



Mobility Program funded by the  
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# CCF Development Project

## *Analysing ways to enhance communication and coordination across the Cambridge Conservation Forum membership*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Effective communication is essential to the success and longevity of multi-institutional organisations. This project sought to critically evaluate and offer recommendations for **enhancing communication and coordination, as well as the potential for developing new collaborative initiatives across individuals and member organisations of the Cambridge Conservation Forum (CCF)**. In so doing the project hopes to improve opportunities for more integrated approaches to promoting dialogue around conservation issues and activities among CCF member organisations, thereby reducing costs and raising the capacity and identity of the collective as a whole.

During a ninth month work programme (October 2011 to March 2012) a number of approaches were used to collect relevant information from the CCF membership, including semi-structured interviews, focal discussions, review of the 51 Membership and 519 Friends registered as of September 2011, review of CCF meeting reports to date, and 270 responses to an online survey developed specifically for this project.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The project encompassed five main stages.

### Phase I. (15<sup>th</sup> of July to 31<sup>st</sup> of August)

**Objectives:** To help clarify and understand the shared vision for CCF, thereby contributing towards the future development of the Forum and modes of engagement for the next stages of the project.

**Approach:** Some semi-structured interviews with the Advisory Group

### Phase II. ( 20<sup>th</sup> of September to 4<sup>th</sup> of November)

**Objectives:** Background research to clarify the original aims and aspirations of CCF by drawing specifically on input from the CCF Founder Group and background documents and meeting reports, and to use these findings as a way of identifying and strengthening existing links and networking opportunities.

**Approach:** Semi-structured interviews with the Founder Group, email correspondence and analysis of historical documents reporting on CCF activities.

The following individuals, comprising Founding Members of CCF were interviewed:

- Valerie Kapos (UNEP-WCMC)
- Roger Mitchell (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation)
- Peter Herkenrath (UNEP-WCMC and the Cambridgeshire Bird Club)

- Pamela Abbott (Natural England)
- Mike Rands (Cambridge Conservation Forum)
- Rosie Trevelyan (Tropical Biology Association)
- Peter Carey (Dept. Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge)
- Jon Hutton (UNEP-WCMC)
- Andrew Balmford (Dept. of Zoology, University of Cambridge)
- John Croaxal (Birdlife)
- Rob Pople (RSPB).
- Lisa Harris (Cambridge Conservation Initiative).
- Leland Julie (British Antarctic Survey).
- Juliet Vickery (RSPB).
- Rachel Austin (Fauna and Flora International).
- Peter Pilbeam (Cambridgeshire Mammals Group).
- Elisabeth Whitebread (Global Ocean Legacy).

In addition, the following documents were consulted:

- Lists of participants of Annual and Summer Symposia.
- Programmes for Annual and Summer Symposia.
- Feed-Back forms from the Annual Symposia in 2006, 2009, 2011.
- CCF Council Meeting Reports from 14 Council Meeting from 4th April 2002 until 29th September 2011.
- Open space discussion report from CCF Symposium on 10th of January of 2005.
- The Constitution of the Cambridge Conservation Forum.
- A review of "Future Options for CCF" June 2001.
- CCF Vision document (2010)

### **Phase III. 5<sup>th</sup> of November to 5<sup>th</sup> of December.**

**Objectives:** Reconstruction of a timeline of CCF events and activities and development of the first draft of an online survey for consultation across the CCF membership

**Approach:** Based on the work of the previous phases, the following tasks were identified:

- (Re) construction of a timeline of CCF events since inception.
- Analysis of the origin and evolution of CCF: current vision and future approaches for delivering the vision.
- Participation analysis across CCF membership, identifying changes and (in)consistencies in institutional and individual participation of CCF events.
- Development of a draft online survey to collect information on current levels of engagement and ways forwards, and for consultation on satisfaction, dissatisfaction, ideas, opinions regarding ownership, vision and approaches across the CCF network.

### **Phase IV. 6<sup>th</sup> of December to 15<sup>th</sup> of February.**

**Objective:** Distribution and preliminary analysis of online survey

**Approach:**

- Presentation of the CCF Development Project at Annual Symposium on 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2012.
- Publication of the online survey between 13<sup>th</sup> of January until 15<sup>th</sup> of February.
- Preliminary analysis of survey results.
- A presentation to the Conservation Science Group in the Zoology Department (8<sup>th</sup> February 2012).

**Phase V. 16<sup>th</sup> of February to 31<sup>st</sup> of March.**

**Objectives:** Analysis of online survey results to identify conclusions and recommendations for improving communication and engagement across CCF.

**Approach:**

- Analysis of questionnaire report.
- Focal discussions with representative of some associations and non members of CCF, including local organisations:
  - Vena Kapoor. CCI
  - Dr. Stephanie V. Prior. Conservation Science Group. University of Cambridge.
  - Reverend Nigel Cooper. Diocese of Ely and Anglia Ruskin University.
  - Guy Belcher. Nature Conservation Officer. City Council.
  - Chris Gerard. Wildlife Trust Association.
  - Philip Clark. Community Greenspaces Manager. Community Engagement Team. Cambridgeshire County Council.
  - Louise Bacon. Cambridgeshire Bird Club, Cambridge Conservation Volunteers, Butterfly Conservation.
  - Caroline Göhler. Cambridge Past, Present and Future.
- Review of existing documentation and meeting reports:
  - Discussions about Student Conference on Conservation Science (SCCS) Internship Programme and possible links to CCF.
  - Exploring Conservation Clusters. Using the Cambridge Conservation Initiative as a case study (Vena Kapoor).
  - Idenk CCI Strategy Meeting. 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012.
  - Green Infrastructure Strategy. (National Trust, Forestry Commission, Landscape Access Recreation, Cambridgeshire County Council, English Nature, Cambridge Preservation Society)



## Future approaches

Suggestions for the future of CCF from the consultation group (CCF Founders and members of the Advisory Group) include **better use of technology and internet tools**, links with educational institutions to raise awareness of CCF with future conservationists, government policy makers and business, **increased public profile, more social events** (guided visits, voluntary work, etc.), **grouping of interests (projects with similar themes) and technical expertise** with a user-generated website directory, highlighting conservation issues, social networking, strengthening of subgroups (including the Marine Group as a role model).

**Difficulties remain with effectively engaging with** local NGOs. Discussions are ongoing about the proposal for CCF to adopt a more formal charitable or similar status and to secure dedicated administrative support.

## What is CCF?

The Forum has the following governing bodies (Committee, Council and Working Groups) which have the following structures and modes of participation.

### CCF Members

There are currently **51 member organisations in CCF** as confirmed at the Council Meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September of 2011, including the recent application of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Cambridge University Press (CUP). 46% of organisations are local in scope, 21% are national and 33% operate at an international level. One quarter of organisations are related to the research sector (universities or research institutes), 14% are government or intergovernmental institutions (UNEP-WMCP, IUCN, Natural England). The remaining 61% includes foundations, local conservation interest and action groups and associations, and charitable bodies. Of these, 25% work locally in Cambridgeshire. The Charities Commission website lists some 299 organisations with an interest in environmental and conservation issues, suggesting that a large number of relevant local groups are not involved in CCF.

Compiling the registration data for the last five years there are currently 519 Friends of CCF (53% female and 47% male). Very few data exist to characterise the profile of the Friends. It is necessary (re)define and clarify the meaning of being Friend of CCF and the procedure for gathering background information.

### The Committee

A volunteer team elected every two years (with the option for re-election for two consecutive terms) and is comprised of: Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Newsletter Secretary, Social Secretary, and Website secretary.

## The Council

The council meets three times a year and welcomes the participation of any individual from a Member organisation or a Friend of CCF. Analysing the participation of 14 Council Meetings from 4th April 2002 until 29th September 2011 gave the following summary:

47% of Member organisations did not participate in the Council Meetings during this period. Organisations who have participated the most (proportion of meetings attended) are:

UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre	85%
University of Cambridge: Department of Zoology	78%
Natural England	64%
Cambridgeshire Bird Club	50%
British Antarctic Survey	42%
A Roche	35%
Cambridge Conservation Initiative	35%
Anglia Ruskin University	35%

In many cases the representation of these organisations has been made by the same small number of dedicated individuals.

## Working Groups

Individual working groups have the remit of organising thematic regular events and developing new ideas and strategies for the future of particular interest groups in the Forum. At present, the only active group is the **Marine Group** which works through occasional meetings. This group has 99 members and the main proposed activity is a monthly meeting in the pub where an informal talk is given at the beginning of the evening on a marine-related topic, followed by group discussion. Two such meetings have happened so far and the future of this activity is currently uncertain because of low attendance.

The second activity of the Marine Group is the monthly marine newsletter (people's main motivations are to keep up to date with what's going on in the marine world and network). A consultative exercise is planned to identify the needs and priorities of this newsletter.

## Symposia

One of the most important activities of the CCF calendar is the Symposia. The Annual Symposium in January is a highly anticipated event which boasts strong participation of the members and non-members. Information has been compiled on the Annual Symposia between 2003-2011 and Summer Symposia between 2010-2011.

60% of the CCF membership organisations have been represented in the Annual Symposium. There is a balance between attendees from international organisations (41%) and local organisations, including universities and academic institutions (40%) with 19% of attendees belonging to national associations. The average attendance was as follows:

- 11% of the organisations have attended all the Annual Symposia
- 6% of the organisations have attended four times.
- 6% of the organisations have attended three times.
- 11% only twice.
- 67% of the organisations have attended just once of which 50% are local entities (including universities or research institutes), 28% are international and 22% are national.

The number of participants from each organisation is also variable. The organisation with the highest number of representatives in the Annual Symposium is the University of Cambridge. 57% are from Zoology Department, 22% Geography, 13% Plant Science, 6% International Law and 5% Biological Anthropology. Following the University of Cambridge is UNEP-WCMC (66 attendees), Birdlife (40 attendees) and Fauna and Flora International (27 attendees)

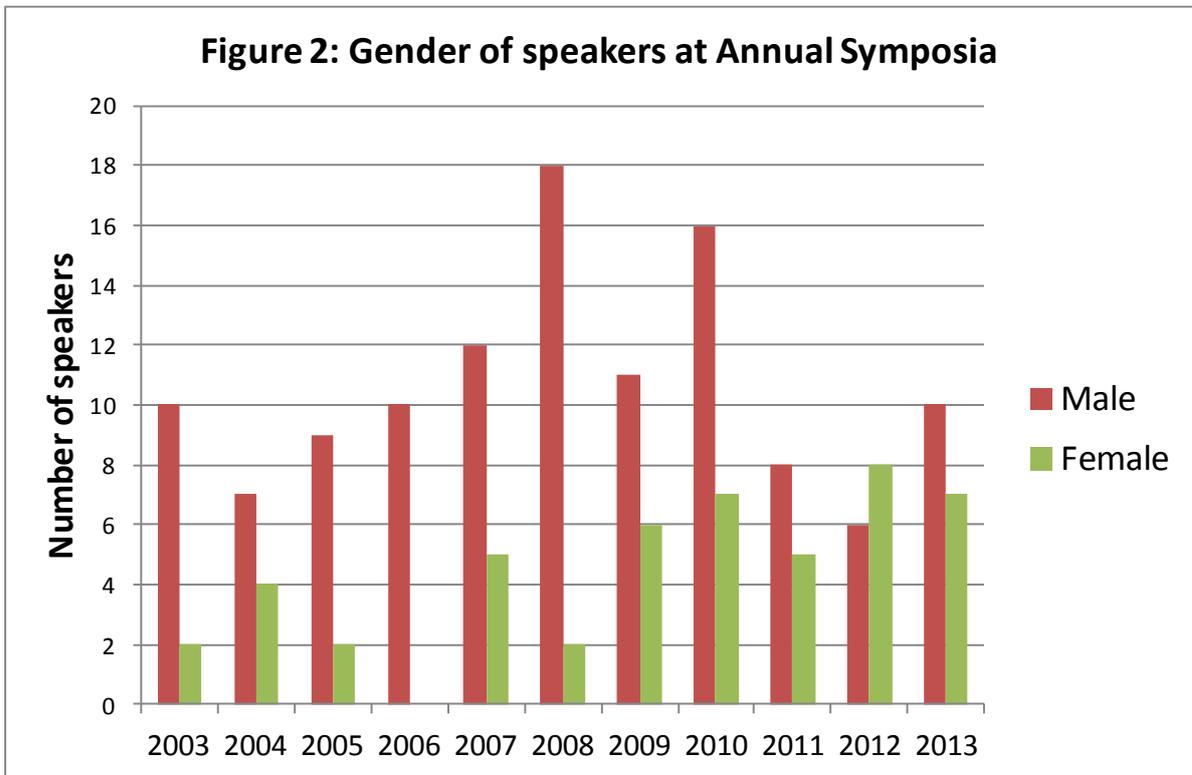
The ranking of the member associations with the highest participation is:

**Annual Ranking of CCF Member participation at Symposia  
(2005-2010)**

University of Cambridge	<b>32%</b>
UNEP-WCMC	<b>25%</b>
BIRDLIFE	<b>17%</b>
FFI	<b>9%</b>
Natural England	<b>5%</b>
RSPB	<b>4%</b>
Anglia Ruskin University	<b>4%</b>
CEH	<b>4%</b>
IUCN	<b>3%</b>

56% of the speakers across all Symposia between 2005 and 2010 do not belong to any Member organisation of CCF. However, in the Annual Symposium, 65% of the speakers belong to a Member organisation, whereas in the Summer Symposium 63% of the speakers do not belong to any Member organisation.

Looking across all speakers from Annual Symposia between 2003 and 2011 there has been a bias towards male speakers (70% of all speakers), although this situation has improved in recent years with recent symposia having approximately equal numbers of male and female speakers (see Figure 2).



### Online survey

The invitation to the online survey was circulated between 13th January and 15th February to representatives of CCF member organisations, the Newsletter circulation list and Friends of CCF. The main sections of the survey were:

- General information.
- Benefits CCF provides for individuals.
- Individual engagement with CCF.
- Opinions and ideas regarding the newsletter, website, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- CCF Vision.

Question format included multiple choice option questions, yes/no, and some (but limited) open ended (free text) questions for respondents to give opinions. It took around 20 minutes to complete using Survey Gizmo.

#### Results of the online survey.

##### i) Who completed the survey?

Because people were asked to circulate the survey link as widely as possible it is difficult to estimate how many people have received the invitation though it is at least 800. We received 228 completed or partially complete responses.

People from 35 countries answered the questionnaire. 60% were from United Kingdom.

Figure.3. Origins of respondents to online survey

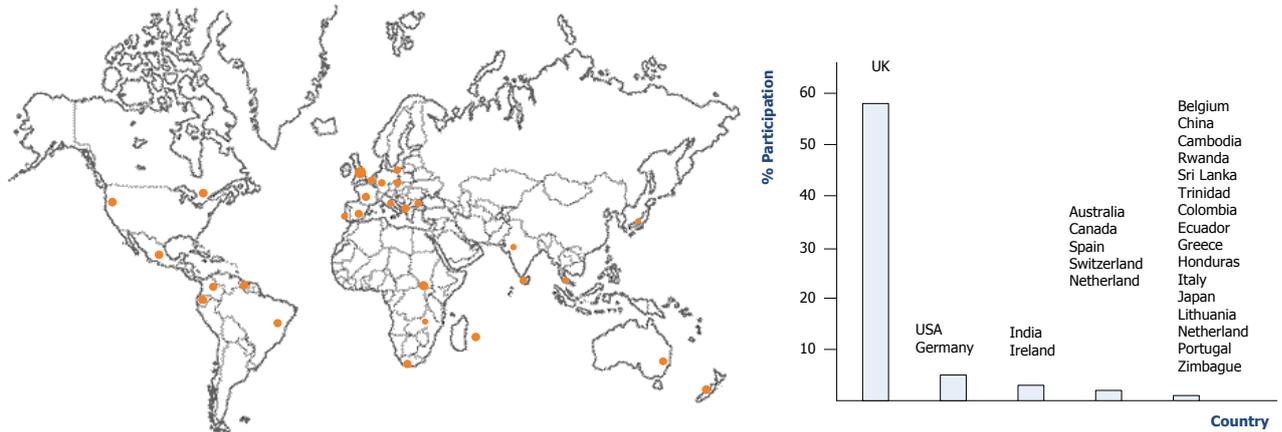
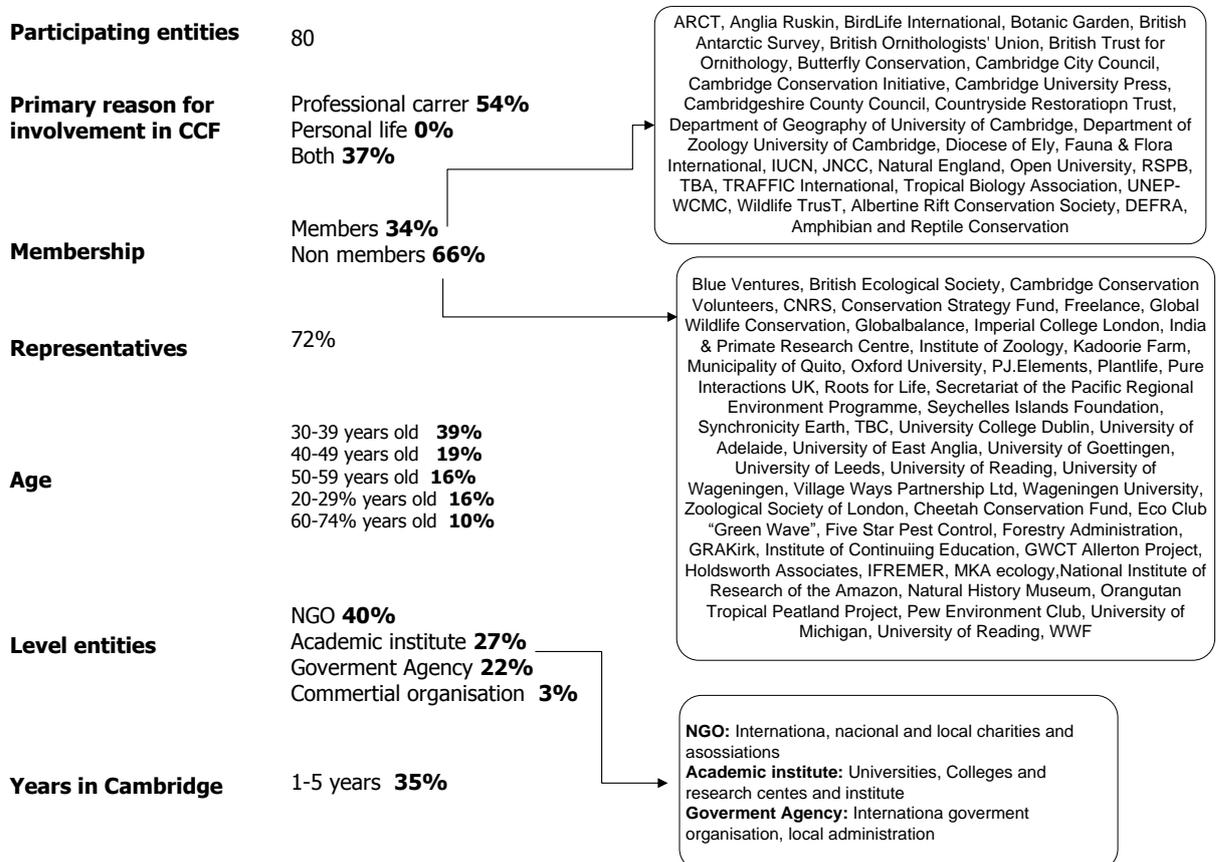


Figure 4. Participants' characteristics.



## ii) Benefits of CCF and individual engagement with the Forum

Responses are grouped by the type of institute the respondent belongs to – NGO (International, national, and local charities and associations) academic institute (Universities, Colleges, research centres and institutes) and Government Agency (international government organisation and local administration.)

**Table 1. Areas of conservation work that interest people the most.**

	NGO	Government Agency	Academic Institute
Conservation science	24%	25%	30%
Conservation education	18%	9%	11%
Conservation advocacy	15%	7%	5%
Conservation policy	15%	23%	18%
Management of conservation sites and species	15%	21%	22%
Training and capacity building	12%	14%	13%

First
  Second
  Last option

Other key interests included: *economic valuation, business and biodiversity, conservation and social science, farming and another transdisciplinary and holistic approaches*

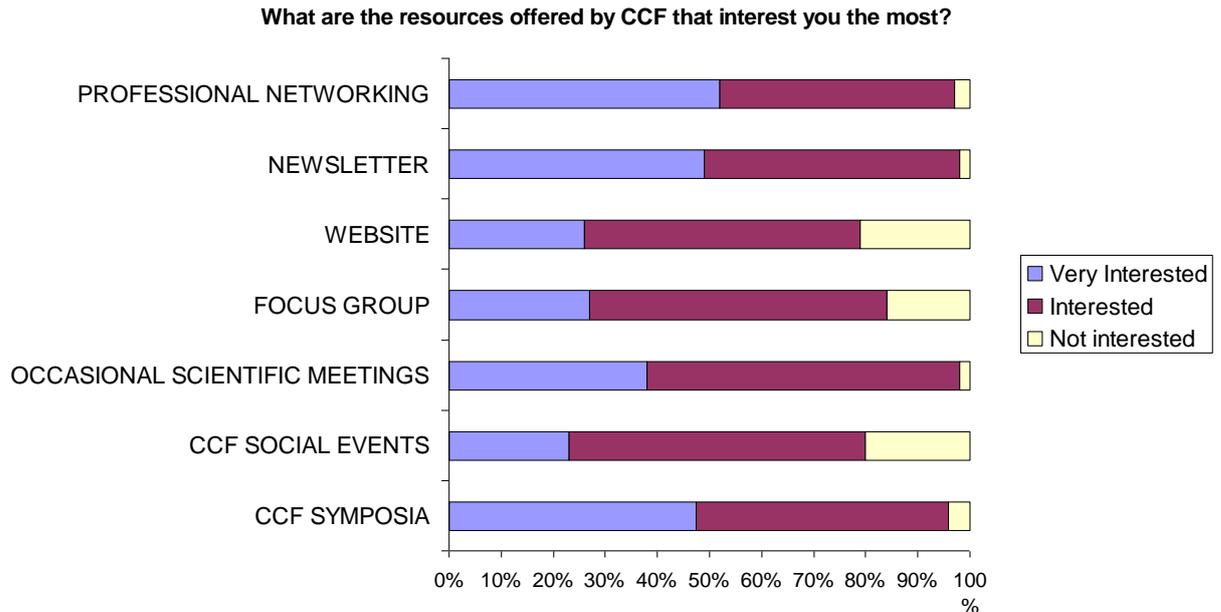
**Table 2. The reasons that people are interested in participating in CCF activities**

	NGO	Government Agency	Academic Institute
Making new contacts in the conservation community	29%	28%	27%
Access to information about local expertise and activities related to conservation	25%	26%	24%
Finding out about jobs in conservation	16%	17%	16%
Finding out about funding opportunities for conservation	16%	15%	14%
Re-establishing old contacts in the conservation community	10%	10%	8%
Finding out about volunteer opportunities in conservation	5%	5%	10%

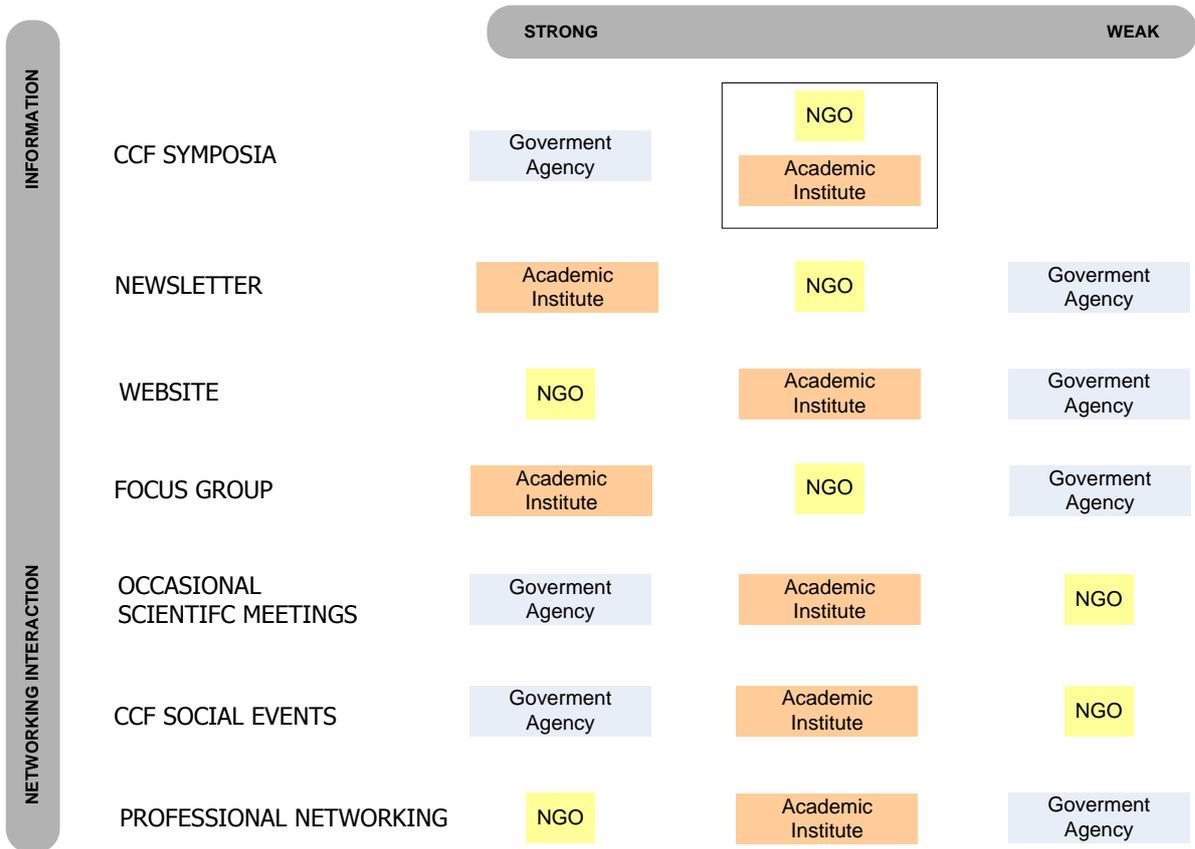
First
  Second
  Last option

Other key interests included: *general information about news and latest developments in a range of CCF partner organisations activities, learning about activities within CCF member organisation, discussions in conservation issues and disseminate information from the own organisation*

Individual engagement with CCF is essential to the success of the Forum. The following section summarises results related to the resources and activities of CCF for each type of organisation.



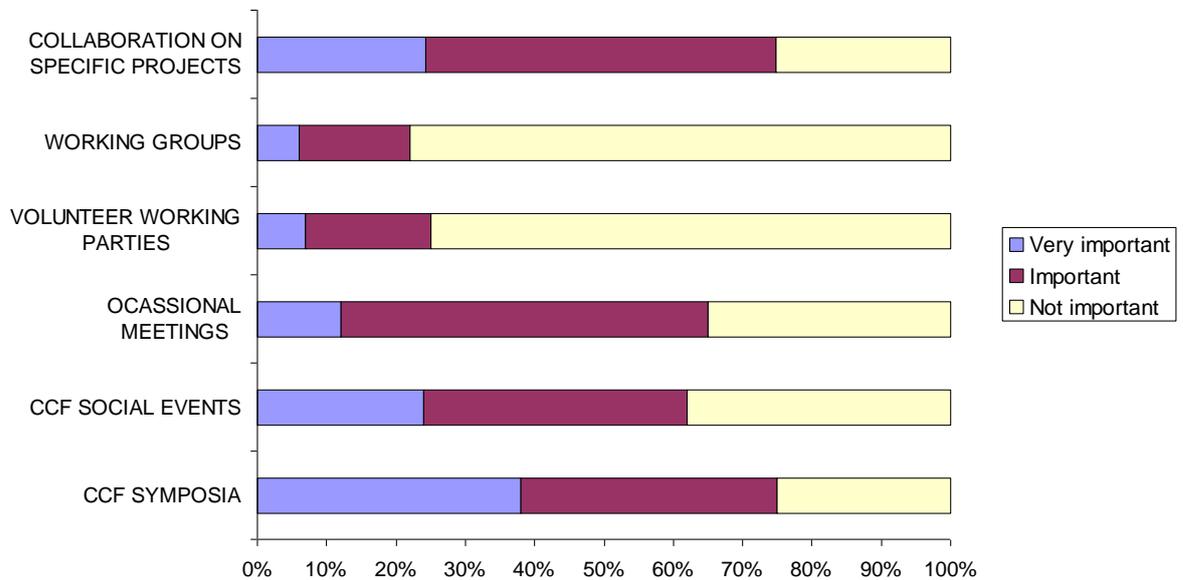
**Figure 5. Interest in resources offered for CCF by type of organisation**



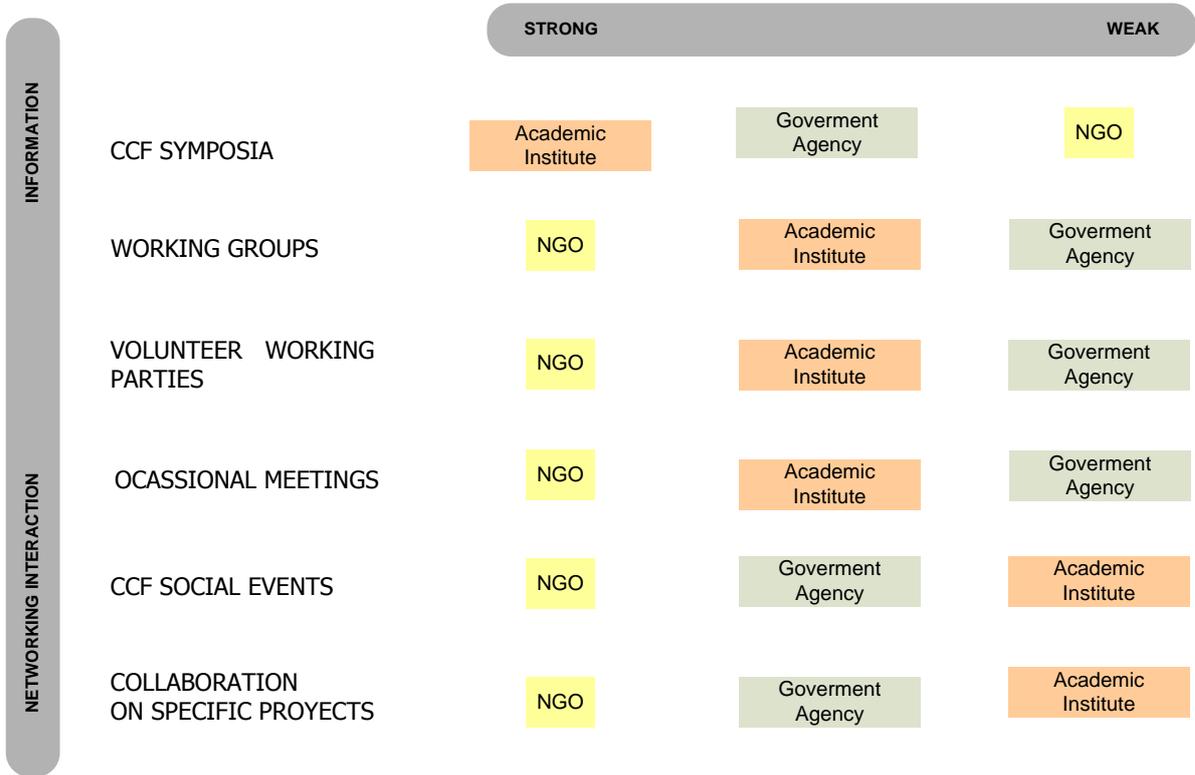
Note: The interest in CCF Symposia is the same for NGOs and Academic Institutions.

Other resources listed include: *internship possibilities for students and research links; job advertisements, skills training, CCF projects and workshops*

**Table 4. Activities considered more important for developing contacts.**



**Figure 6. Activities considered more important for developing contacts by type of organisation.**



Additional activities listed include: *The Annual Symposium, Christmas Party, the project "Harmonising Measures of Conservation Success" Project, Conservation Seminars and Mphil in conservation of the Leadership and the evenings at the Castle pub are all considered as important aspects of the CCF community*

Table 6. Current participation in CCF

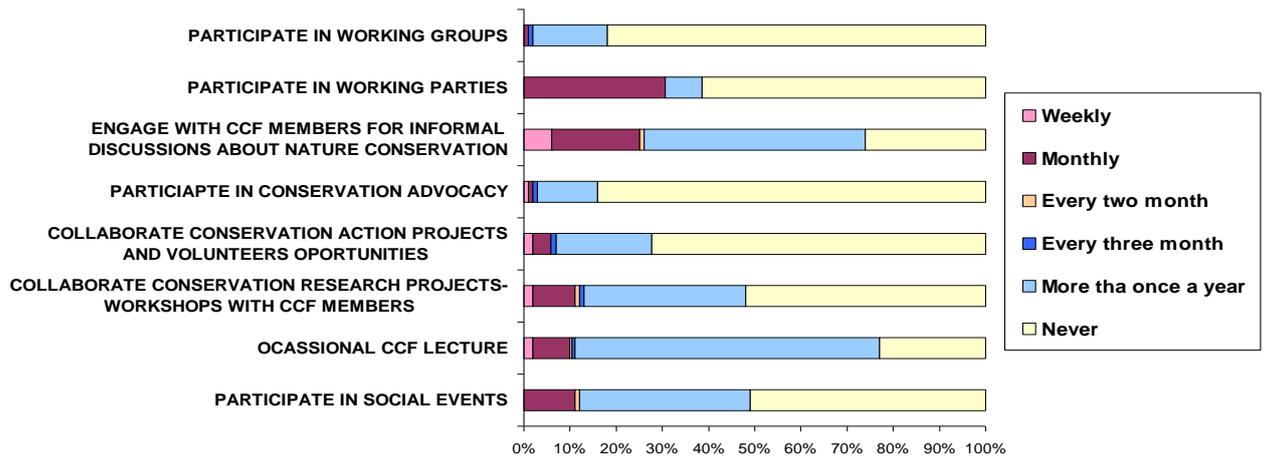


Figure 7. Current participation in CCF by type of institute.

	STRONG			WEAK		
INFORMATION	PARTICIPATE IN WORKING GROUPS	NGO	Academic Institute	Government Agency		
	OCASSIONAL CCF LECTURE	Academic Institute	Government Agency	NGO		
	PARTICIPATE IN WORKING PARTIES	Academic Institute	Government Agency	NGO		
	ENGAGE WITH CCF MEMBERS FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS ABOUT NATURE CONSERVATION	NGO	Government Agency	Academic Institute		
NETWORKING INTERACTION	PARTICIPATE IN CONSERVATION ADVOCACY	Government Agency	NGO	Academic Institute		
	COLLABORATE CONSERVATION ACTION PROJECTS AND VOLUNTEERS OPORTUNITIES	Government Agency	NGO	Academic Institute		
	COLLABORATE CONSERVATION RESEARCH PROJECTS-WORKSHOPS WITH CCF MEMBERS	Academic Institute	NGO	Government Agency		
	PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL EVENTS	Government Agency	NGO	Academic Institute		

**iii) Newsletter, website, Facebook and LinkedIn**

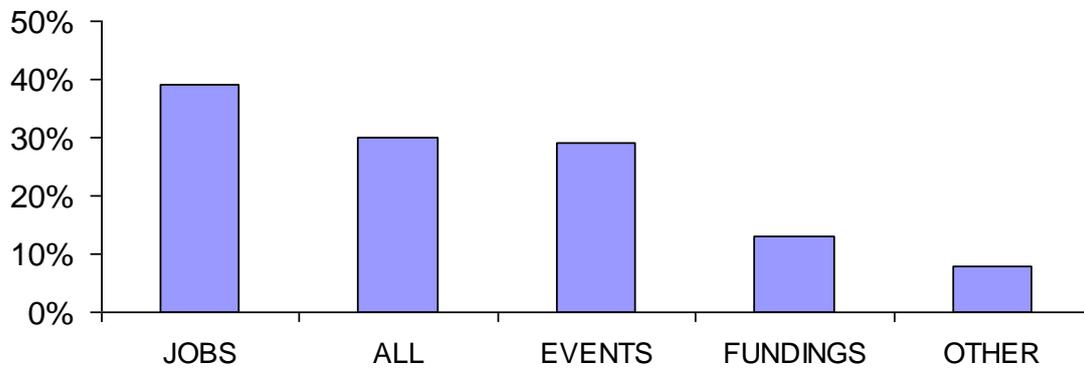
**Newsletter.**

54% of respondents received the Newsletter directly from the CCF Secretary and 26% through their organisation, 8% forwarded from a friend and 2% do not receive the Newsletter at all.

54% share the Newsletter with less than five people and 8% distribute it to more than twenty and 5% distribute between five and ten people. The main reason for sharing the Newsletter is the Job section.

**Table 7.**

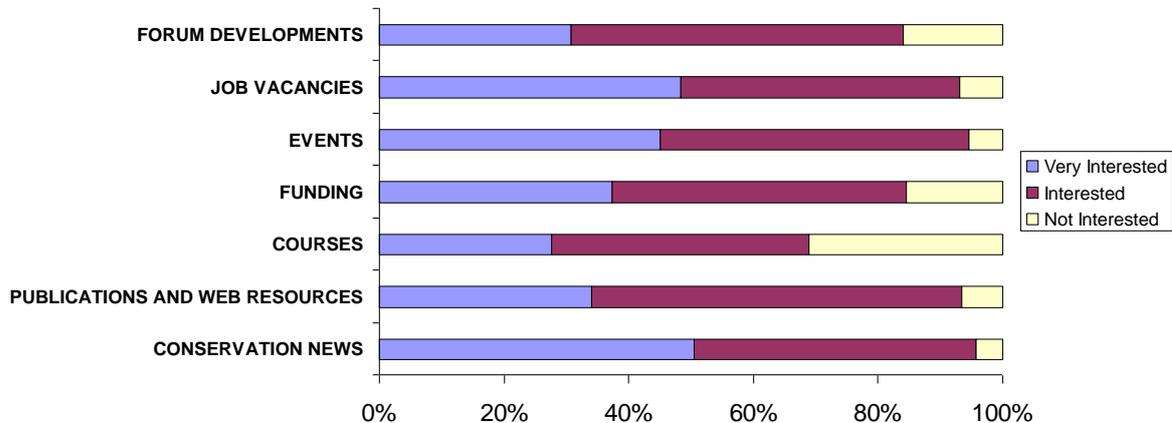
**Reason to share the newsletter**



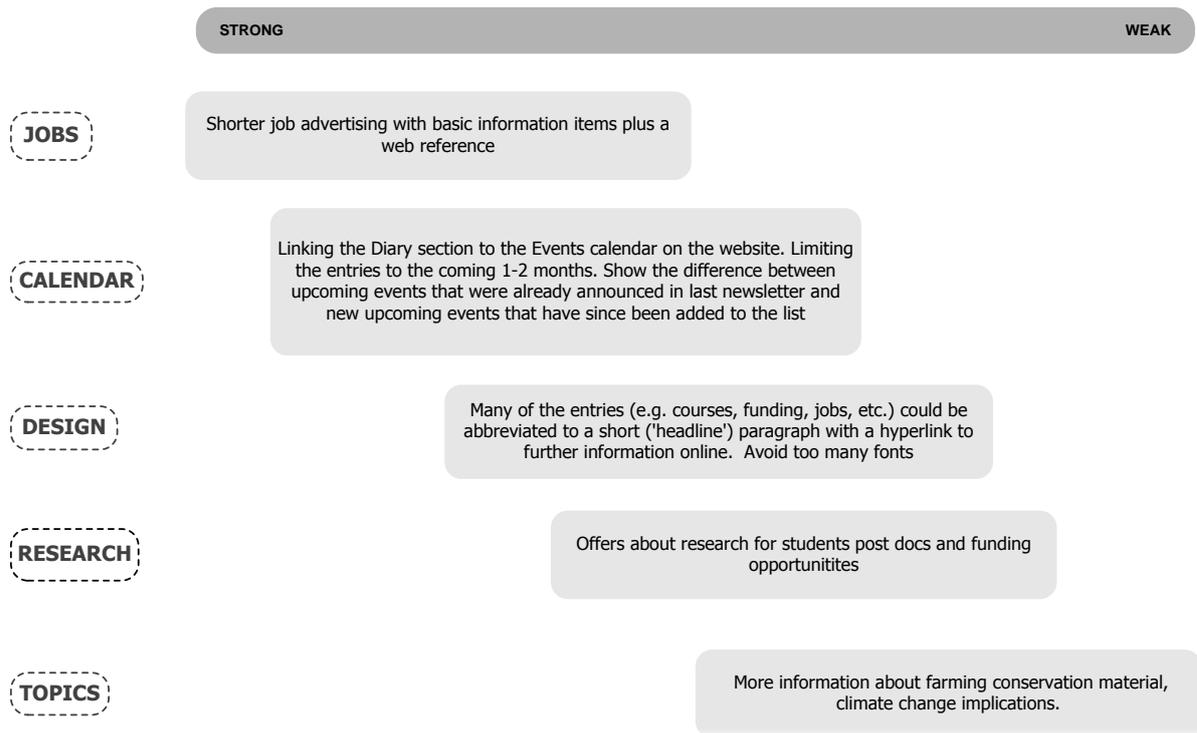
The interest in the different sections of the newsletter is showed below. "Conservation News", publications, "Web Resources" and "Job Vacancies" are the sections considered the most interesting for participants.

**Table 8**

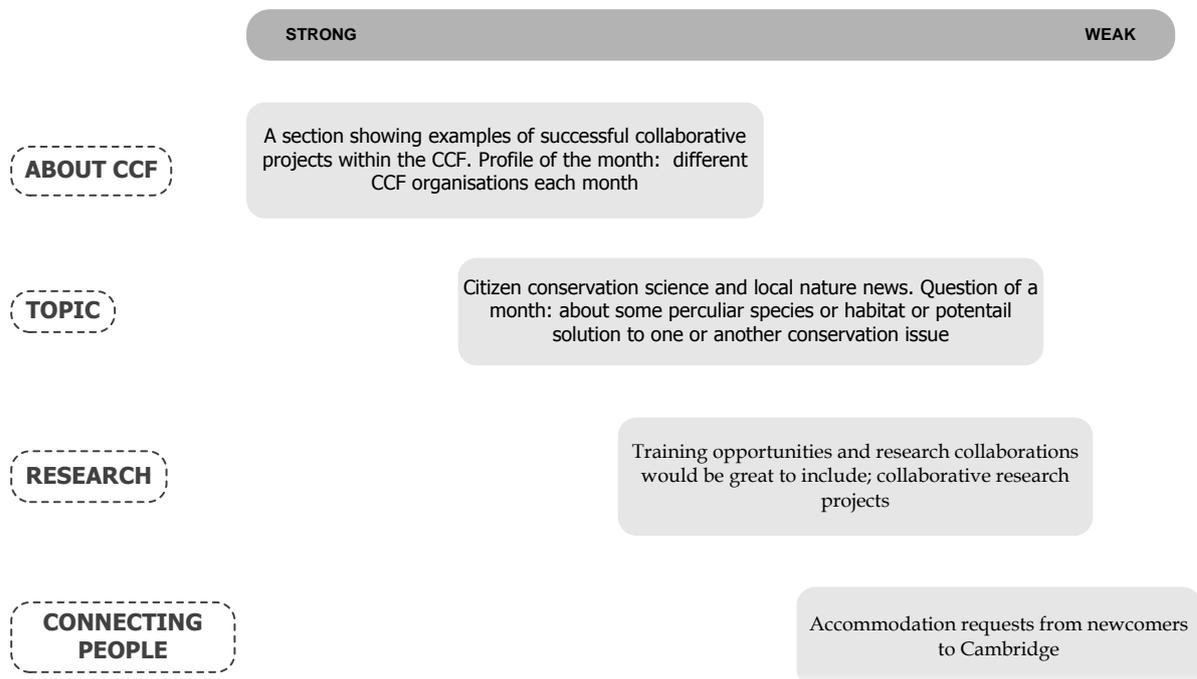
**How interested are you in the different sections of the newsletter?**



**Figure 8. Suggestions for improvement of the Newsletter.**

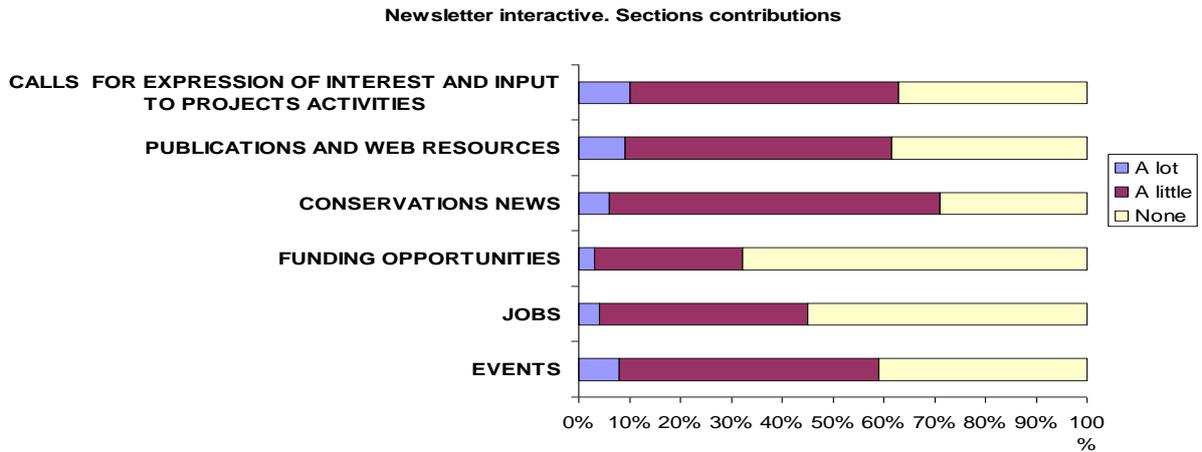


**Figure 9. Interest in proposals for new sections in the Newsletter.**



63% of the participants expressed a preference not to move towards a continuously updated online version of the newsletter (with links to details). Though this concern is alleviated if users can set their own preferences on when to receive updates and make contributions.

**Table 9. New contributions to the Newsletter**



**Website**

47% of respondents visit the website monthly and 41% never. Only 5% visit the website weekly.

**Table 10**

**Areas to improve in the website**

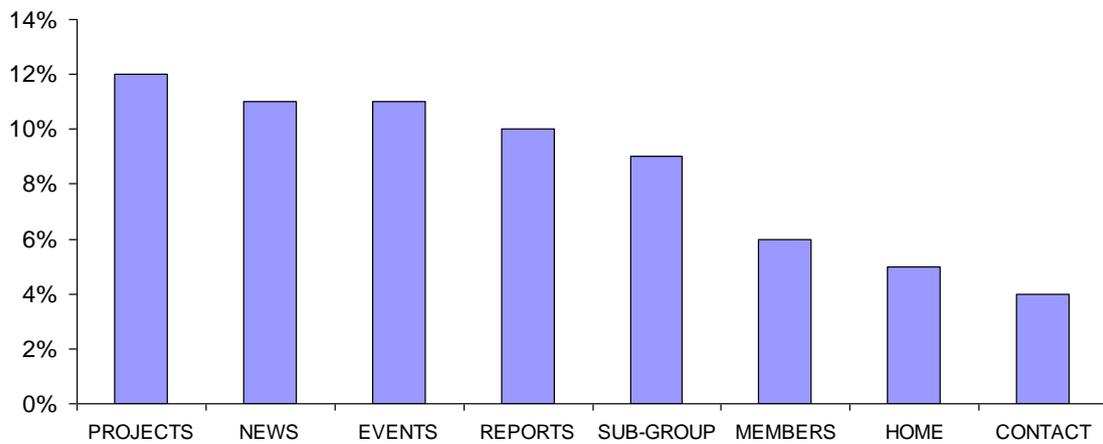
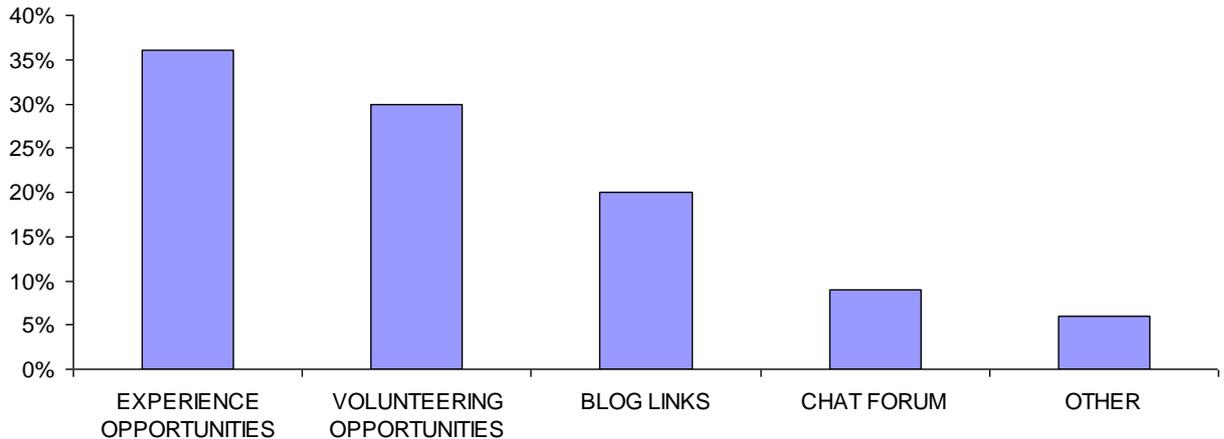
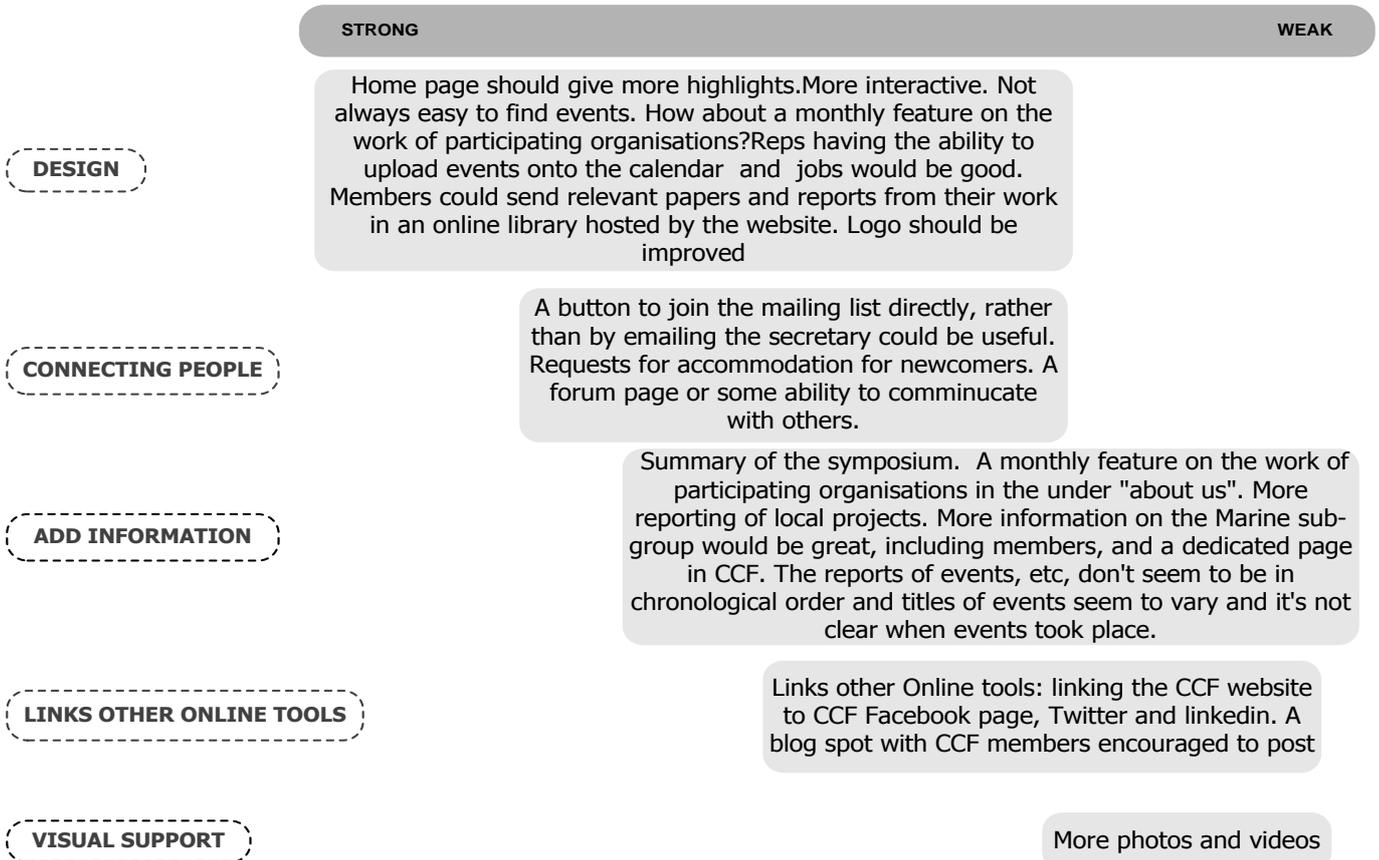


Table 11.

**New sections in the website**



**Figure 10. Suggestion for improvement of the Website**



**Use of LinkedIn and Facebook.**

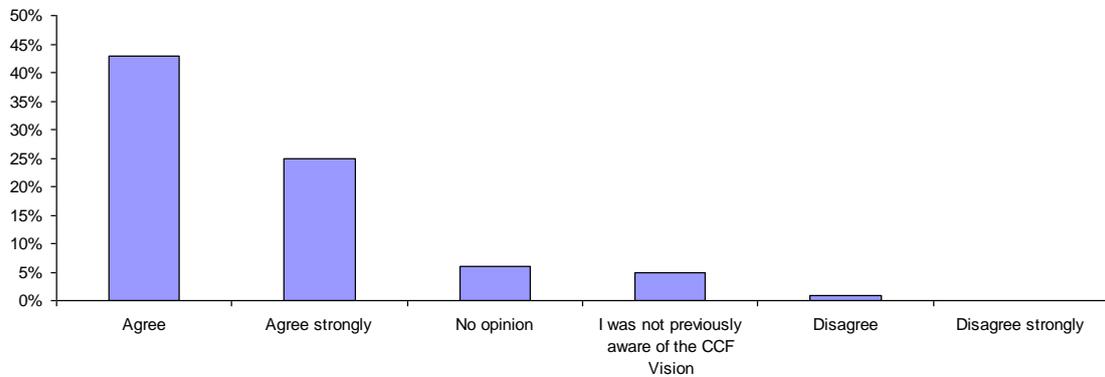
Use of LinkedIn and Facebook CCF page is quite low with c.10% of respondents use this facility actively.

**iv) CCF Vision.**

The CCF Vision established in 2010 was identified as “a forum to link organisations in the Cambridge area by providing an open, dynamic platform for exchanging knowledge and developing solutions to current and emerging conservation issues”. The opinion of the participants regarding the CCF Vision was:

**Table.12**

**Do you agree with this vision of CCF?**



**v) Perceived strengths and weakness of CCF**

The perceived **strengths and positive aspects** of CCF are related to the following issues:

- **Synergy.** The added value of disparate knowledge-rich organisations sharing information between a variety of organisations.
- **Social capital.** Enthusiastic, talented and passionate people working in conservation. Critical mass of conservationists in a friendly informal environment.
- **Networking:** Useful, informal and relaxed venue for networking and information exchange to bring so many disciplines and sectors together.
- **Brand - Cambridge, a tradition in Conservation:** based on an extraordinary experience the Cambridge area. Different organisations and individuals encouraging discussion. Variety of organisations with a collaborative base even more potential.
- **Activities** Seminar series, social events, Symposia are very useful.

The perceived **weaknesses and negative aspects** of CCF are related to the following issues:

- **Lack of resources:** deficit of professional and administration support. Secure funding to support core functions in a context where people have increasing demands on their time. Not having a small office (physical) presence.
- **Tools of communication.** Improvements urgently needed in the Website and Newsletter, linking the two and providing opportunities for user contributions and user specified receipt of information.
- **Distance to Cambridge and time availed to participate in events**
- **Insularity.** Dominated by those who already have strong links, and by people most established in their organisations and the network. Focused on the needs of the big institutions in Cambridge. Needs to ensure that membership policy is inclusive to all.
- **Organisation.** Still difficult to turn personal interactions into useful collaboration between organisations; it is still quite hard to find out who is doing what. It relies on a few quite overworked volunteers to run it and high turnover of young people involved (students, volunteers, interns etc) some tentativeness about role and decisions.
- **Other topics:** An identified need for more practical conservation projects especially linked to agriculture; Opportunity to do much more for the biodiversity of Cambridge and surrounding countryside
- **CCI and CCF.** Competition with CCI? Lack of high level support across the CCF membership particularly given attention given to CCI.

**Table 13. A timetable of successful CCF Projects**

1999	<b>Constitution of Cambridge Conservation Forum.</b>
2000	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Annual Symposium</b>
2001	<b>A review of future options for CCF June 2001</b> Working group in response to suggestions that The Forum might explore new ways to create “added-value” from the “critical mass” of conservation professionals in around Cambridge, the members of CCF decided to review its progress and consider options for the future.
2002	Working Group to discuss the measurement of conservation success.
2003	<b>4<sup>o</sup> Annual Symposium.</b>
2004	<b>May-Harmonising Measures of Conservation Success</b> This ongoing work, originally funded by the MacArthur Foundation in May 2004, aims to develop tools for evaluating the success of conservation efforts in order to help identify those approaches that are most effective and distinguish them from less productive approaches
	<b>5<sup>o</sup> Annual Symposium</b>
2005	<b>September-Marine Conservation Group Inauguration.</b> With the aim of bringing together key academic, government, private and non-government organisations based in Cambridge and operating in the marine environment.
	<b>6<sup>o</sup> Annual Symposium.</b> Biodiversity and Poverty, Remote Sensing and Conservation, Harmonising Measures of Success Project, Access to Justice and Environmental Information.
2006	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium.</b> Climate Change.
2007	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium.</b> Marine Conservation.
2008	<b>Carbon Offset Project</b> This project reviewed CCF members’ experiences of carbon offsetting and the state of the voluntary carbon market in 2008 with a view to informing members’ future decisions on carbon offsetting.
	<b>August-Harmonising Measures of Conservations Success. Final Report</b>
	<b>9<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium</b> Agriculture and biodiversity
	<b>Summer Symposium.</b> Future farming in the UK: global implications for society and biodiversity
2009	<b>Special Council Meeting.</b> (Vision session)

	<p><b>Seminar:</b> Global Analyses of Protected Area Impacts. Lucas Joppa of Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University.</p> <p><b>10<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium.</b> Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The challenges ahead.</p> <p><b>Summer Symposium</b></p>
2010	<p><b>Vision session at the Annual CCF Symposium.</b> New CCF Vision document, which indicates some of the ways CCF is hoping to develop</p> <p><b>CCI/CCF workshop on carbon management and offsetting.</b> It aimed at progressing the thinking on reducing the carbon footprints of conservation organizations across Cambridge</p> <p><b>11<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium.</b></p> <p><b>Summer Symposium</b> Climate change adaptation in the International Year of Biodiversity</p>
2011	<p><b>12<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium.</b> International Year of Biodiversity</p> <p><b>Summer Symposium. Landscape and localism:</b> Future directions in habitat management.</p>
2012	<p><b>13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium.</b> Rio+ 20, Building support for conservation by integrating cultural connections to nature, Nature Improvement Areas, Case studies from the Rapid Response Facility, Marine Conservation Zones, Marine Conservation Zones, Pecha Kucha Sessions.</p>

<b>CCF-CCI</b>
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There is still a common lack of understanding regarding the relationship between CCF and CCI. Questions include identifying the flow of information and ideas between both associations and wondering how this mechanism can be improved and made more efficient.

The documents "Exploring Conservation Cluster. Using the Cambridge Conservation Initiative as a case study "(Vena Kapoor) and "Idenk CCI Strategy Meeting."(13th January 2012) have helped a lot in understanding the relationship between the two associations.

The main differences perceived between associations by the CCF membership are:

CCF	CCI
<p>Works to help formalize informal communication and networks</p> <p>The place where ideas begin to take shape and evolve.</p> <p>51 organisations from very different levels</p> <p>Focus on voluntary work</p> <p>Activities include workshops, informal interactions and talks, social events.</p> <p>Few joint projects amongst member organisations.</p> <p>People see CCF as the forum for promoting a sharing of knowledge, ideas and methods of engagement and involvement in debates.</p>	<p>Formal programme of collaborative work</p> <p>Membership comprised of 10 larger organisations (from all sectors).</p> <p>Independent financial backing, full time managerial and administrative support</p> <p>Focus of work on identifying synergies and collaborations between organisations with shared goals and interests</p> <p>Combines conservation action, education, research, and conservation leadership</p> <p>A core objective is the development of the Conservations Campus to promote the vision of CCI</p>

Using the Cambridge Conservation Initiative as a case study suggested that the presence of a pre-existing informal social network, having a representative and democratic governance mechanism, and the availability of funding with a separate fundraising strategy are important for promoting successful conservation cluster initiatives. Academic and research institutions within the clusters can increase these benefits. Strong social capital is important for initial and sustained collaboration.

The project highlights the conflicts that arise when different institutions formalize collaborations; such as mismatch of research agendas between the partners and potential conflict due to overlap of domain boundaries between a partner and the collaborative initiative.

## CCF AND LOCAL LEVEL ENGAGEMENT

Interviews were conducted with some local entities, including: The Diocese of Ely, Nature Conservation Officer, City Council, Wildlife Trust Association, Community Green spaces Manager, Community Engagement Team, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Bird Club, Cambridge Conservation Volunteers, Butterfly Conservation and Cambridge Past, Present and Future. The discussion was focussed on the role of CCF and efforts to enhance communication, networking and integration with local organisations.

Some existing (non CCF) initiatives have been highlighted for improving engagement with local conservation volunteers and citizens, which could provide guidance and inspiration for CCF:

- Green Spaces and Strategy Plan (National Trust, Forestry Commission, Landscape Access Recreations, Cambridgeshire County Council, English Nature, Cambridge Preservation Society and Cambridge Past, Present and Future)
- Community Consultation and involvement (Cambridgeshire County Council and citizen participation)
- Involvement of schools and local farms. (Cambridgeshire County Council volunteers and local NGO)

Difficulties to participate more in CCF:

- International topics often appear to dominate the agenda.
- Time. People who work at local level are already voluntary.
- Local organisations do not use Newsletter and website to promote their activities and offers.

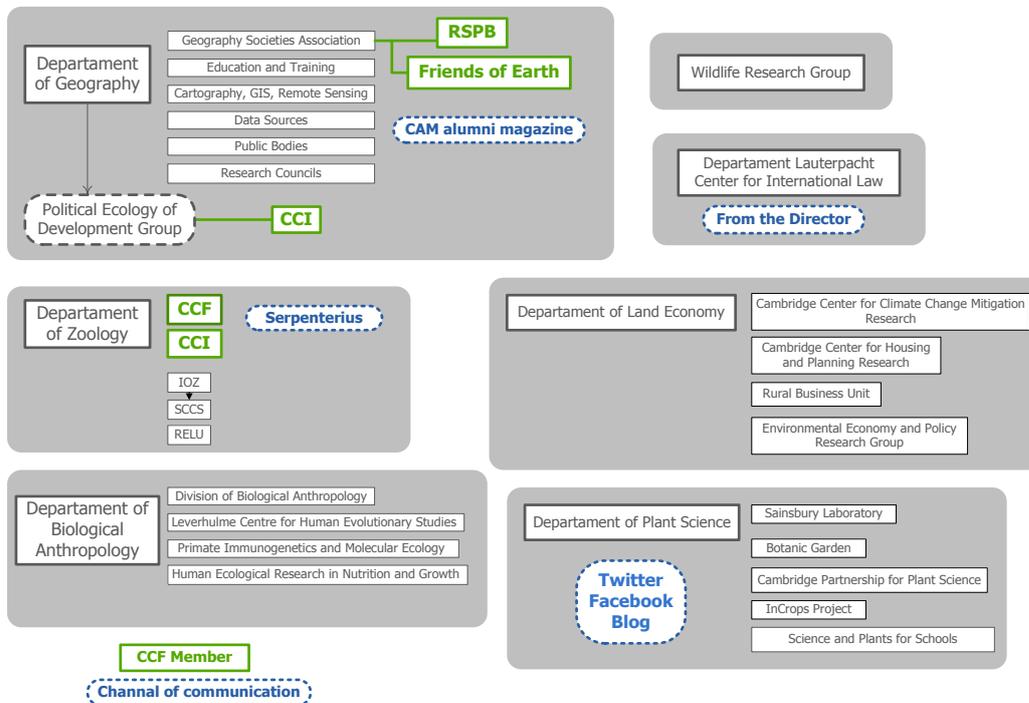
The following suggestions emerged from discussions with local organisations:

- Promote the local level through the national NGOs and local government agencies (instead of only through local associations and local NGOs)
- Create a specific space for the local organisation in the CCF Website and Newsletter
- Strengthen the relationship among Universities and local organisations to improve the research input to local projects.
- Promote CCF in public places (library, festival of science, etc.)
- Improve the role and leadership of local organisations at the Summer Symposium (including both topics and participation)
- Use current initiatives (Green Spaces Strategy, Local Planning and Public Consultations) to promote networking, workshops, etc.

**CCF AND THE UNIVERSITY**

The Department of Zoology is one of the organisations with more active participation in CCF together with the Department of Geography. The current network and the tools for communication between departments and CCF are shown in Figure 12. Note that also Departments of Geography and Zoology have their own links with CCF and CCI through their institutional website.

**Figure 12. Network and the tools for communication between departments and CCF.**



From this picture, some questions emerge:

- How can CCF help to promote and encourage this network?
- It is necessary that all departments are part of CCF?
- How to promote the role of CCF inside each of the departments?

### **SCCS Internship Programme**

Since 2000 the Student Conference on Conservation Science has been hosted by the Department of Zoology. This now globally recognised initiative plays an important role in providing young conservation scientists with experience and the chance to meet likeminded people and leaders in the field, and learn new ideas. After the Conference, the SCCS Internship Programme supports some students in staying with a host conservation organisation in United Kingdom for a four week internship.

Several organisations have participated in this programme; however only some of them are belong to CCF:

- Zoology Department. University of Cambridge
- UNEP-WCMC
- Wildlife Conservation Trust
- Birdlife International.
- RSPB
- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.
- Department of Genetic. University of Cambridge.

- How can CCF help to promote the involvement of more member organisations in the SCCS Internship Programme?

## 5. CONCLUSIONS.

CCF was founded with the goal of strengthening links across the unique community of conservation researchers, practitioners and volunteers around Cambridge. During the thirteen years it has been in existence the Forum has established a strong foundation of communication, collaboration, and information sharing amongst a wide variety of organisations and volunteer groups as well as amongst individuals irrespective of their institutional affiliation. Key aspects of this success have been the CCF Symposia series, an active Newsletter and website and a series of collaborative projects, social events and occasional meetings.

This project aimed to take stock of progress to date and contribute towards further improvements in communication, networking and integration across the CCF membership. A six month programme of work included a large number of semi-structured interviews, focal discussions, reviews of existing documentation and meeting reports, analysis of the 51 member organisations and 519 Friends registered as of September 2011, and the results of 270 responses to an online survey.

The key findings of the project are:

- The membership is divided into 46% at local level, 21% at the national level and 33% at international level. The gender balance amongst friends is 53% female and 47% male. 25% of member organisations are related to the research sector and 14% to government (international government organisations and local administrations)
- Only 8 member organisations work locally in Cambridgeshire, whereas there are 299 organisations environment related organisations registered in the Charities Commission for the Cambridge area.
- CCF is governed by the Committee and the Council. 53% of member organisations participate frequently in Council meetings, with the strongest representation from UNEP-WCMC, Department of Zoology and Natural England. Participation is often due to same small number of dedicated individuals.
- The Annual Symposium is the most important CCF activity. 60% of participants and 65% of the speakers between 2005 and 2010 have come from a member association. 90% of the speakers at the Annual Symposium to date have been male. The most active organisations in the Annual Symposium are the University of Cambridge, UNEP-WCMC and Birdlife.
- 270 people from 35 countries, 80 entities (34% members of CCF) answered the online survey including 40% from NGOs, 27% academic institutions, 22%

from government agencies and 3% from commercial organisations. 72% of CCF representatives responded to the survey.

- The area of nature conservation that interested survey respondents the most is “conservation science”. However, the second most highly ranked area of interest depended strongly on the type of institution (e.g. NGO: conservation education; government agency: threatened species management)
- The main reason for participating in CCF is to make new contacts in the conservation community.
- The resources offered by CCF that attract the most interest across survey respondents are the Newsletter and occasional CCF Lectures. The activities more important for developing contacts are the CCF Symposia and collaboration through specific projects.
- The primary reason for not participating more actively in CCF is a lack of time. Options for promoting future engagement in CCF depend on the type of organisation, e.g.: Government Agency: “Promote CCF in its organisation”, NGO and Academic institute: “helping in the running of planned CCF events”.
- 54% of survey respondents received the Newsletter from the CCF Secretary directly and only 26% through their member organisation, identifying a failure by representatives to distribute to member organisations. 54% of respondents share the newsletter with less than five people and 8% distribute it to more than twenty other individuals. The main reason for sharing the Newsletter is the Job section. Conservation News, publications, Web Resources and Job Vacancies are the sections considered the most interesting.
- Perceived weakness of CCF are related to a lack of resources, effective tools of communications, distance to Cambridge to attend events and time availability, insularity and a lack of clarity regarding the role of the organisation. Many people still find the relation between CCI and CCF confusing.
- Perceived strengths of CCF relate to the potential to develop synergies across the Cambridge conservation community, a strong base of social capital, tradition in conservation on nature in Cambridge and successful activities including the Symposia, seminars, and social events.
- Among the successful projects, the Annual Symposium was consistently highlighted, as well as the project “Harmonising Measures of Conservation Success” Project, the conservation seminar and the monthly Monday evenings at the Castle pub.

Based on above, some possibilities for further discussion and action to further enhance CCF are:

- Improvements to ensure that the Website and Newsletter are more up-to-date, dynamic, accessible and better linked to each other. And those individuals are able to make contributions themselves to news items (including talks, jobs, conferences, volunteer postings etc). In doing so helping to democratise the process of information sharing and greatly reduce the current bottleneck from the ineffectual representative system.
- Supporting the move for CCF to obtain charitable status or similar and options for securing dedicated CCF staff support.
- (re)define the meaning of being a Friend of CCF and the procedure for gathering the information about Friends and Member organisations.
- Improved ways of engaging local groups, including through national level organisations and creating a specific space for these organisations in the CCF Website and Newsletter.
- Strengthening of the relationship among departments of University of Cambridge and CCF.