

# SALT!

**Shaken out....**



**Stirred in!**

## 1 Introduction

Members of the congregation of St. Mark's church, Gabalfa, Cardiff were asked to complete a survey at the beginning of October 2011 with a view to finding out about their involvement with the church and the wider community. Some 136 responses were received and analysed. This document reports on the results. Where relevant I have attempted to compare the data with the *Office of National Statistics* (ONS) mid-2010 data for the Cardiff North and Cardiff Central constituencies (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/sape/parliament-constituency-pop-est/mid-2010-release/rft---mid-2010-parliamentary-constituency-population-estimates.zip>) to give an idea of how the respondents compared to the general population.

## 2 Summary

136 people responded to the survey. More women than men responded that would be expected from a random sample from the population of Cardiff. Also, more older people responded than would be expected from the general population. If the responses reflect those of the church membership, then the church is weighted in favour of older women. . Over half the respondents live in Whitchurch, Gabalfa, Cathays, Llandaff, Heath, Rhiwbina or Llanishen. Most respondents attend weekly, but some go to church twice a week. Home groups are the popular church based activities. 61% of respondents were involved in work, sports, charity work or school/university/college. 63% were aware of the aims of St. Mark's and were strongly or partially committed to them. 29% were unaware of the aims or failed to answer the question. A number of questions were asked to gauge the way respondents perceived St. Mark's in terms of equipping for mission approach to the community and world, how well it is known and how strongly the church engaged with issues of the day. As might be expected, the general perception was positive, but with room for improvement. Finally, a question was asked about balance between inward and outward looking. Whilst some people thought it was just right, many felt the church was unbalanced in favour of inward looking or could do more in both inward and outward directions. Many people weren't sure or failed to answer the question.

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## 4 Demographics

### 4.1 Age Range

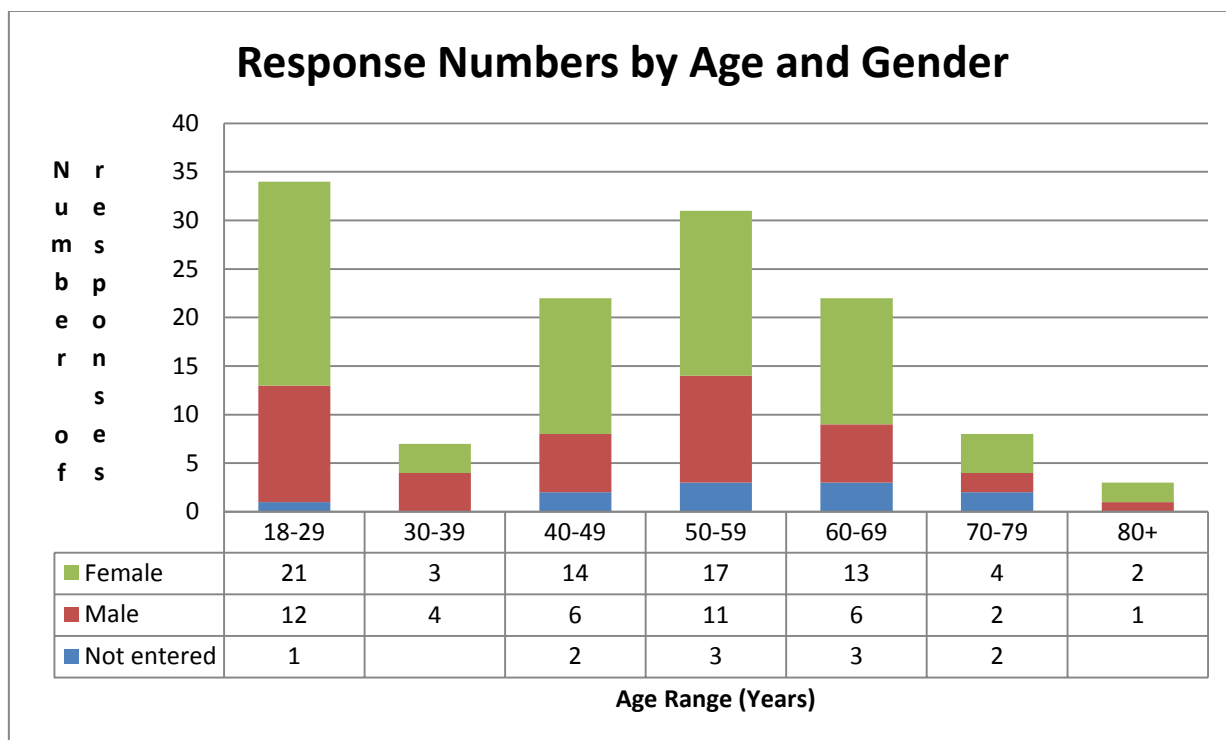


Figure 1 Response numbers by age range

Here is a comparison with the age distribution from the *Office of National Statistics*.

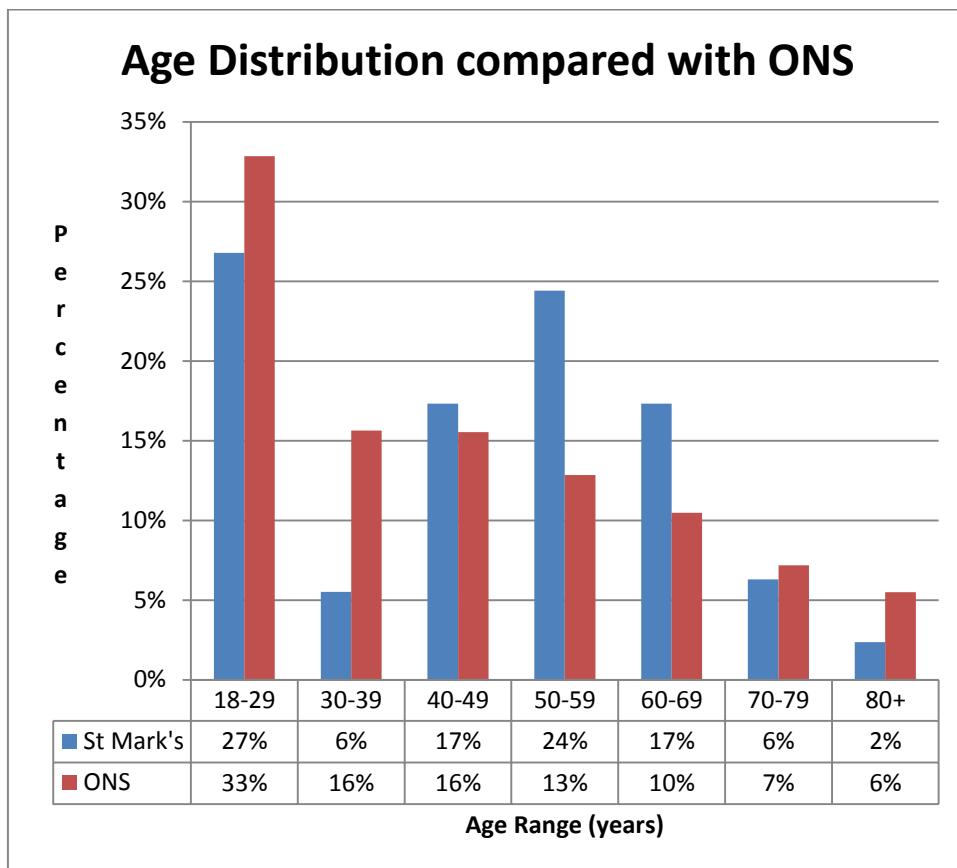


Figure 2 Age range compared with ONS figures

Note that the ONS data for 18-29 are actually 20-29, so the shortfall for that age group at St. Mark's is even more marked than the figures show. The figures show that St. Mark's is weighted in favour of the middle-aged (40 – 69). It is possible we have fewer 70-80+ not because we fail to attract them, but because they can no longer get to church. The most marked shortfall is in the 30-39 age group, presumably the one with young families, which is a concern. I have omitted those (9) who failed to state their age from these data.

## 4.2 Gender distribution

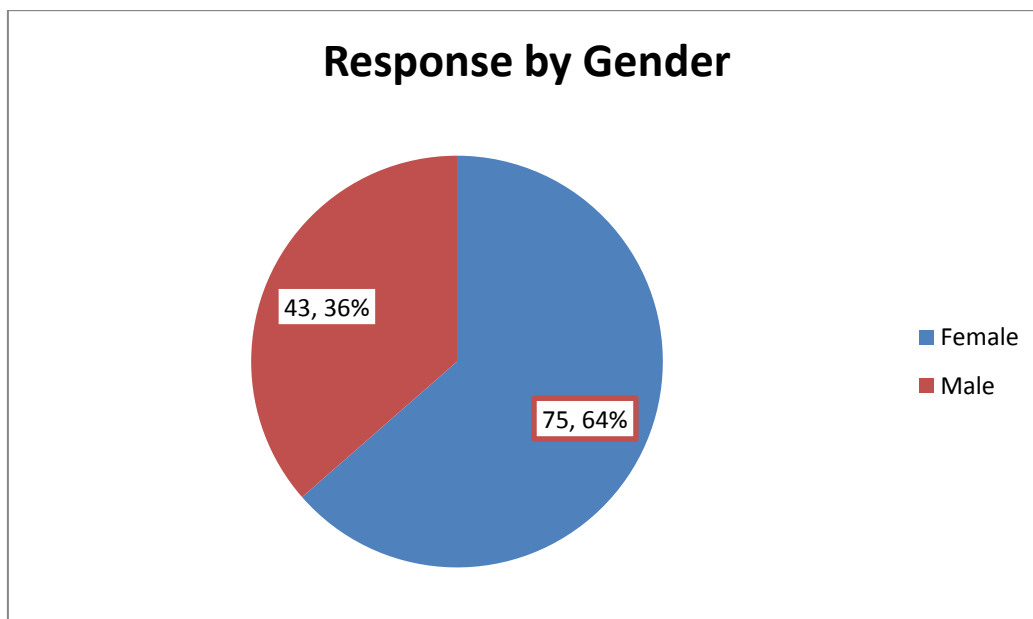


Figure 3 Response by Gender including only those who answered the question

As you can see here, there were 75 (64%) females and 43 (36%) males on responses where the gender question was answered. In addition, 18 responses failed to indicate gender. This compares to the estimated distribution in the general population for of 49% male and 51% female. This may be an indication that the church is failing to attract men. If my statistics are correct, there is only a 0.4% probability of achieving this distribution had the sample been taken at random from the general population of Cardiff.

### 4.3 District/location

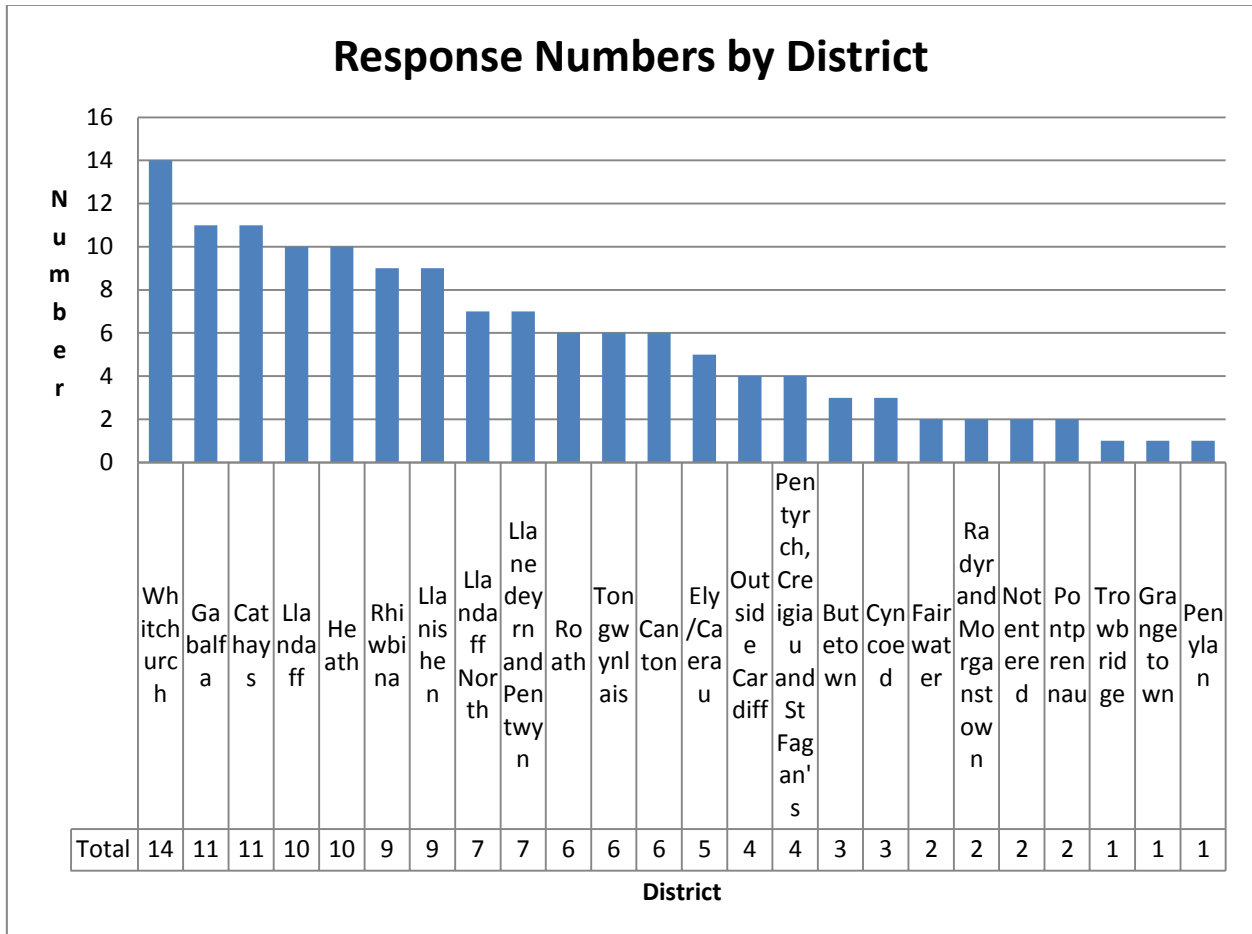


Figure 4 Response numbers by district

As you can see, most respondents came from close to the church. See the electoral ward map here: <http://yourcardiff.walesonline.co.uk/2010/03/10/cardiff-electoral-wards-map/>. However, see also the comment in the appendix. I grouped the few responses from Birchgrove and Thornhill into Heath and Llanishen respectively as those districts weren't listed in the questionnaire. Over half the respondents live in Whitchurch, Gabalfa, Cathays, Llandaff, Heath, Rhiwbina or Llanishen. Note that it is possible that some responses gave an incorrect district – see 9.1.

## 5 Commitment/Involvement

### 5.1 Attendance

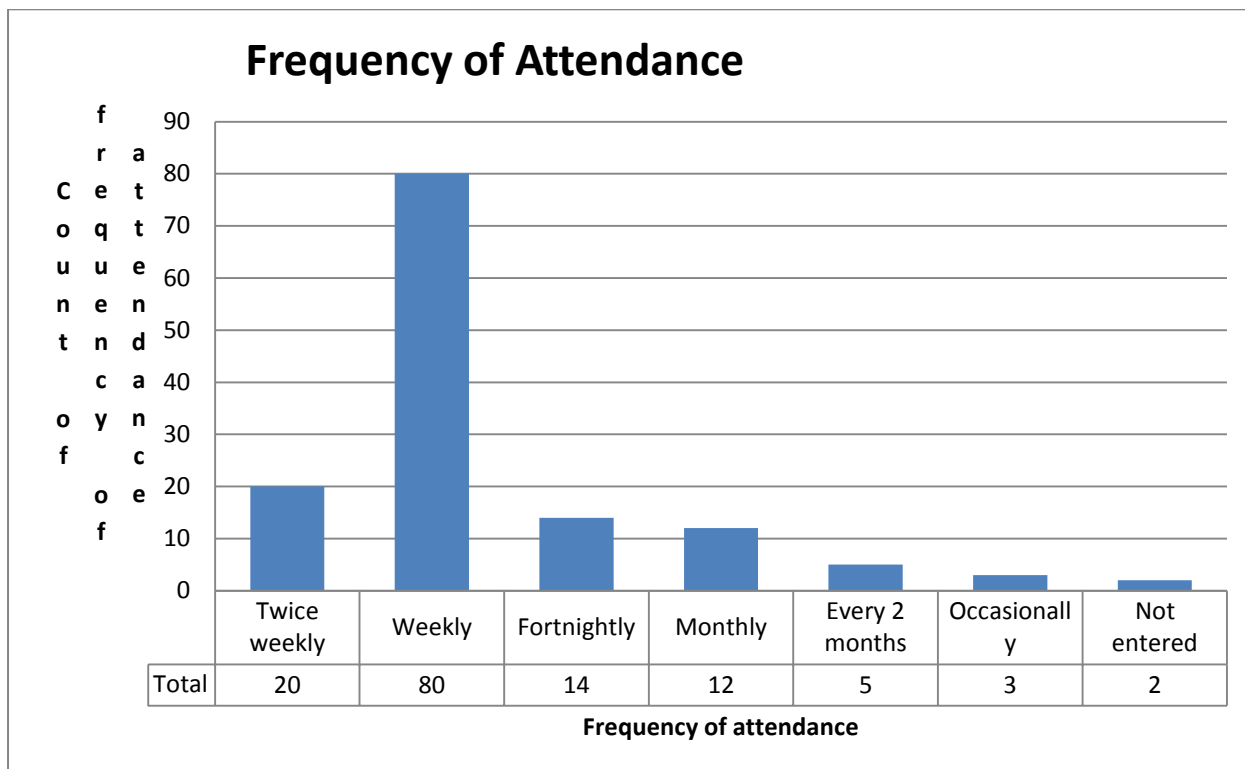


Figure 5 Frequency of Attendance

As you can see, by far the majority of respondents attend weekly, with smaller numbers attending twice weekly or less than once a week. It is possible that the results are skewed towards frequent attenders as the infrequent ones may have missed the questionnaire. However the relatively large number indicates a level of commitment.

### 5.2 Involvement in church-based activity

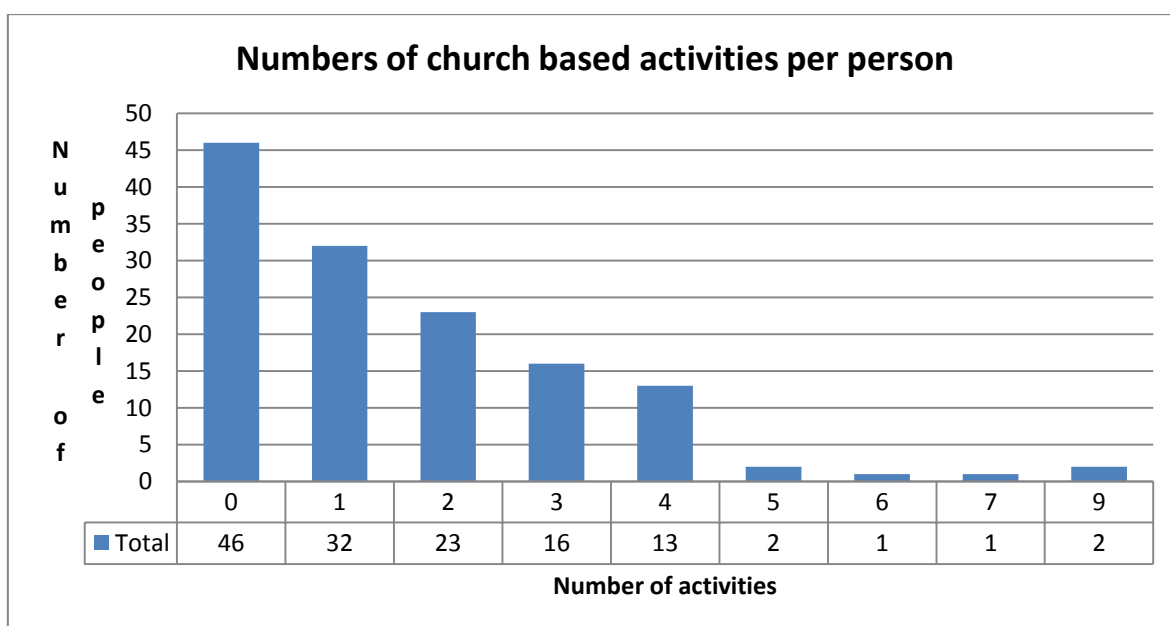


Figure 6 Numbers of church based activities per person

As you can see, a large number of respondents reported no involvement in activities outside the Sunday services, but many others have at least one activity in which they are involved. Two people had nine!

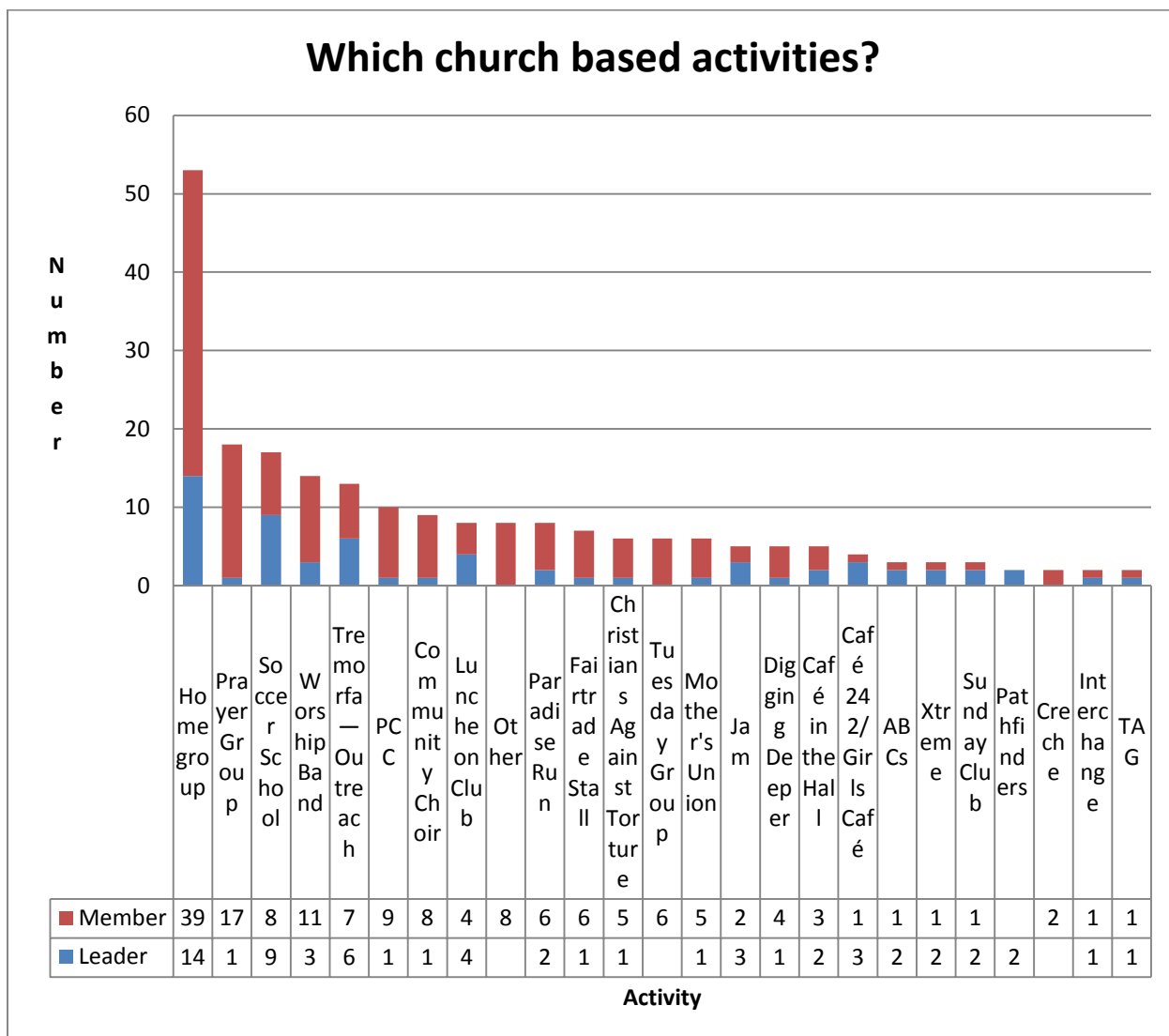


Figure 7 Which Church-based activities?

As you can see, home groups are by far the most popular church based activity but prayer groups, Soccer School and other activities are also popular. The definition of leader was unclear, since presumably all adults involved with the Soccer School and other children’s activities should be regarded as leaders. This chart reports what the respondents reported. Some people reported involvement in Crèche and Interchange, so I added these to the list. Extend was the only activity with which no respondent was involved.

### 5.3 Involvement outside church

This is the area where we can be most salt and light as we meet people who do not necessarily have church connections and may not otherwise be exposed to the Gospel.

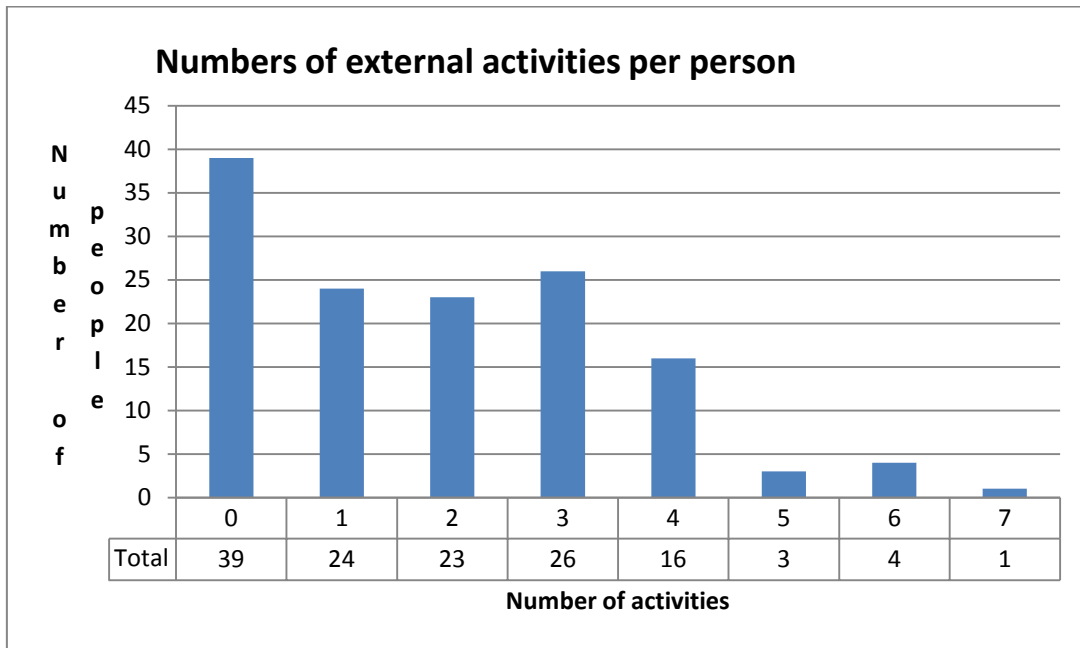


Figure 8 Involvement outside church

As you can see, 39 or 29% of respondents reported no activity outside church. This may be due to a misunderstanding of what to report. However, the rest are involved in one or more such activities. One person listed seven external activities.

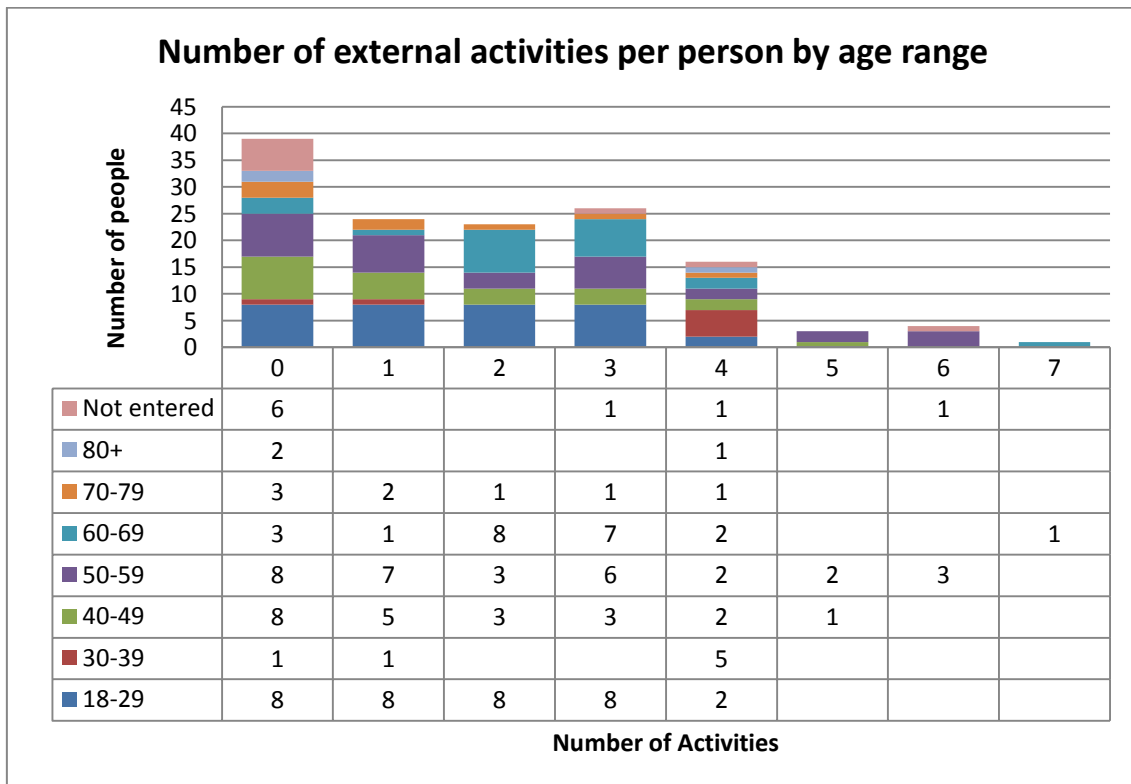


Figure 9 Involvement outside church by age range

Those with no outside involvement appear to be evenly spread by age range.

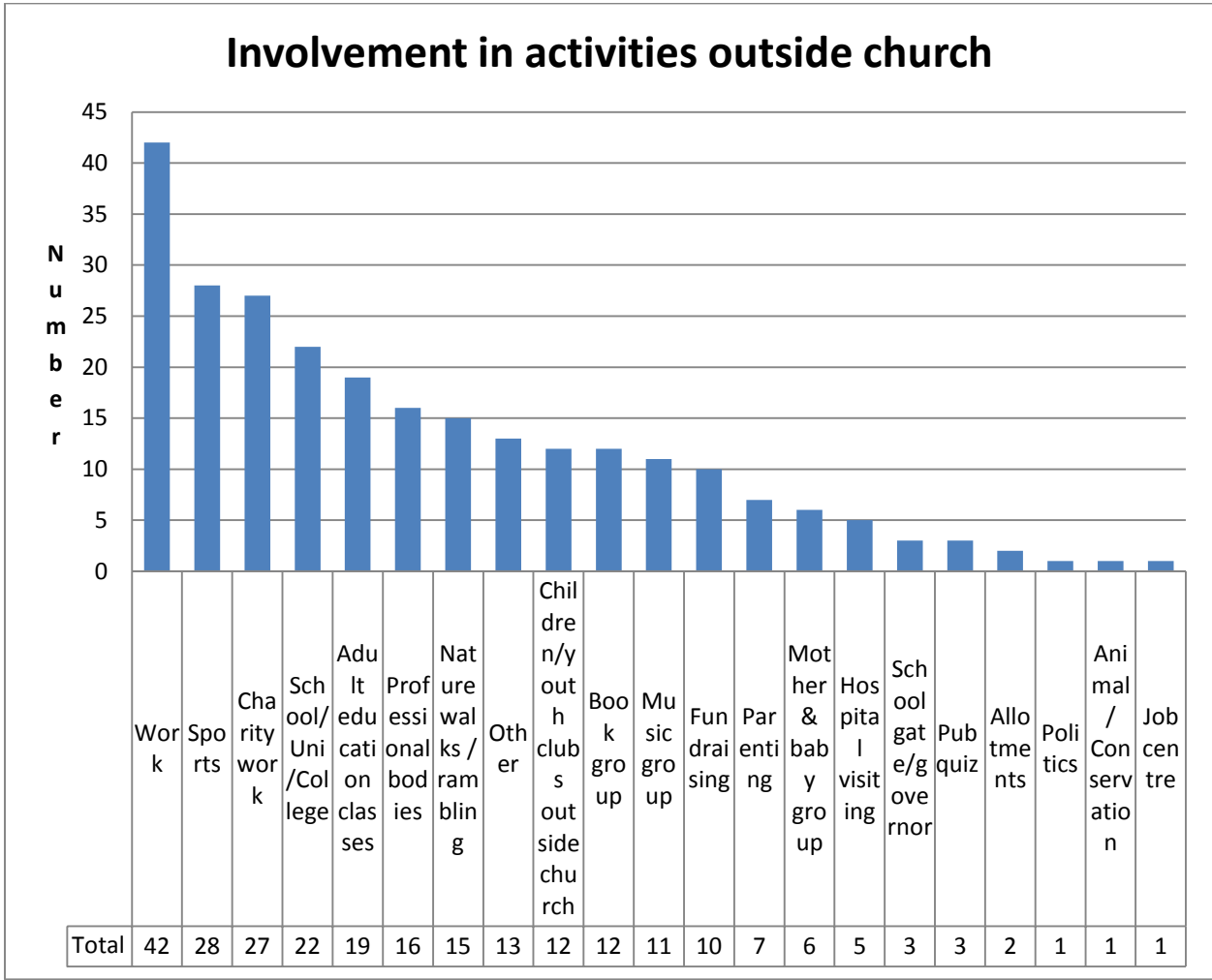


Figure 10 Involvement outside church by activity

As you can see, a large number of respondents were involved in work, sports, charity work etc. Politics, Job centre (it isn't clear what this means) etc. had few participants. It would seem that teaching targeting the world of work, sports and school/college would be useful.

## 5.4 Correlation of internal and external involvement

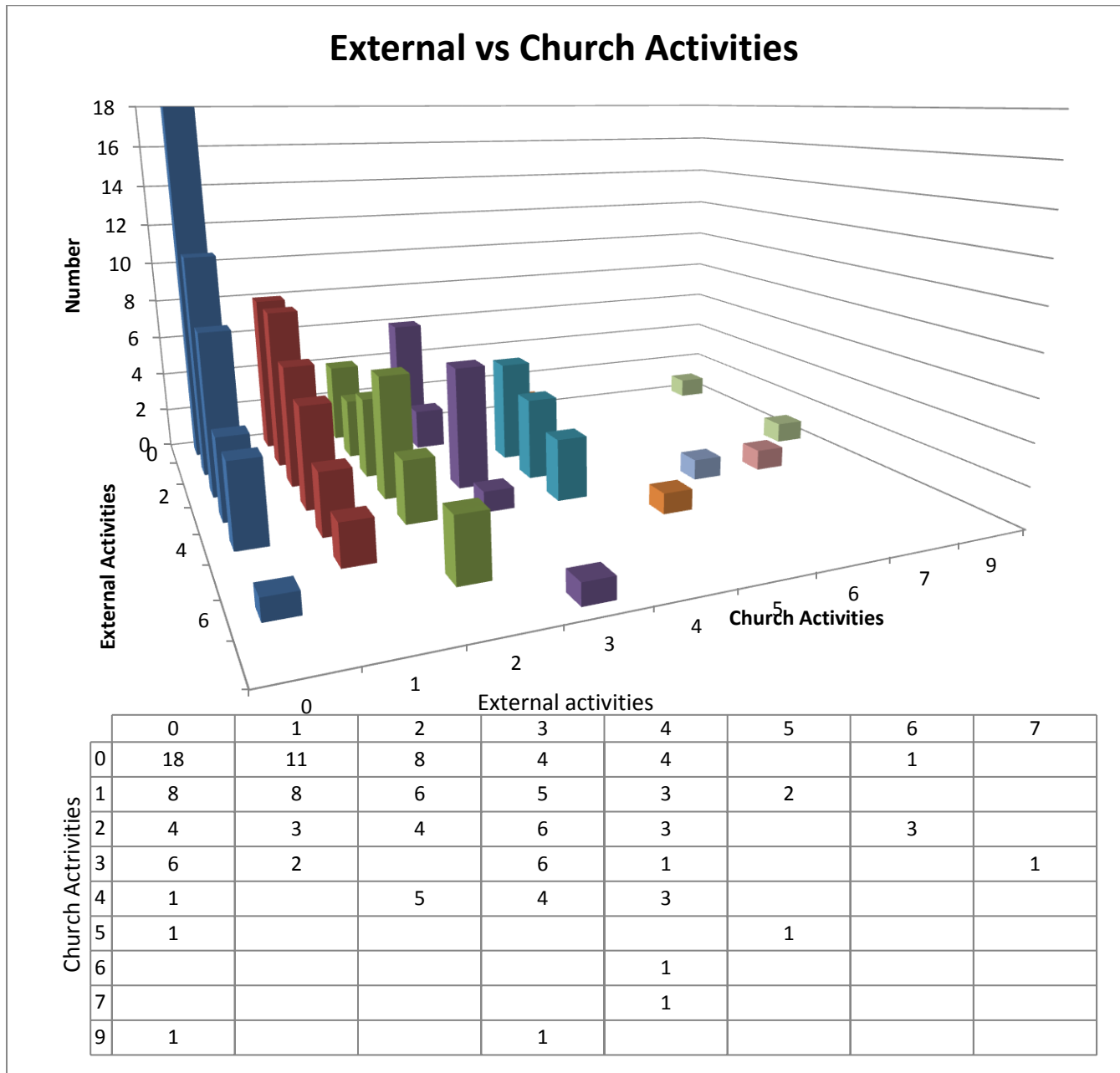


Figure 11 Correlation of external and internal activities

You can see that many people are involved both inside and outside church, but there are a number with no involvement in either place. One busy person has five of each activity!

## 5.5 Understanding and commitment to the vision of St. Mark's

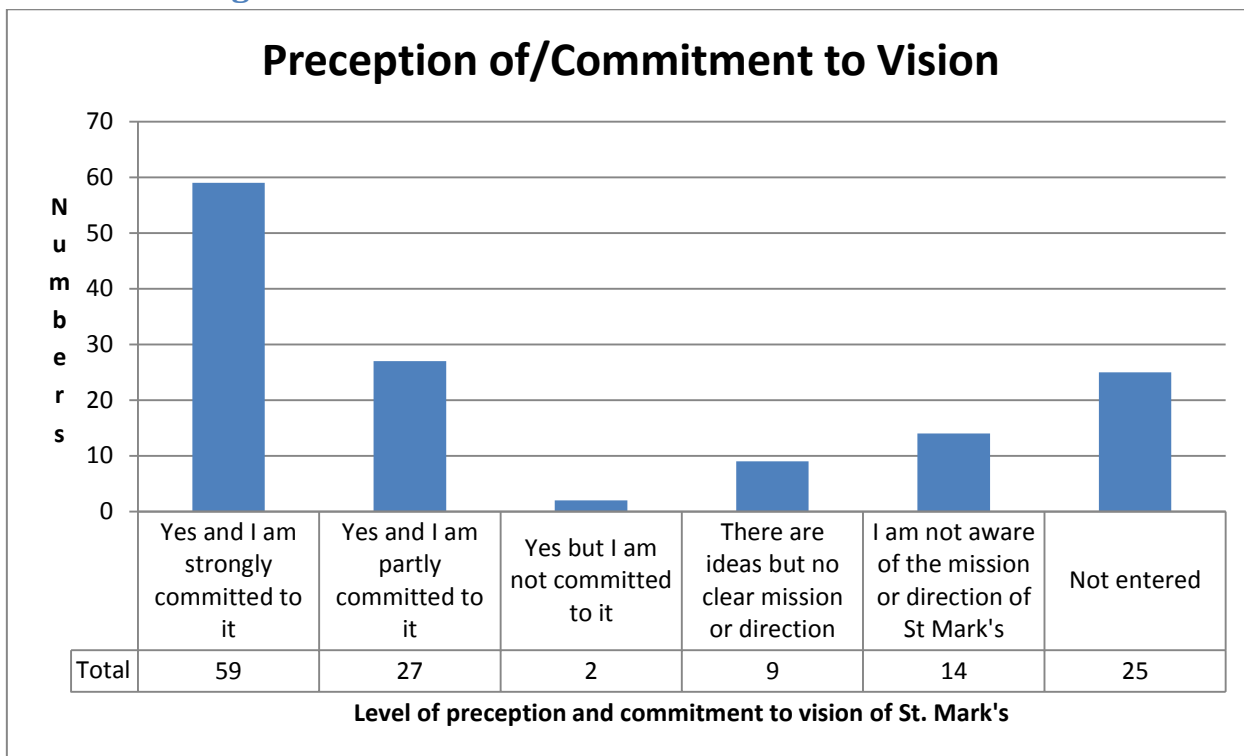


Figure 12 Awareness of and Commitment to the Vision of St. Mark's

A large fraction (63%) of the respondents was aware of the vision and was at least partially committed to it. This may not be a surprise as one might expect those committed to the church to cooperate with the aims of the questionnaire. However, 29% of respondents were either unaware of the vision or failed to answer the question.

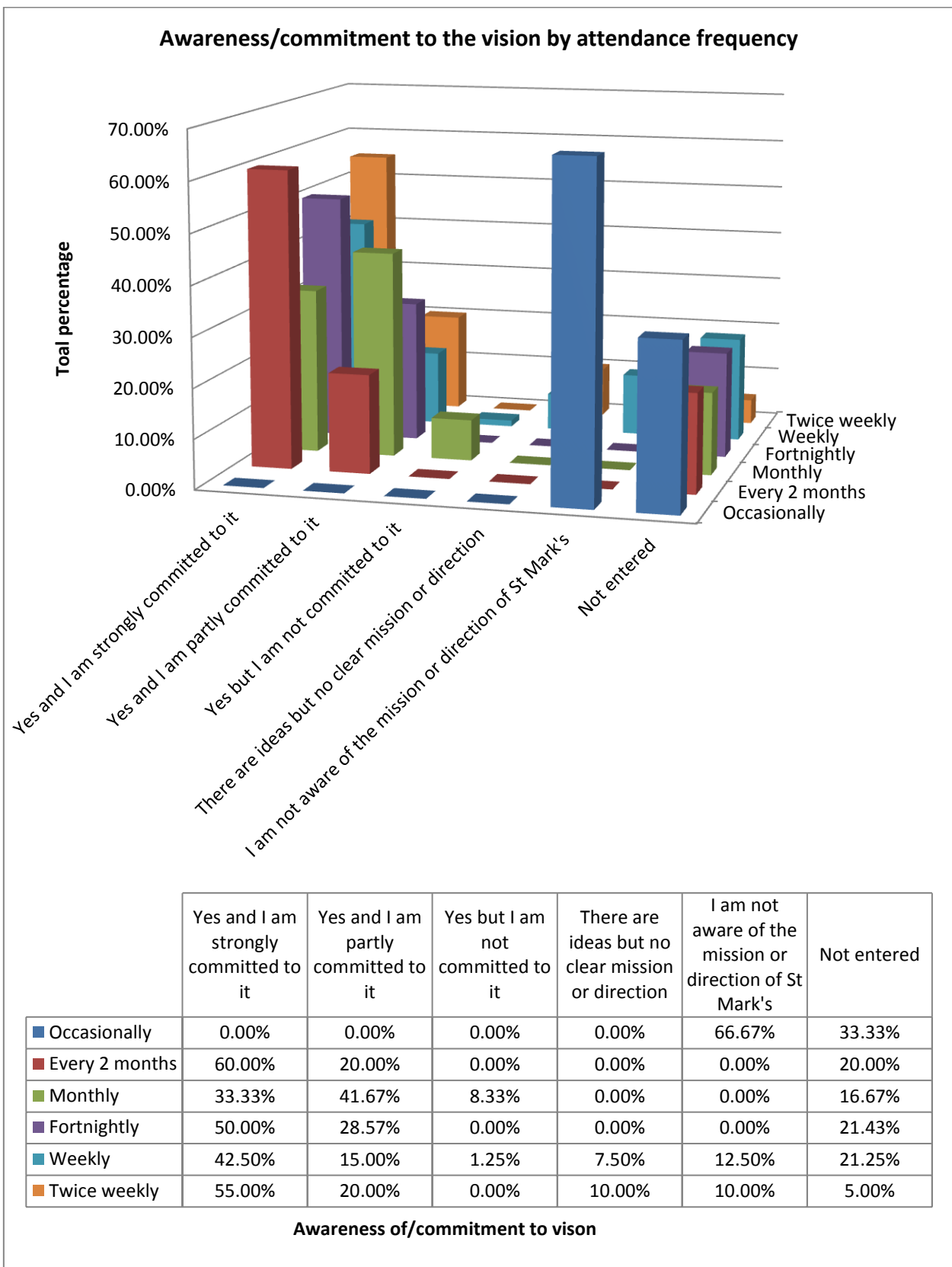


Figure 13 Awareness of and commitment to the vision by attendance frequency

You will see that 55% of those attending twice weekly and 42.5% of those attending weekly were aware of and strongly committed to the vision of St. Mark's. Surprisingly, those attending less frequently were at least partially committed to the vision. Unsurprisingly, the occasional attenders were not aware of the vision.

## 6 Description of St. Mark's

This attempted to answer the question:

*Using the seven point scale between each set of alternatives, please circle the number which best describes St Mark's. ("1" meaning most like the characteristic on the left, "7" meaning most like the characteristic on the right, "4" meaning an equal mix of both.).*

## Distribution of description of St. Mark's

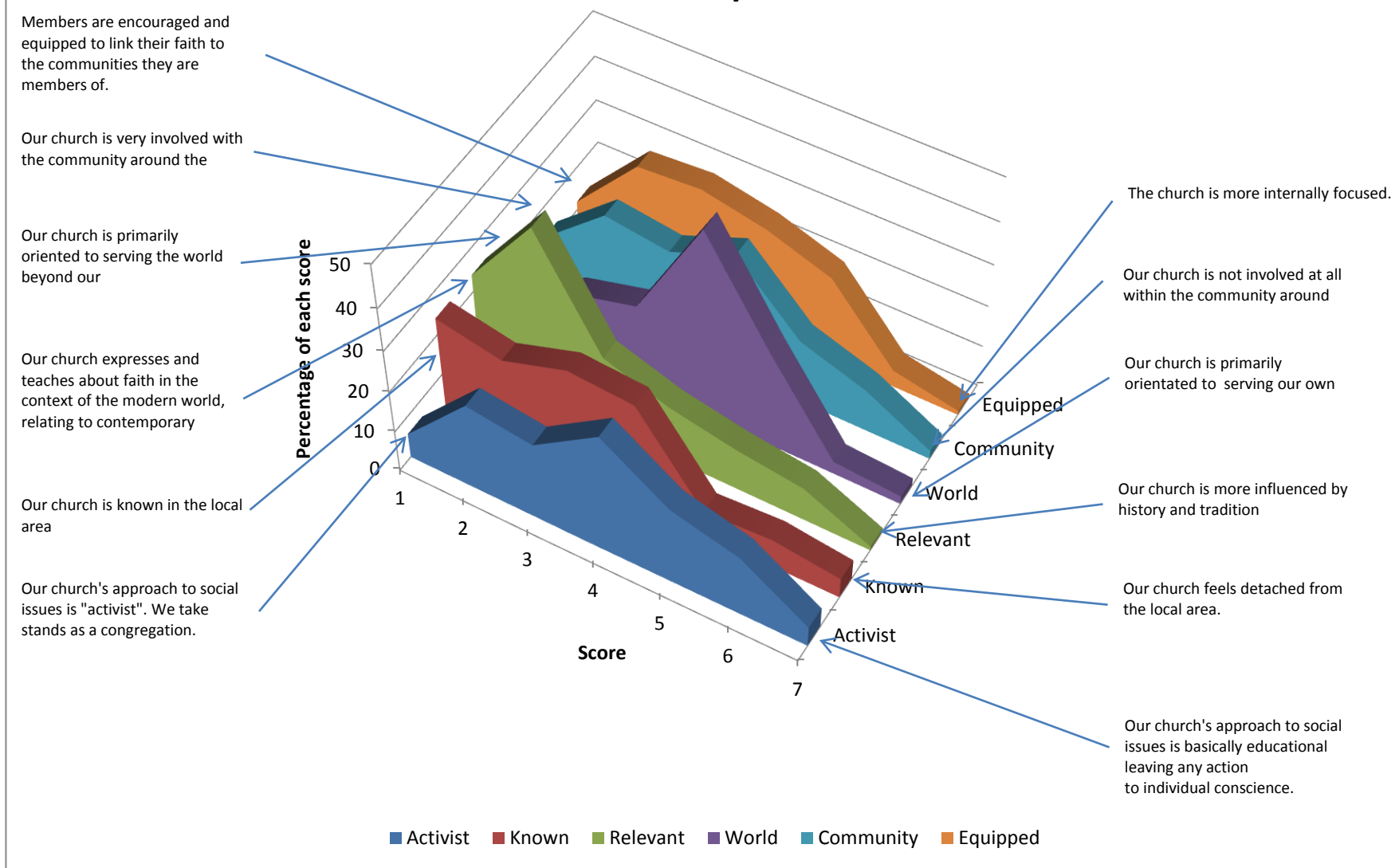


Figure 14 Distribution of how we would describe St. Mark's

You can see a summary of the responses to how we would describe St. Mark's in Figure 14 Apologies for its 'busy-ness'; it is hard to summarise all the information in a single chart.

### **6.1 Equipped**

The respondents seemed to think we are fairly well equipped to link our faith to the communities of which we are members; the scores tended to be in the middle. The average score was 3.0.

### **6.2 Community**

The respondents seemed to think that we are fairly well involved with the community around the church. The average score was 3.0.

### **6.3 World**

The respondents seemed to think that we are not that well oriented towards serving the world beyond our members. The average score was 3.2, but a number of people gave a score of 4.

### **6.4 Relevant**

The respondents seemed to think that the church teaches about faith in the context of the modern world – their responses were towards the 1 and 2 values with an average of 2.4. Half the people gave scores of 2 or 1.

### **6.5 Known**

The respondents seemed think the church is reasonably well known in the local area. The average score was 2.7.

### **6.6 Activist**

The respondents seemed to think that the church's approach to social action is fairly neutral between the congregation taking a stand and leaving things to the individual. The average score was 3.4.

## 7 Balance

This attempted to answer the question:

*The balance between church activities that support people within our church family (inward looking) and church activities that support people outside of our church (outward looking) is:*

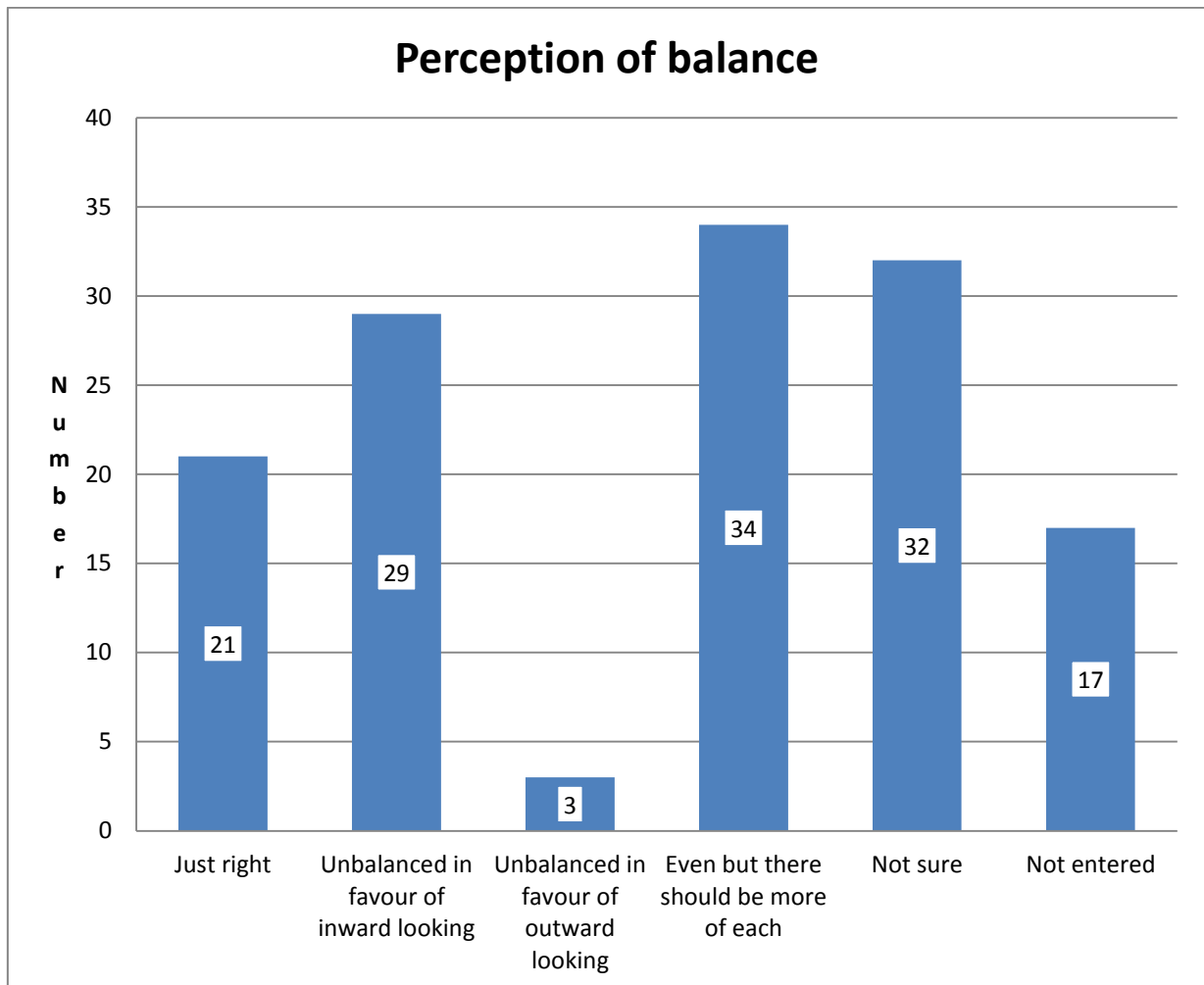
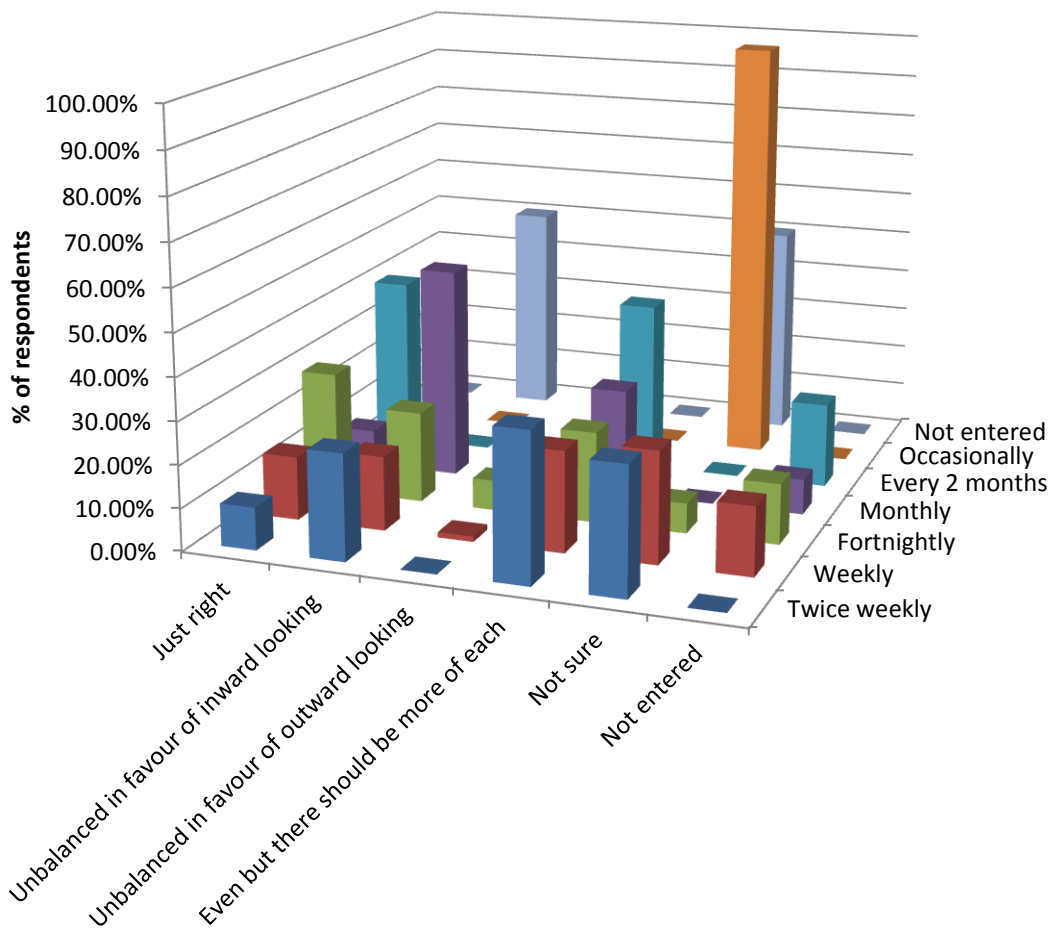


Figure 15 Perception of balance

You will see that most respondents felt St. Mark's was unbalanced in favour of inward looking or that it was even, but there should be more outward and inward looking. No one felt there should be less of each.

## Perception of balance by attendance frequency

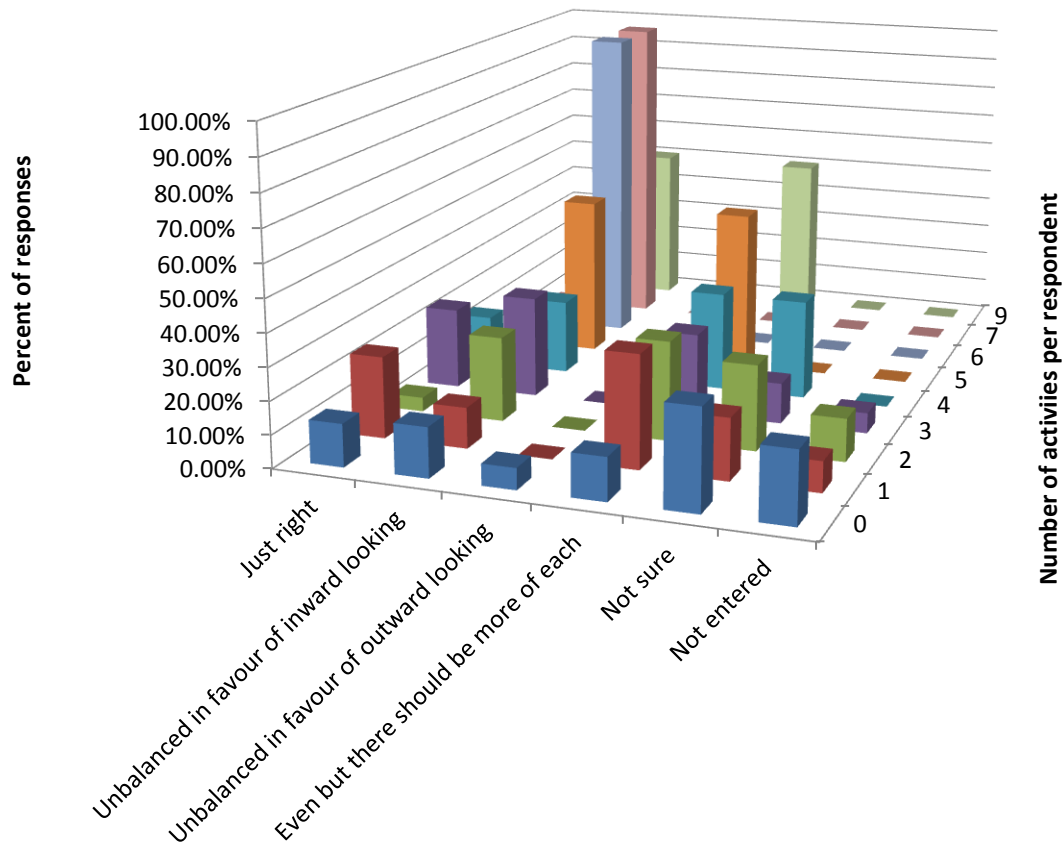


	Just right	Unbalanced in favour of inward looking	Unbalanced in favour of outward looking	Even but there should be more of each	Not sure	Not entered
Twice weekly	10.00%	25.00%	0.00%	35.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Weekly	15.00%	17.50%	1.25%	23.75%	26.25%	16.25%
Fortnightly	28.57%	21.43%	7.14%	21.43%	7.14%	14.29%
Monthly	8.33%	50.00%	8.33%	25.00%	0.00%	8.33%
Every 2 months	40.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	0.00%	20.00%
Occasionally	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Not entered	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%

Figure 16 Perception of balance by attendance frequency

Breaking down the perception of balance by the frequency of attendance reveals that unsurprisingly, the occasional attenders are unsure of the balance. Some of the weekly and twice-weekly attenders are unsure of the balance as well or hadn't entered that information.

**Perception of balance by church based activity**



	Just right	Unbalanced in favour of inward looking	Unbalanced in favour of outward looking	Even but there should be more of each	Not sure	Not entered
0	13.04%	15.22%	6.52%	13.04%	30.43%	21.74%
1	25.00%	12.50%	0.00%	34.38%	18.75%	9.38%
2	4.35%	26.09%	0.00%	30.43%	26.09%	13.04%
3	25.00%	31.25%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	6.25%
4	15.38%	23.08%	0.00%	30.77%	30.77%	0.00%
5	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%
6	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
7	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
9	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%

**Figure 17 Perception of balance by church based activity**

It is interesting to see how perceptions vary depending on how many church based activities people are involved with. You will see that the all the people with 6 or 7 activities thought that we are unbalanced in favour of inward looking, but that ½ of the people with 9 activities thought there should be more of each. The question is, if we are to do more of each, how we provide the manpower to do it; maybe those with no church activity should consider involvement with one.

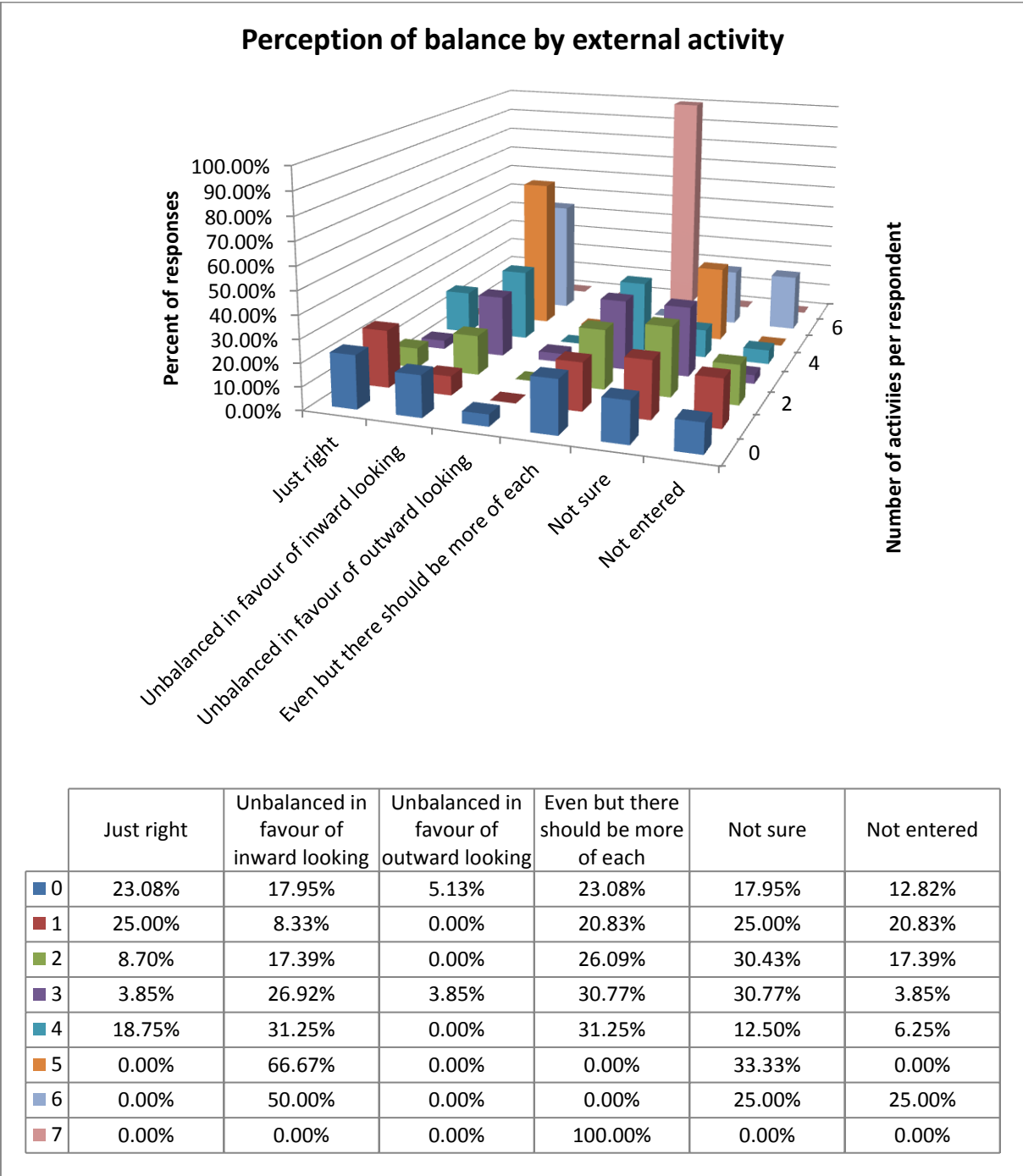


Figure 18 Perception of balance by external activity

It was also worth looking at the perception of balance based on how many external activities people are involved with. Amazingly, the person with 7 external activities thought there should be more of each kind! Perhaps not surprisingly, most of the people with 5 or 6 external activities thought we were imbalanced in favour of inward looking. Again, maybe the people with no external involvement should consider getting involved somewhere.

**8 Appendix 1 - the Questionnaire:**

This is the questionnaire that we used:

# SALT!

**Shaken out....**



**Stirred in!**

**We want to help St Mark's be an outward looking community, engaging the community of the parish and the other communities that we are already a part of. This survey will help us find out about you and your involvement in St Mark's.**

*This questionnaire contains 9 questions and should require approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your thoughtful responses will provide valuable information about our ministry and mission at St Mark's. Your responses will be completely confidential. We appreciate your time and effort.*

1. Age: [18 – 29 ], [ 30-39 ], [40-49], [50-59], [60-69], [70-79], [80+]

2. Sex: [Male], [Female]

3. Which area of Cardiff do you live in?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Gabalfa	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ely/Caerau	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandaff North
<input type="checkbox"/>	Heath	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tongwynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>	Canton
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rhiwbina	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Butetown
<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanishen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pentyrch, Creigiau and St Fagan's	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cathays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whitchurch	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandaff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roath
<input type="checkbox"/>	Radyr and Morganstown	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grangetown	<input type="checkbox"/>	Penylan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Riverside	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyncoed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pontprennau
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rumney and Llanrumney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adamsdown/Splott	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trowbridge
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outside of Cardiff: please specify:				

4. On average, how often do you attend Sunday services?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Twice weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fortnightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Every 2 months
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occasionally

5. Which groups and activities are you currently involved with in St Mark's other than a Sunday congregation? (Please tick member or leader for church based list on left, and member for external activities on the right )

Home group	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	School/Uni/College
Mother's Union	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work
Prayer Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Children/youth clubs outside church
PCC	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Book group
Luncheon Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music group
Worship Band	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult education classes
Tuesday Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parenting
ABC's	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mother & baby group
Extend	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	School gate/governor
Paradise Run	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job centre
Community Choir	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity work
Pathfinders	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pub quiz
TaG	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allotments
Jam	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports
Digging Deeper	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nature walks / rambling
Soccer School	<input type="checkbox"/> Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Politics

Sunday Club	Member	Leader		Hospital visiting
Café in the Hall	Member	Leader		Fundraising
Café 242/Girls Café	Member	Leader		Professional bodies
Xtreme	Member	Leader		Animal / Conservation
Fairtrade Stall	Member	Leader		Other (please specify)
Tremorfa – Outreach	Member	Leader		
Christians Against Torture	Member	Leader		
Other (Please specify)				

**6. Is there anything that would encourage you to share your Christian faith through serving or talking within these communities/relationships?**

**7. Do you have an understanding of the vision of St Mark’s?**

- Yes and I am strongly committed to it
- Yes and I am partly committed to it
- Yes but I am not committed to it
- There are ideas but no clear mission or direction
- I am not aware of the mission or direction of St Mark’s

**8. Using the seven point scale between each set of alternatives, please circle the number which best describes St Mark’s. (“1” meaning most like the characteristic on the left, “7” meaning most like the characteristic on the right, “4” meaning an equal mix of both.)**

Members are encouraged and equipped to link their faith to the communities they are members of.      **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**      The church is more internally focused.

Our church is very involved with the community around the church.      **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**      Our church is not involved at all within the community around the church.

Our church is primarily oriented to serving the world beyond our membership.      **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**      Our church is primarily orientated to serving our own members.

Our church expresses and teaches about faith in the context of the modern world, relating to contemporary issues      **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**      Our church is more influenced by history and tradition

Our church is known in the local area      **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**      Our church feels detached from the local area.

Our church’s approach to social issues is “activist”. We take stands as a congregation.      **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**      Our church’s approach to social issues is Basically educational leaving any action to individual conscience.

**9. The balance between church activities that support people within our church family (inward looking) and church activities that support people outside of our church (outward looking) is:**

- Just right
- Unbalanced in favour of outward looking
- Unbalanced in favour of inward looking
- Even but there should be more of each
- Even but there should be less of each
- Not sure

## 9 Appendix 2 – Data issues/observations

### 9.1 District/Locality

As you will see from the Questionnaire, there is a tick box to the left of each district to indicate residency. However, it is possible one could have ticked the box to the right. So, for example, a resident of Rhiwbina would be telling us that they lived in Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn. It is quite possible that this happened:

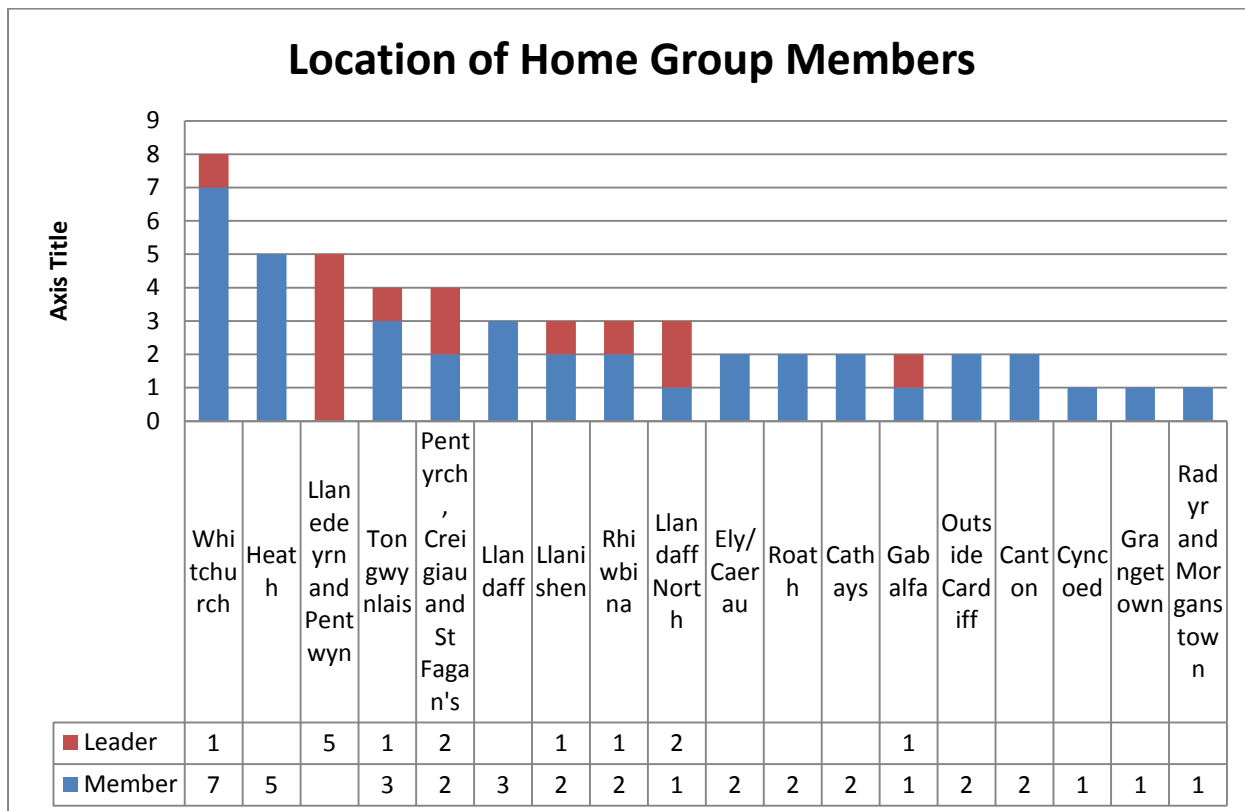


Figure 19 Location of home group members

Notice the number of home group leaders in from Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn! Whilst I do not wish to disparage those districts, I am not aware of many members of the congregation coming from there. In future, it might be better to ask people to circle the district in which they live.

### 9.2 The description of St. Mark's

Usually, a high score in a questionnaire is positive, and a low one negative. In this case, it was the other way round. It is possible that when people were filling in the questionnaire quickly during a pause in the service that they got this wrong.

## 10 Appendix 3 – Some more information

The questionnaire was compiled by the SALT team of Rob Wilson, Phill and Rosy Robinson, Jenny Beaumont and Louise Griffiths. The analysis was performed by Stephen Palmstrom.

Some technicalities – Stephen wrote a computer program using Microsoft Visual C# Express 2010 and a Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Express database to hold the data. The analysis was done using Microsoft Excel 2010 and reported using Microsoft Word 2010.