
In 2011 22% of respondents rated the newsletter as excellent, and 80% rated it as above average. The opinion of the members has remained relatively stable between 2007 and 2009, but in 2011 the newsletter received its best ratings yet.

Conclusions

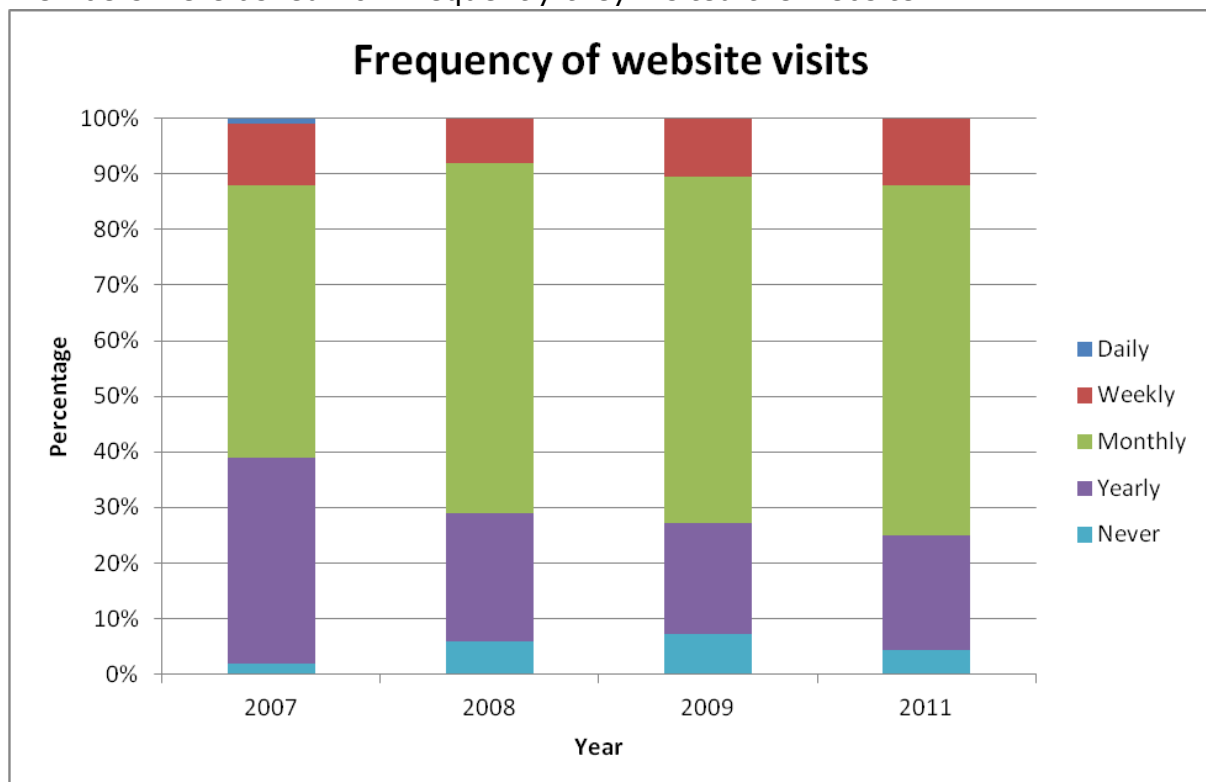
Similar to the journal, the newsletter is highly valued across the membership grades. The IES is in the process of a review of the newsletter, seeking to identify the areas of most interest and value to members. Whilst this process is ongoing, the improved ratings in 2011 reflect that it has already achieved success.

Services: website

Members were asked to rate the quality of the IES website, www.ies-uk.org.uk, the results of which were compared with previous years.



Members were asked how frequently they visited the website.



Findings

The website has received its highest rating since 2007 with 65% of surveyed members rating it as excellent or good. A greater percentage of members rated it as excellent than in previous years (15% in 2011 versus 11% in 2009 and 2008 and 8% in 2007). For the first time no members rated the website as poor.

A greater percentage of members are now regularly visiting the website. Use has increased consistently over the past five years, with 75% of members now visiting it at least once a month (compared with 61% in 2007). Four per cent of members have never visited the website.

A couple of members provided general comments on the website:

- *The website does appear to need an update of the format / layout but the information is contained on it is fine*
- *The website has good information, but it could be re-organised and re-styled to better present information*

Conclusion

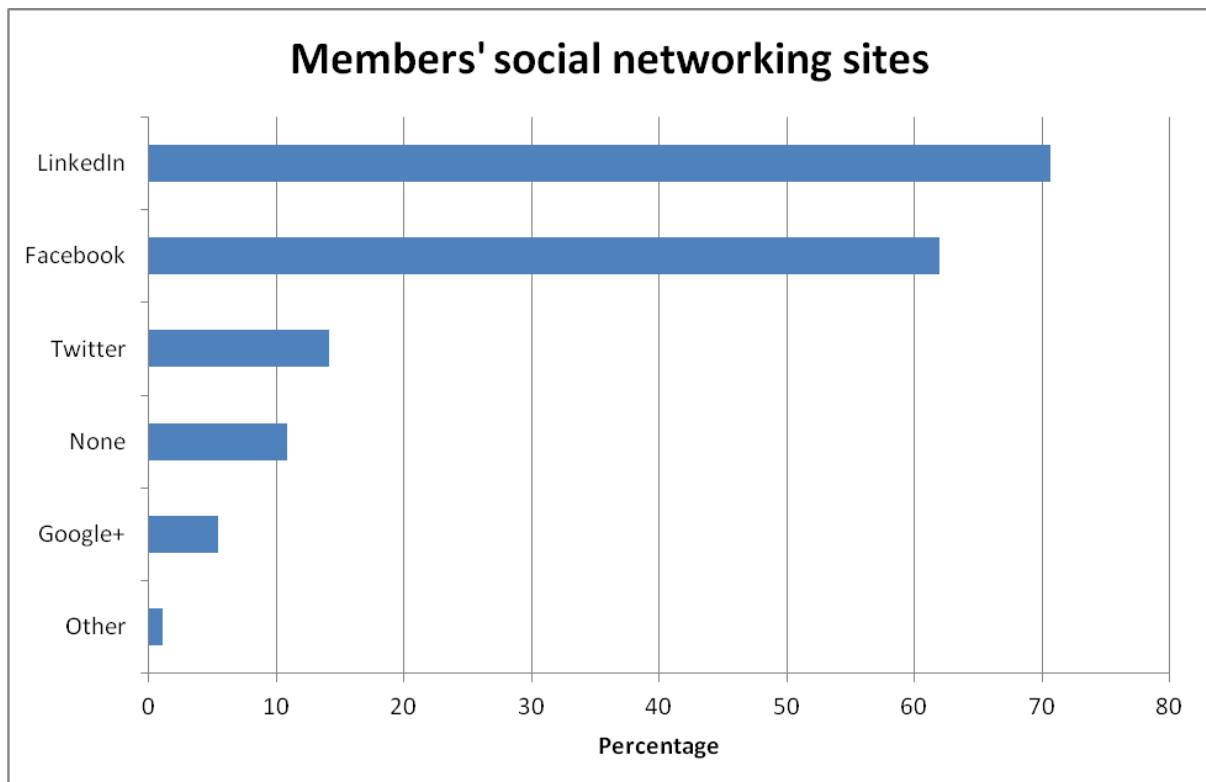
The website was rated as an important service by the majority of respondents, as stated previously. More members are now using the website regularly and it is predominantly perceived as being a good quality service.

The IES is developing a new website which will be launched in early 2012. The aim of this website is to be more engaging and interactive, enabling members to control and access their own information and submit their CPD records online. The aim is to enable members and non-members to more easily find the relevant information and engage more effectively with the work of the IES. The comments above recognise the need to update the website which this work has addressed. The new website should continue to facilitate increased use and quality of the online services.

Services: social media

Many organisations are now investing in social media. In 2010 the IES launched its own Twitter account, IES_UK. For the first time, this survey enabled members to rate the IES Twitter account. Whilst 12% of respondents rated the Twitter account as good or average, 88% of members do not use the Twitter account at all.

To ensure that IES resources are focused in the most effective and appropriate areas, respondents were also asked to identify the social networking sites to which they currently belong.



- *As a recent member, I was not aware of the Twitter Account. Perhaps this should be included in the joining pack, or advertised more clearly on the website?*

Findings

The majority of members belonged to at least one social networking site. Over 70% of respondents had a profile on LinkedIn, with Facebook being the second most common form. Only 11% (13 in number) of respondents to this question

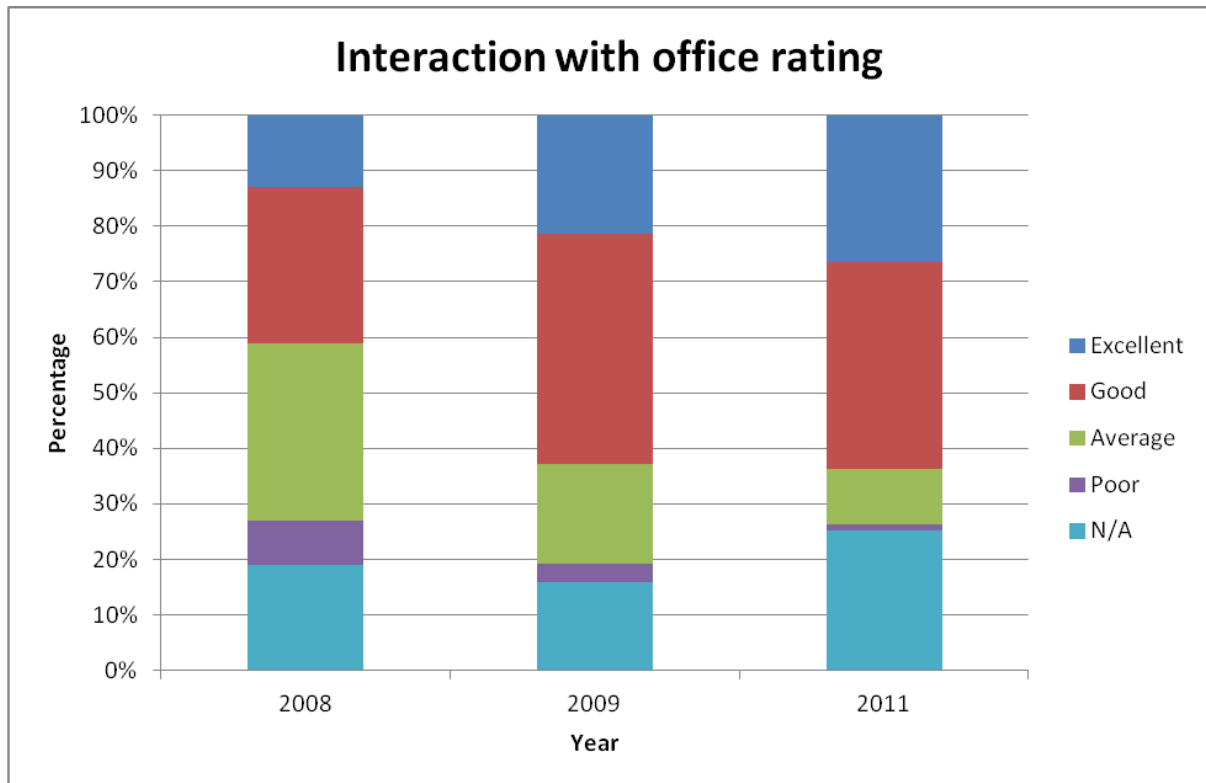
were on Twitter, which reflects why only 12% (11 in number) of respondents rated the quality of the IES Twitter account.

Conclusion

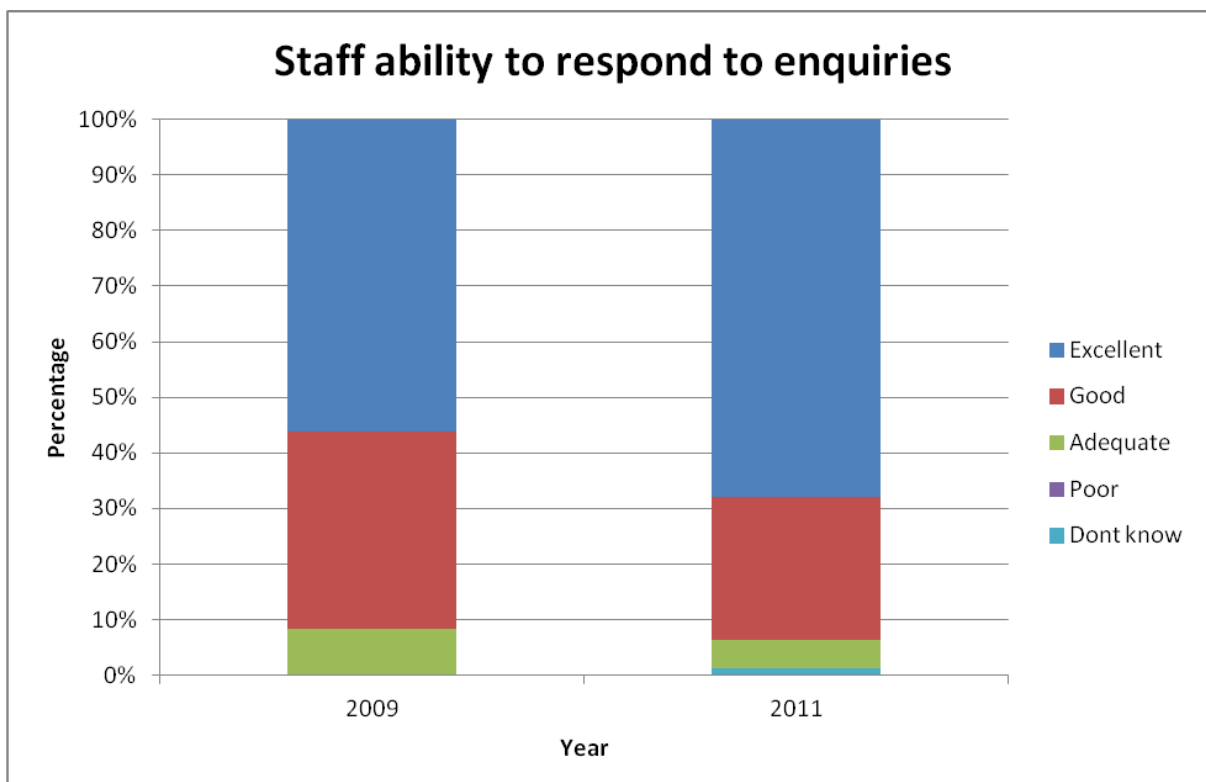
With the current prolific use of social networking sites by IES members, this provides a potentially valuable opportunity for engaging with members. Of those members using Twitter, the IES account was viewed positively but this is currently a low percentage of members. The IES will investigate other sources for social networking which might prove effective for supporting members, as well as promoting the Twitter account more widely amongst members.

Interactions with IES Staff

Members were asked to rate the quality of their interactions with the IES Office.



Respondents were also surveyed on the ability of the IES staff to answer their enquiry last time they interacted. The 14% who had not interacted with the office were removed from this graph.



Findings

The quality of members' interactions with IES staff has remained consistently high. Similar percentages of members rated their interaction as above average in 2009 and 2011 (63% and 64% respectively), but a greater percentage stated it was excellent (a 5% increase in 2011). One quarter of respondents had not interacted with the office, which was the highest in any of the three surveys which asked this question. When removing these from the comparison, 85% of those who had interacted with the office stated it was excellent or good, which is a ten per cent increase from 2009.

When considering the ability of IES staff to answer member enquiries, the results are also high. A similar percentage of respondents who had interacted with the IES office stated it was good or excellent (92% in 2009; 94% in 2011) but the percentage who stated it was excellent rose by 12% (from 56% to 68%).

Conclusion

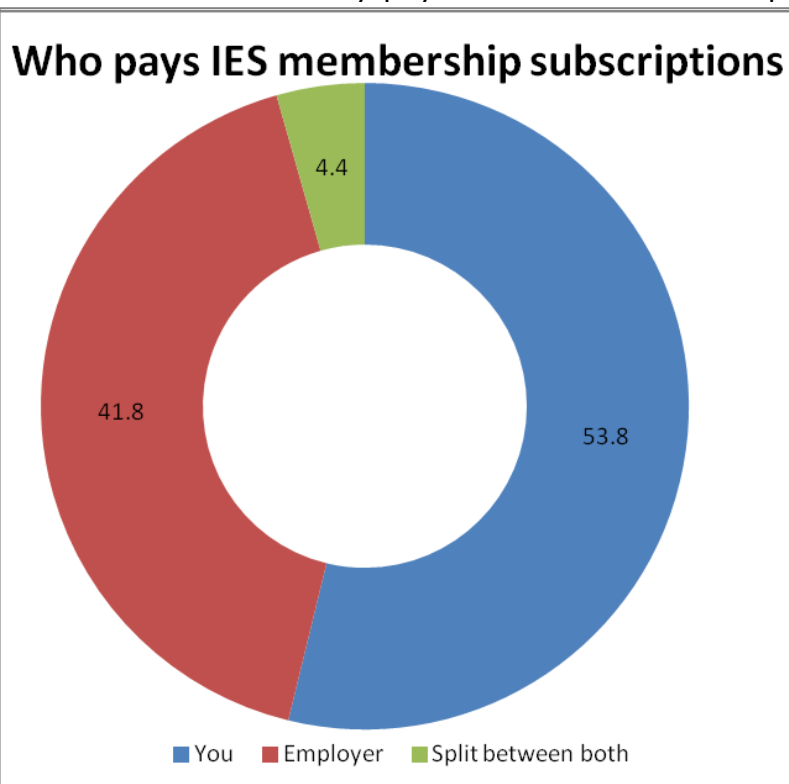
Over the years the IES has consistently offered good levels of customer service. The increase in excellent interactions and responses to enquiries reflects the continuing improvement in customer service experienced by members. This can be attributed to an increase in capacity in the IES office which has improved response times to enquiries, and to the increased knowledge the staff hold which enables them to successfully engage with member enquiries.

Membership fees

Respondents to the survey were asked who currently pays their IES membership subscriptions.

Findings

The majority of IES members pay their own membership fees (54%), though 42% have their fees paid by their employers. Only a very small percentage split the cost between themselves and their employer. No members received financial support for their membership from any other source.



A couple of members chose to comment on the membership fees:

- *Please allow payment on a monthly basis by direct debit. Paying the full membership fee(s) in one go straight after Christmas is a big ask. We're all having to pay more attention to where our money is spent, and in a household's list of priorities I would guess that IES/CEnv fees will be some way down that list*
- *Cheaper membership fees?*

Conclusions

In light of the current economic climate the IES has been concerned to ensure that membership has remained affordable, especially as most members are paying their own subscriptions. For the second year in a row the IES has kept the increase in fee rates to that of inflation (five per cent). The IES has also introduced vastly reduced rates for members who are unemployed or on maternity leave. Monthly payment by direct debit is currently under consideration though there are some technical barriers to overcome.

Section 4 – Other Comments

Below is a selection of general comments collected from the questionnaire.

Events, Training and CPD.

Are there any training courses available with IES? If so better communication of training courses. If not... implement some.

Offer a registered list of CPD and speakers.

Free or low-cost training events. More manuals on specific topics. I have found these very helpful.

More events, for CPD and otherwise. Very disappointed about the postponement or cancellation of Burntwood as I think it gives out completely the wrong signal.

Online logging of CPD.

Regional and International Branches

I think becoming less London centred, how about setting up regional groups. I would support a Scottish Group

More local regional events

International branches

Regional Groups promoting more accessible regional meetings/seminars

General

More guidelines on progression through IES, I am considering applying for Fellow within the next year or two but don't know how to do it. Admittedly I haven't rung the office.

More frequent communication and more practical resources

Offer a list of potential External Examiners.

Improve focus on careers and jobs.

Would like to see a better journal archive.

I do not find the newsletters relate to my line of work - these may be very good for relevant occupations. By the way I am an Environmental Geologist.

Would like to see more UK-wide promotion of IES membership and Chartership routes.