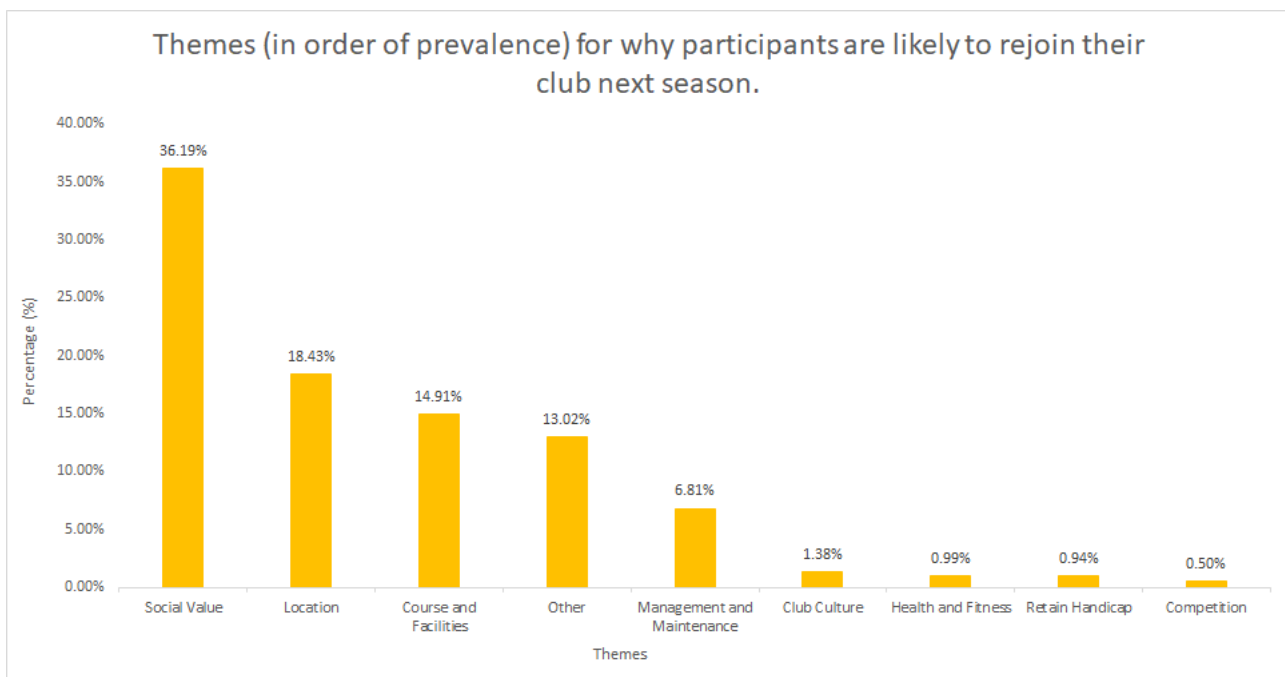


# LOVE Membership Deep Dive: Social Value

The social value of golf and the contribution of membership to the sense of connectedness and shared 'spirit' is needed in this changed COVID-19 world.

## The social value of golf: Key findings

Open text analysis from the 2019 Club Member Experience survey highlighted that: Over a third of participants (36.19%) are planning to rejoin their club next season due to the value they gain from playing and socialising with other members.



A key finding from our research into the health benefits of golf is that golf helps connect us with our friends and family. Quotes from #LOVEGolfStories support this:

- Golf provides individuals with the opportunity to meet others, meet friends and enhance relationships.

"Golf has been a great sport to help me with the move to New Zealand. The most important part of golf for me is the comradeship and the people I have met who are now long-lasting friends."

- Golf promotes positive interpersonal interactions.

“Golf is so much more than a game, I have had so much fun with the ladies I play with all our dress ups, silly antics, trips away. It is so important to me the social side.”

- Golf promotes intergenerational interaction.

“Golf has become our social outing. It's a great way to enjoy the outdoors and spend quality time together. It has brought our family closer together. Twilight golf has become our date night. While Sunday is our family time on the course with the kids and grandparents.”

- Golf clubs are hubs within the community.

“When my wife fell ill we enjoyed many morning teas spent at the club house enjoying the view of our local course. After the recent passing of my dear wife, we chose to hold the "celebration" of her life at our lovely club house. I'm forever grateful for the love and support of my fellow golfers through this difficult time.”

- Golf is an ideal setting to enjoy meaningful conversations before, during and after the round.

“The social aspect is great too, I've made many a friend on the course and we are all from different walks of life but can share in the game.”

## How can our club support the creation of social value?

National club membership has continued to increase, up by 4% compared to the same time last year. The challenge now is to retain those members into next year. With renewals coming up, it is timely to draw attention to the fact that while golf can achieve these wider social benefits, clubs can support this by intentionally structuring experiences.

Consider the different needs of your membership. For example, consider the following groups:



### **New members**

Integration into the club environment and developing a sense of belonging and community is an important way to create social value for new members.

**Action:** Look to introduce new members to existing members and provide opportunities for them to meet new people, both on and off the course.

**Action:** Personally invite new members to take part in social activities or to enter competitions and follow up with them.



### Older members

These members value the camaraderie of their golf experience and post-lockdown will be relying on each other for social interaction more than ever.

**Action:** Consider how these members get their social interaction - is it out on course, or afterwards in the club house, or both? Continue to look out for your older members and take note of those who might need a little extra aroha to help with the loneliness that they may have experienced during lockdown.



### Families

Golf clubs are a place where families can go to spend quality time together.

**Action:** Look to create opportunities for families to participate together. Consider how your golf facility could be more family-friendly, and allow interaction between children, parents and grandparents such as having family tee times, family memberships, family specials or hosting a family event.



### Younger members

Young people view golf as a way to have fun and be with friends. Friends play an integral role in influencing how young people participate.

**Action:** Look to create opportunities for younger members to connect socially with other people their own age both on and off the course.

**Action:** Create a safe, welcoming and friendly environment for young people at your club and share and celebrate their achievements to give them visibility within the club environment.

**"He waka eke noa - we are all in this together"**