The Garden Club:
Client Responses

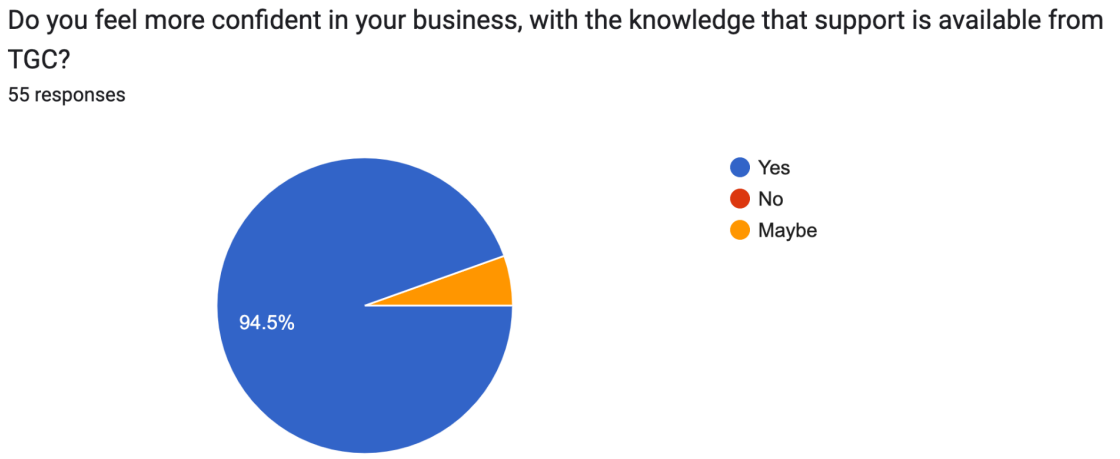
The following responses were recorded from a combination of clients, from active, to archived and some who have only accessed some elements of the project

Word of mouth is still key

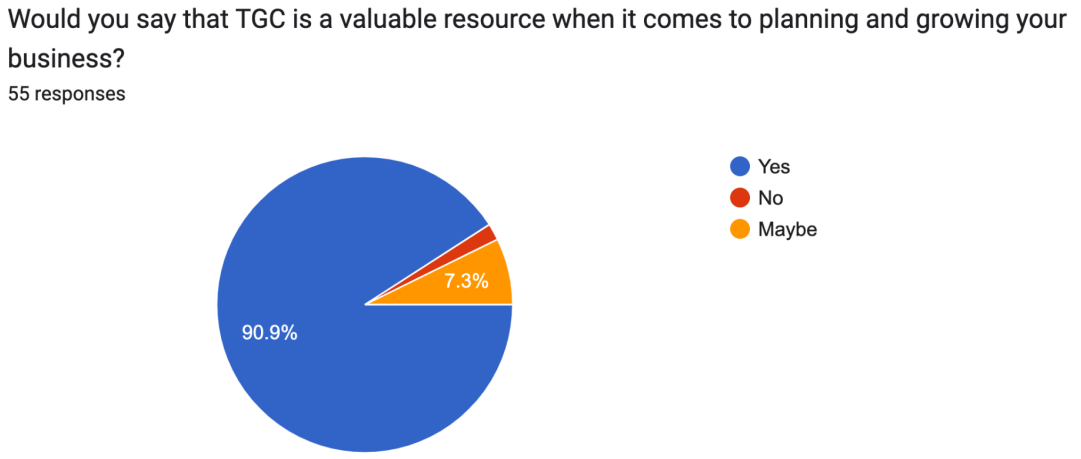
As with the first report, it is still recommendations, connections and networking that has grown the Garden Club community. There has been a large proportion of referrals, as well as some more connections and enquiries via facebook groups. A number of clients have also approached Sally directly, which could potentially indicate that more cohesive branding of the Garden Club would cause more direct enquiries.

Positive Response

Overall, the response to the project and its effectiveness remains extremely high, with 94.5% of respondents reporting an increase in confidence when running their business and making strategic decisions, as a result of being part of TGC. This response also includes businesses who only engage with the networking aspect of the project, rather than the consultancy, demonstrating that there is an awareness of the support that could be provided, should it be needed.



Again, 90.9% are confident that TGC remains a valuable resource for the trade and their businesses.

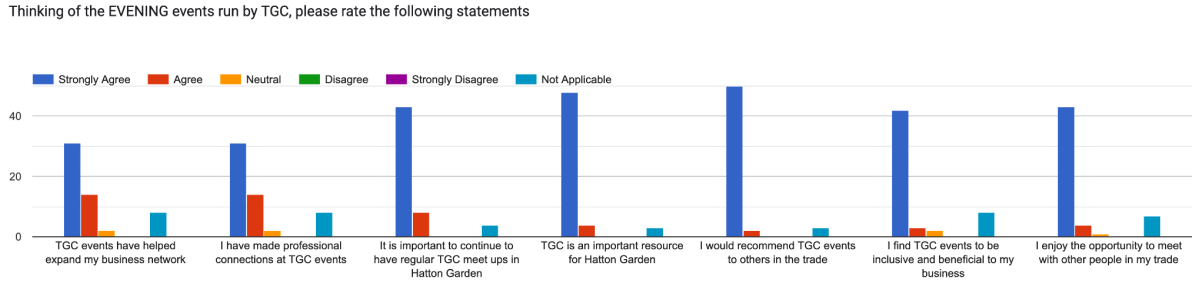


The overall majority of respondents have a very positive view of the Garden Club, and its impact on the area, and its relevance to the sector as a whole.

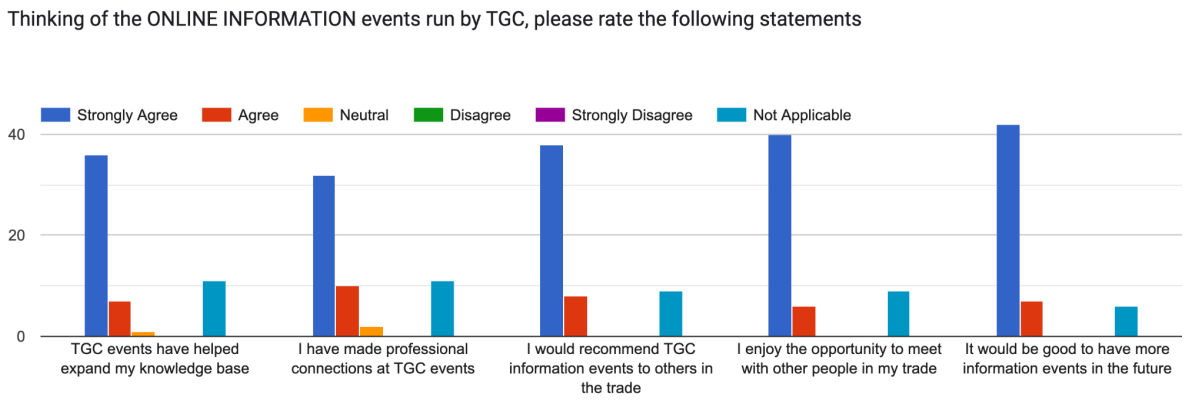
Survey statements	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**
TGC has helped with my business strategy	90%	10%
I feel more confident about my products and pricing	87.50%	12.50%
I can call on TGC when I need support	82.50%	12.50%
The performance of my business has improved with the support of TGC	80%	20%
TGC are knowledgeable about the jewellery industry and needs of my business	95%	5%
I feel TGC understands the issues within my business	97.50%	2.50%
TGC is an important resource for Hatton Garden	95%	5%
I would recommend TGC to other people in the jewellery trade	97.50%	2.50%

Events

With regular informal meet ups occurring in Hatton Garden over the last 18 months, we have seen a steady increase in the number of attendees, with many forging business relationships on the night. These have become an important aspect of the project, with the reach of these events extending into different areas of the trade.



A series of information events have also been held with speakers found at research events and these have been very positively received, with a high number of people requesting more online events of this type - ideally with businesses/topics not usually covered by support programmes.



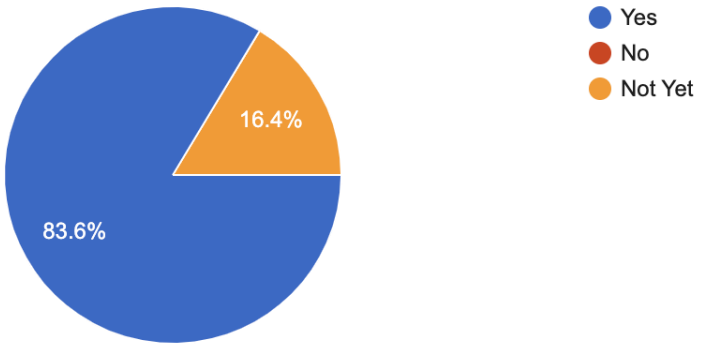
Sally has also supported other industry events such as The Hatton Garden Social/The Jewellery Collective and The Forge to help create a more connected community for the Hatton Garden area.

CONNECTIONS AND REFERRALS

The establishment of the regular meetings in Hatton Garden, alongside the overall increased awareness of the project has resulted in a number of professional connections and referrals established as a direct result of The Garden Club. Over the last 18 months, 46 businesses (83.6% of respondents) have reported making new professional connections as a result of TGC. Connections include diamond dealers, stone setters, photo editors and CAD designers.

Has TGC helped you establish new connections and/or business contacts?

55 responses



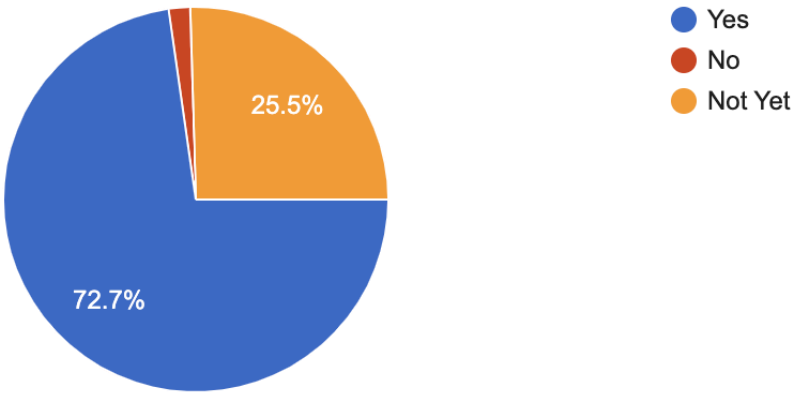
Outcomes

NEW PRODUCTS

Over the course of the entire project, 59 businesses have reported developing new products, with a further 16 in the planning stages. Of the 59, 38 (72.7%) reported new products in the last 18 months

Since joining TGC, have you created new products/pieces/collections?

55 responses

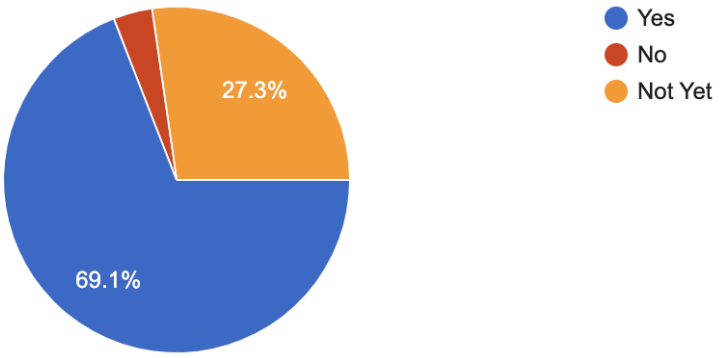


NEW SYSTEMS/PROCESSES

Over the course of the entire project, 60 businesses have reported implementing improved systems and processes, with 37 of those being in the last 18 months. Systems implemented include: costing and pricing; range planning and production tracking

Since joining TGC, have you improved your business systems, such as costing and pricing, or improved production tracking systems?

55 responses



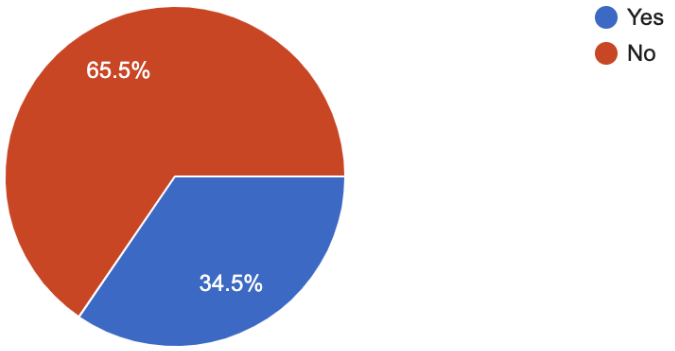
EMPLOYMENT / JOBS CREATED

Over the duration of the project, 19 (34.5%) businesses have employed someone either on a contract or freelance basis. This is a slight increase of 2% on respondents employing someone in the first round of the project.

In total, this represents 27 businesses over the life of the project hiring someone either freelance or on PAYE. The roles include production, administration and e-commerce, as well as particular specialist trades

Have you employed anyone on a freelance or payroll basis since starting on the program?

55 responses

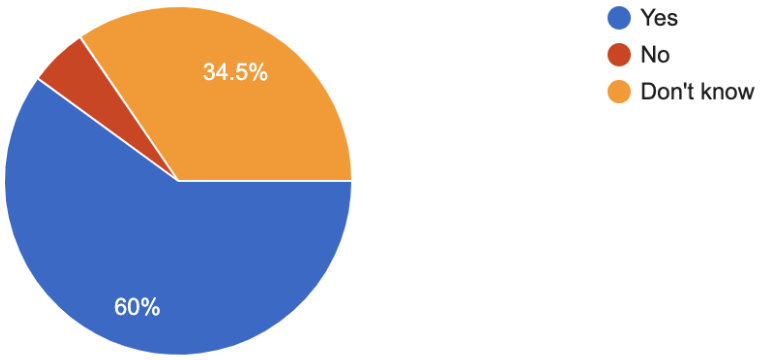


INCREASE IN SALES

Over the duration of the project, 33 businesses (60% respondents) have reported an increase in the number of sales since joining the project, with 34.5% (19 respondents) unsure of potential sales increase (usually due to the short term with the project to date)

Has the amount of annual sales you make increased since joining the program?

55 responses



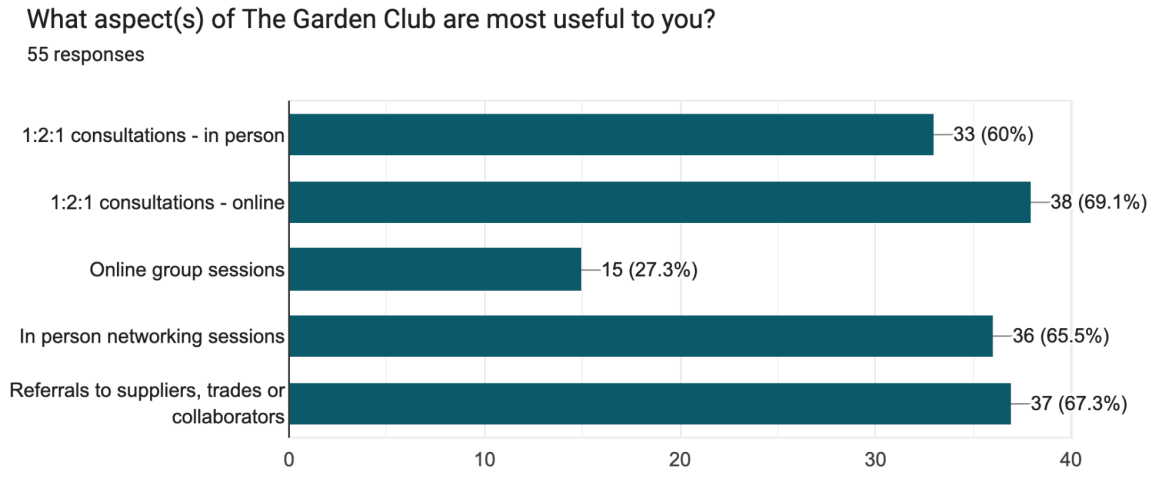
Project Format

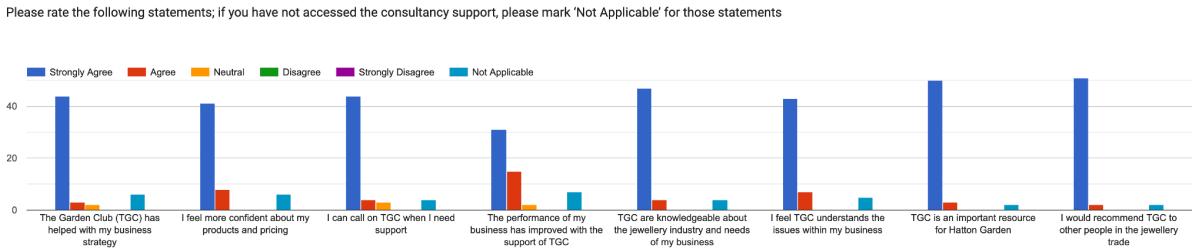
Meetings

There is still a slight preference for online meetings over in person ones, which may reflect the wider geographical spread of the businesses trading locations. The desire to see more in-person meetings reflects the post-Covid desire to return to 'normal'

Referrals

This feedback was the first time that referrals were tracked as part of the project, and has proven to be one of the the most important/useful aspects of the project, with 67.3% of respondents citing it as a key part of the project that they use.





Response to the Garden Club

100% of respondents declared The Garden Club as a valuable resource when it comes to strategy and planning of the business; whilst many clients are confident on the product side of things, a lot of them lack confidence when it comes to

making any strategic business decisions, such as market placement, product pricing and outsourcing production

Communications

There have been additional means of communication developed during the project, with the creation of both a mailing list/newsletter and a WhatsApp group comprised of Garden Club members, where they can request support, recommendations and connect with other businesses

Written feedback

Selected comments from the feedback questionnaire:

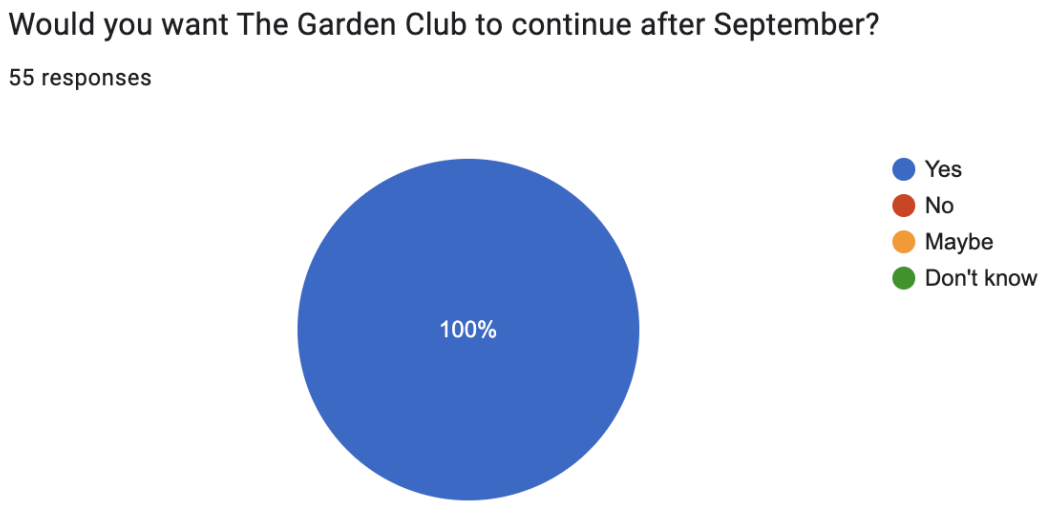
> *"Love the garden club and everything it has done for my business and our community ♥ "*
>
> *"Sally is a true asset to the Garden and have no doubt she has contributed to the growth of many businesses. I personally made lifelong connections at my very first event and since then have conducted substantial transactions with these connections, one of which was made and concluded the morning following the event .....I would have no problem with being contacted to verify and and all information provided on this form"*
>
> *"TGC is an invaluable tool. As a small business in a trade made up of other small businesses, I've struggled for over 20 years on my own. Just having someone knowledgeable to speak to and get advice and connections is something that if I'd have had 20 years ago my business would be in a much better position, and also would have made it a far less lonely."*
>
> *"I probably wouldn't still be in business if it wasn't for Sally's support and advice. Please continue with TGC!"*
>
> *"TGC has been so beneficial to my company, Sally's knowledge and spreadsheets has helped me so much with my company. Please keep it going as I'm moving on to the next step of trade and need Sally to help me achieve this goal as she is great at what she does. Thank you"*

“The planning on Hatton Garden needs a more restrictive Neighbourhood Plan that reflects the desire to maintain the jewellery industry through incentives/ decentives for developers that give back to the jewellery industry. I would be happy to be involved in this if there is a team forming.”

“I've struggled to grow my business on my own, and feel that the continued support of the Garden Club will be invaluable moving forward and helping introduce freelance tradespeople and manufacturers. ”

“The Garden Club, has been an invaluable resource in the progession of my business. The one to one sessions with Sally have been incredibly insightful - combining knowledge of the trade with a great sense of perception and observation. A massive thank you for all her time and guidance.”

“Sally does an absolutely amazing job. I wouldn't be where I am without her! Her no nonsense guidance of the jewellery industry is envaluable. Long may her work continue! ”

Continuation

As with the first review, this time there is an overwhelming amount of support and desire for the Garden Club to continue, with 100% of respondents agreeing that it is a support service that needs to carry on post first-round funding