

7851 The Institute of Detectorists

Feasibility study for the proposed development of an institute for metal detecting

PART THREE – CONSULTATION

Keith Westcott

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Purpose of document

This document includes consultation reports undertaken in fulfilment of the HE funded project: *7851 The Institute of Detectorists - feasibility study for the proposed development of an institute for metal detecting*.

Its purpose is to provide insight into the need, audience, scope and remit of the proposed Institute, understand its operational functions, review risks and opportunities involved in set up, and review the viability of the proposition with a series of recommendations.

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1 STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 A stakeholder survey of organisations was undertaken in February 2021 to review perspectives on the development of an Institute, its role and function, within the wider context of relevant organisations. Due to the lack of engagement with the Project Advisory Board from the NCMD and the concerns of organisational representatives of the detecting community engaged with the Association following negative campaigns, the stakeholder survey was limited to members of the Project Advisory Board and to Finds Liaison Officers. The results provide a clear picture on how heritage organisations and some individual heritage professionals see the role and function of an Institute – but does not inform our understanding of how detecting groups and bodies may respond to the same questions. The consultation complements the survey of individual detectorists which was widely circulated and provides a suitable balance alongside this heritage sector perspective. The stakeholder data therefore provides an opportunity to evaluate the views of potential partners, collaborators, and stakeholders of the Institute which sit with the heritage community.

1.1.2 In total, 18 responses were collected during a three-week period, representing the following groups:

- Organisations (heritage) – 6 (including CBA, ClfA, ALGAO, PAS, NMS, SMA)
- Individuals (heritage) – 4
- Finds Liaison Officers – 8

1.1.3 The survey focused on six key areas:

- Understanding the current challenge
- Reviewing the options
- Potential roles of an Institute of Detectorists
- Membership and accreditation
- Pros and cons of setting up an Institute.

1.2 Understanding the current challenge

1.2.1 The first question asked respondents to consider a series of statements and indicate if they agreed or disagreed, using a scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' with the option to remain 'unsure'. The responses indicate that, whilst on-one disagreed that detectorists were keen to work responsibly, only half the group agreed and a number were unsure. The reason for this perspective seems to relate more to the depth to which detectorists understand the meaning of 'responsible' detecting, rather than questioning the intentions or ethics of those undertaking the activity. Within this group, six respondents agreed that detectorists did understand what is meant by responsible detecting and nine disagreed, three were unsure. Of the remaining statements, there was mainly agreement from the responding group suggesting that accreditation, training and guidance around responsible detecting was seen as needed and that encouragement for collaborative working between detectorists, PAS archaeologists and museums would be welcome. When asked if something should be done to address some of the perceived challenges in detecting, 17 responded positively.

1.2.2 Some thoughts from the free text responses include:

I think before someone can say they are keen to work responsibly, they need to know what that means. I'm not convinced the majority do.

We rely on detectorists who know what responsible detecting is to reach those that we cannot... Better guidance and resources could support this.

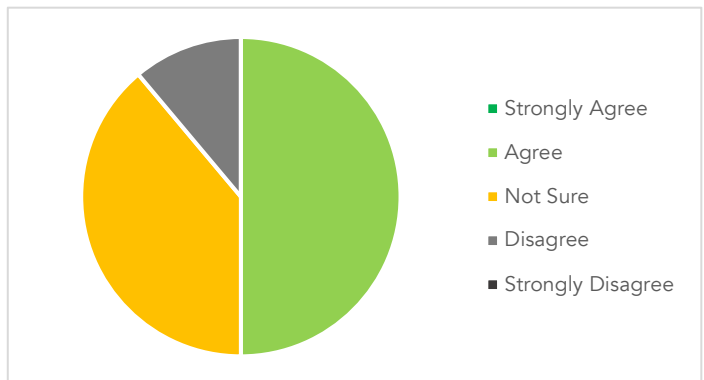
Presently it is very easy for metal detectorists to act irresponsibly without recourse and there needs to be a fairer relationship between the hobby of metal detecting and archaeology - part of this is about institutional and wholesale change of the current relationship and an understanding of the impact that metal detecting has on the buried resource is key to this.

There may be an assumption being made that there are many detectorists who actually want to work with archaeologists - how do we know that? Where is the quantitative data that might provide answers to the first two questions? Whose definition of 'responsible' matters to whom?

I also think probably the biggest challenge is less the codes and education on responsible detecting and more the environments being created which might encourage poor practice.

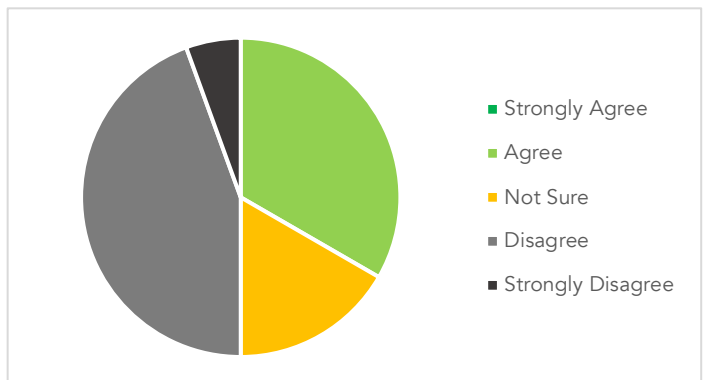
1.2.3 Most detectorists are keen to work responsibly.

- Half the respondents agreed that most detectorists are keen to work responsibly (9) and 7 were not sure.
- Only two of the group disagreed with the statement.
- No respondents strongly agreed or disagreed.



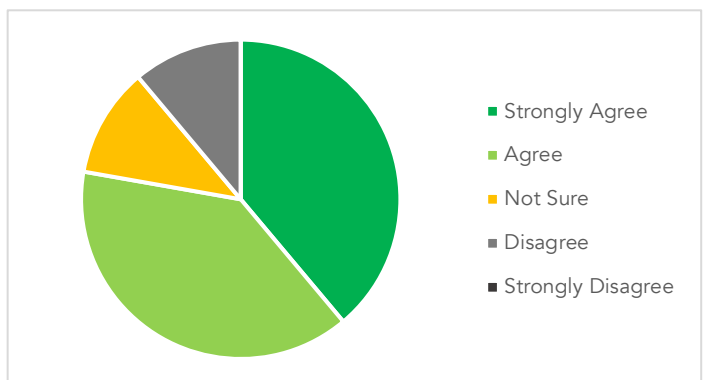
1.2.4 Most detectorists have a good understanding of responsible detecting.

- Half the respondents disagreed that detectorists have a good understanding of responsible detecting (8 – disagreed, 1 – strongly disagreed).
- Six respondents agreed with the statement, and three were unsure.
- No respondents strongly agreed with the statement.



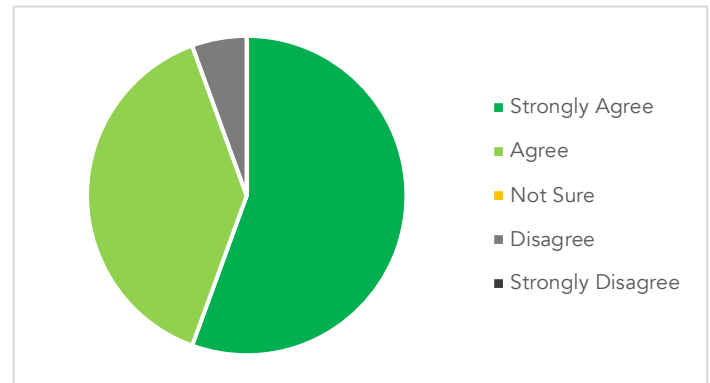
1.2.5 There is a need to develop better guidance for detectorists about responsible detecting.

- Most of the group agreed that better guidance for responsible detecting was needed (7 – agreed, 7 – strongly agreed).
- Two respondents disagreed with the statement, and two were unsure.
- No respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.



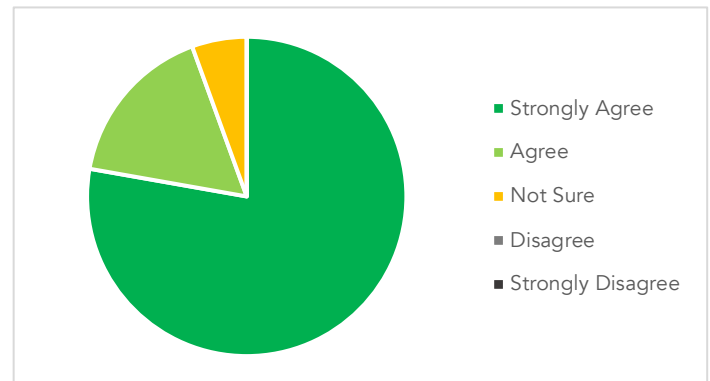
1.2.6 There is a need to provide more training about responsible metal detecting.

- A clear majority agreed that more training was needed about responsible detecting (7 – agreed, 10 – strongly agreed).
- One respondent disagreed with the statement.
- No respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, and no-one was unsure.



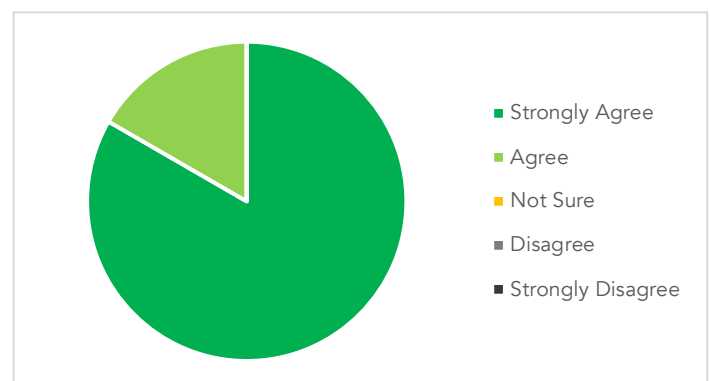
1.2.7 It would be beneficial to encourage greater collaboration between detectorists and archaeologists.

- A majority strongly agreed that greater collaboration between detectorist and archaeologists would be beneficial (3 – agreed, 14 – strongly agreed).
- One respondent was unsure.
- No respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.



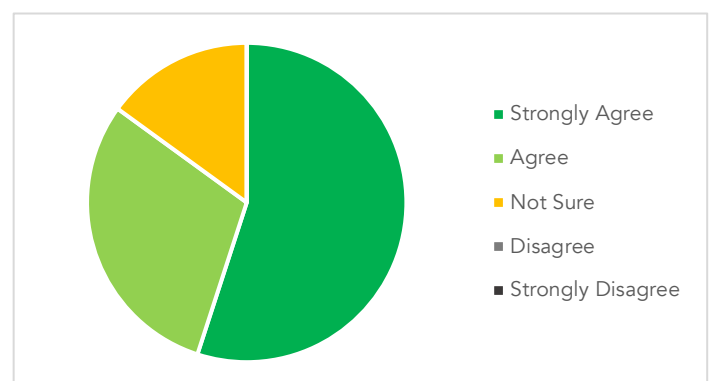
1.2.8 Responsible detecting requires a collaborative approach between bodies and groups representing detectorists, archaeologists and other stakeholders (landowners, heritage bodies, PAS).

- All agreed that a collaborative approach underpins the ethos of responsible detecting (3 – agreed, 15 – strongly agreed).
- No respondents were unsure or disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.



1.2.9 An accreditation system would help provide a 'quality stamp' for detectorists looking to work with archaeologists.

- A majority agreed that an accreditation system for detectorists would be useful (6 – agreed, 11 – strongly agreed).
- Three respondents were unsure.
- No respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.



1.3 What are the options?

1.3.1 Whilst the feasibility study is focused on reviewing the viability of setting up an Institute for Detectorists, consideration of other possibilities forms a key part of that discussion. Broad support was felt for the idea that something does need to be done to try and address the challenges outlined, with 17 out of 18 respondents agreeing that issues should be addressed. Discussions within the Project Advisory Board meetings and the Focus Group meetings have identified five potential paths that a solution might take:

- Do nothing – there is no problem.
- Do nothing – work with existing groups to take up the challenge.
- Create a new Hobbyist Group for Responsible Detecting - address challenges through a broad and open to all membership.
- Create a Special Interest Group for Detectorists as part of an existing professional body (eg ClfA) and use existing accreditation structures.
- Develop training courses - no need for an Institute.

1.3.2 Most of the responding group disagreed that taking a passive approach or maintaining the status quo would be a good option. Of the three active options – creating a hobbyist group for responsible detecting, a ClfA Special Interest Group or addressing through training courses – there was no strong lead option. The most positive response felt was for the development of a Special Interest Group as part of an existing body (eg ClfA). Presented with these options, most of the group supported the development of an Institute as the best option (14 out of 18 agreed).

1.3.3 Some thoughts from the free text responses include:

I think there are those detectorists who want to move beyond hobby and currently I don't think there is any organisation who can support that.

There is clearly a problem that needs to be addressed with regard to promoting best practice amongst some metal detectorists but I am not sure that there is an overwhelming desire amongst the majority for training and accreditation...

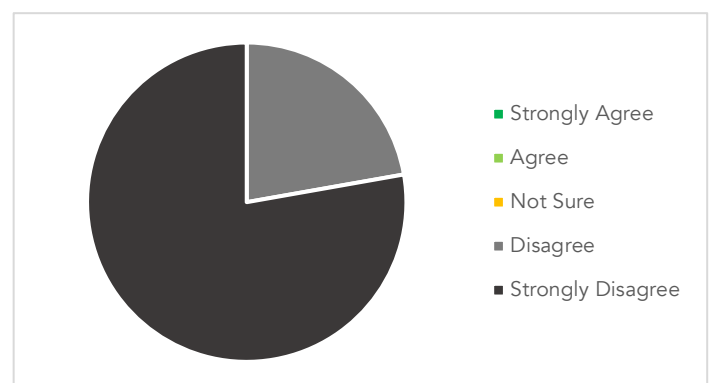
The benefit of the Institute is the accreditation, however, basic training for responsible detecting should be available to the widest possible audience.

The IoD provides the focus on metal detecting that other institutions would not be able to achieve.

There is a need for training courses that could be disseminated to all interested groups. But an institute is a good idea as it gives a level of creditability, origination and belonging...

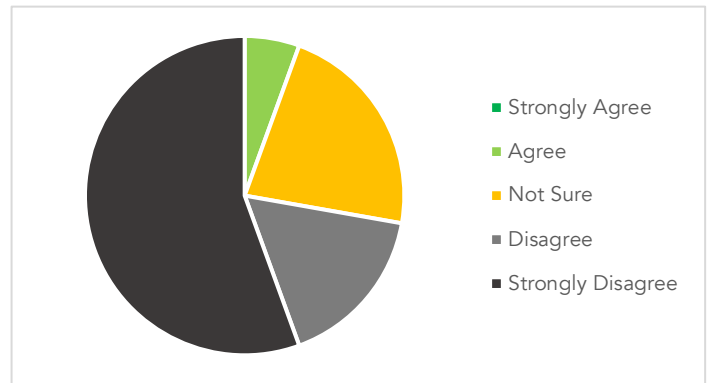
1.3.4 Do nothing - there is no problem

- All respondents disagreed that nothing should be done and there was no problem to address (4 – disagreed, 14 – strongly disagreed).
- No respondents were unsure, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.



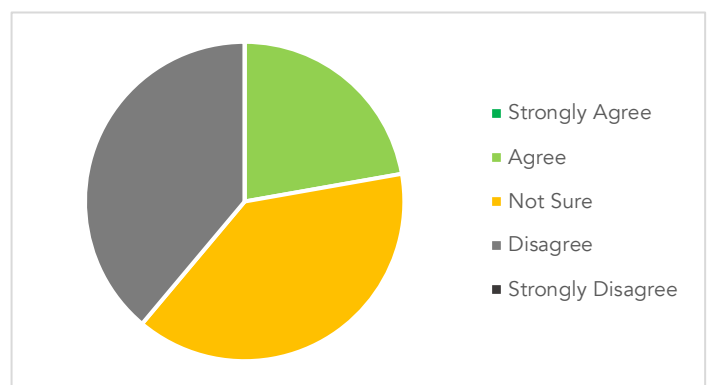
1.3.5 Do nothing - pressure existing groups to take up the challenge

- Most respondents disagreed that existing groups should be pressured to take up the challenge (3 – disagreed, 10 – strongly disagreed).
- Four respondents were unsure and one agreed with the statement.
- No respondents strongly agreed with the statement.



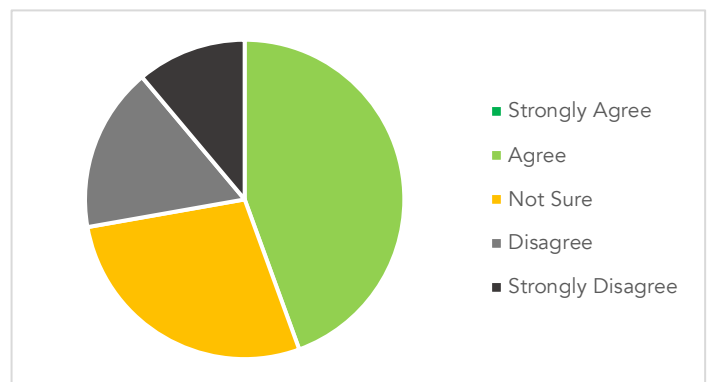
1.3.6 Create a new Hobbyist Group for Responsible Detecting - address challenges through a broad and open to all membership

- An equal number of respondents disagreed (7) or were unsure (7) about a new hobbyist group being a suitable response.
- A smaller number (4) agreed it might be a positive action
- No respondents strongly agreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.



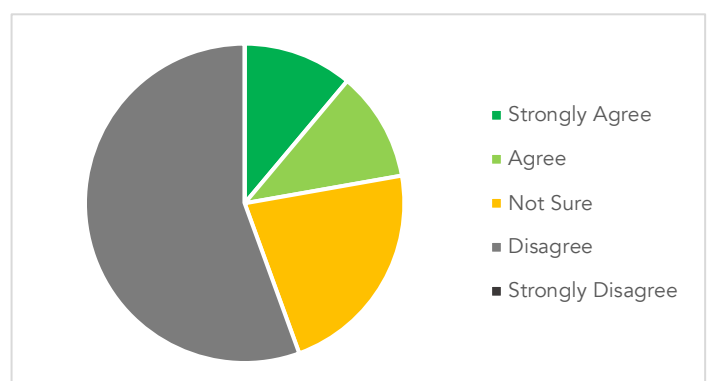
1.3.7 Create a Special Interest Group for Detectorists as part of an existing professional body (eg ClfA) and use existing accreditation structures

- There was a greater support for the idea of a detectorist group within an existing body, such as ClfA (8).
- There was also a reasonable opposition to the idea, with three respondents disagreeing, while two strongly disagreed. Five were unsure.
- No respondents strongly agreed with the statement.



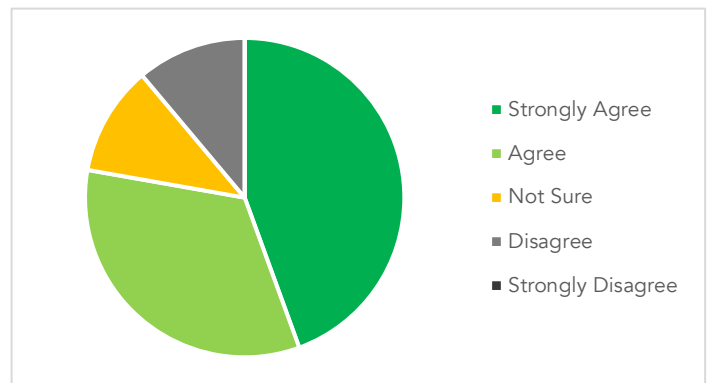
1.3.8 Develop training courses – but no need for an Institute

- More people disagreed (10) with this idea than others, although no respondent strongly disagreed.
- Two people strongly agreed and the same number agreed.
- Four respondents were unsure.



1.3.9 Setting up an Institute is a good option to support responsible detecting.

- There was strong support for this option, with eight in strong agreement and a further 6 agreeing.
- Two people were unsure and two disagreed.
- No respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

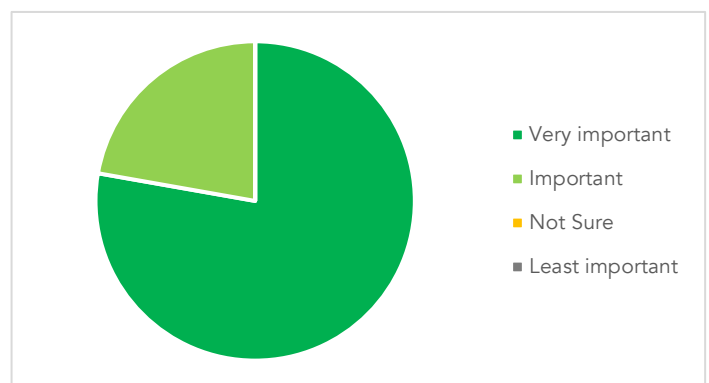


1.4 The role of the Institute

1.4.1 Understand the priorities that stakeholders see as part of the remit of the Institute provides an excellent indication of what role they see as being more important. The consulted group were presented with the same set of functions as were presented to the detectorists survey and asked to rate each in terms of importance. The potential roles are listed below in the order of importance to the stakeholders. The most important to all but one stakeholder was for the Institute to work collaboratively with PAS and heritage organisations to define and implement best practice guidance for detecting. Following that, other important functions are seen as supporting detectorists who are keen to undertake the hobby responsibly, and to develop education and training resources. The survey also asked if stakeholders would add any functions, and two further areas were highlighted – one suggesting that a key function would be to educate and support landowners, and one highlighting a role to work with law enforcement officers.

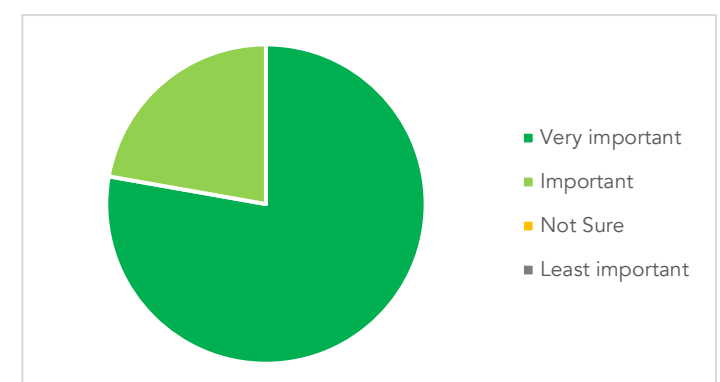
1.4.2 Support detectorists who are keen to undertake the hobby responsibly.

- The need to support responsible detectorists was seen as very important by most (14) and important by four.
- No respondents felt this role was least important or were unsure.



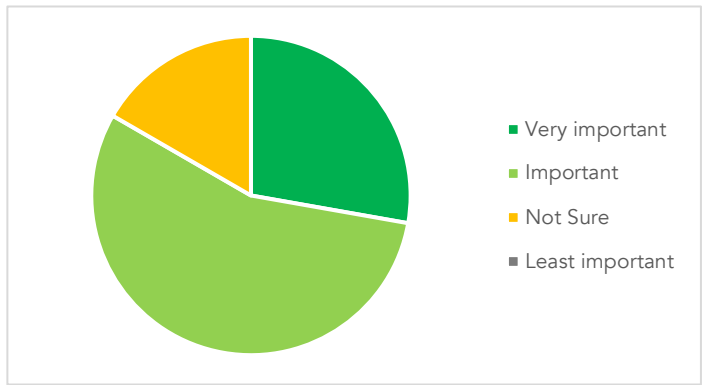
1.4.3 Develop training and education resources.

- The need to provide training and education for responsible detecting was seen as very important by most (14) and important by four.
- No respondents felt this role was least important or were unsure.



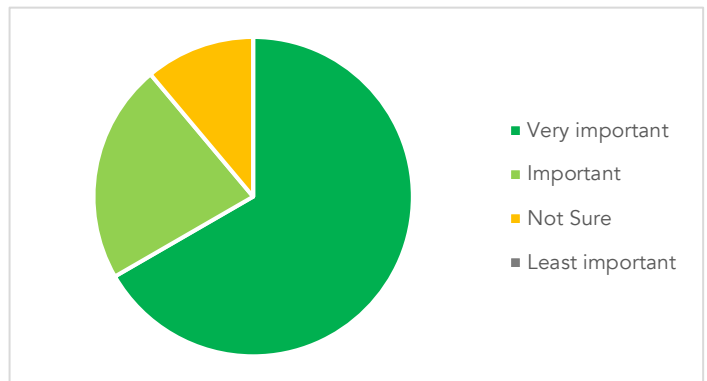
1.4.4 Endorse relevant training provided by others.

- Having a function to endorse training provided by others was seen as important by the majority (10) and very important by five.
- Three respondents were unsure.
- No respondents felt this role was least important.



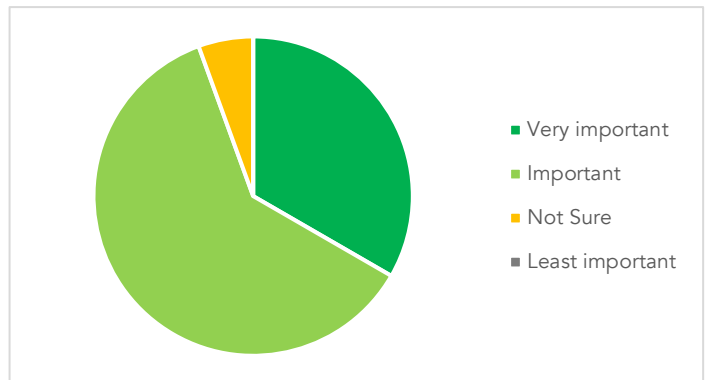
1.4.5 Have a clear set of guiding principles which members can sign up to.

- Underpinning the Institutes role with a clear set of guiding principles was seen as very important by most (12) and important by four respondents.
- Two respondents were unsure.
- No respondents felt this role was least important.



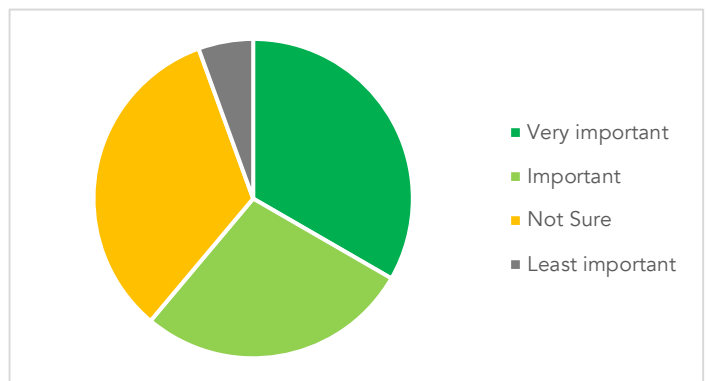
1.4.6 Provide a way that detectorists can demonstrate their skills and experience.

- Most respondents felt that the ability to support detectorists in demonstrating their capabilities was important (11) or very important (6).
- One respondent was unsure.



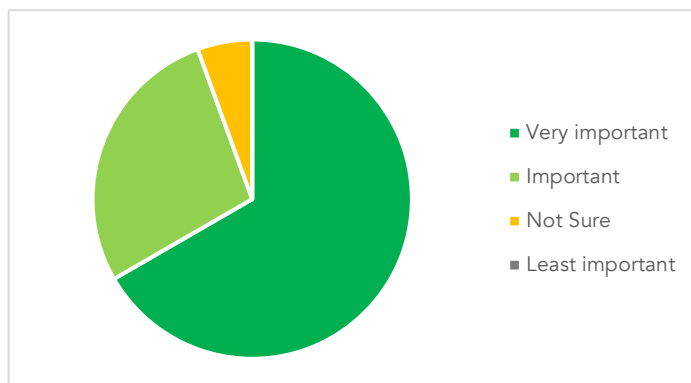
1.4.7 Offer a system of self-regulation, providing a quality stamp for responsible detectorists.

- Respondents were more unsure about developing a system of self-regulation, although the function did still garner support from the majority (6 – very important, 5 – important).
- Five respondents were unsure and 1 felt this was least important.



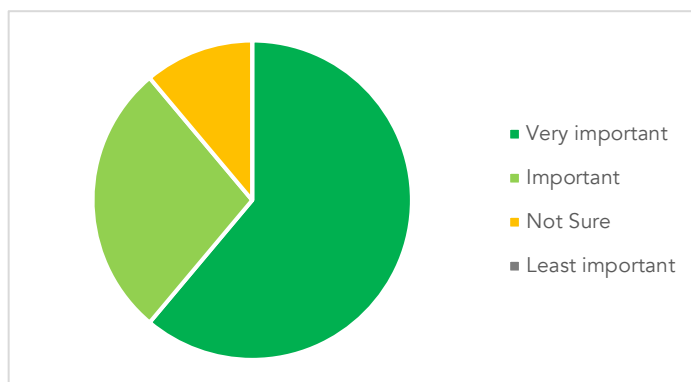
1.4.8 Represent responsible detectorists, promoting best practice to landowners, the heritage community and to government agencies.

- Representation of detectorists to landowners, the heritage community and government agencies was seen as very important by many (12) and important by five.
- Only one respondent was unsure.



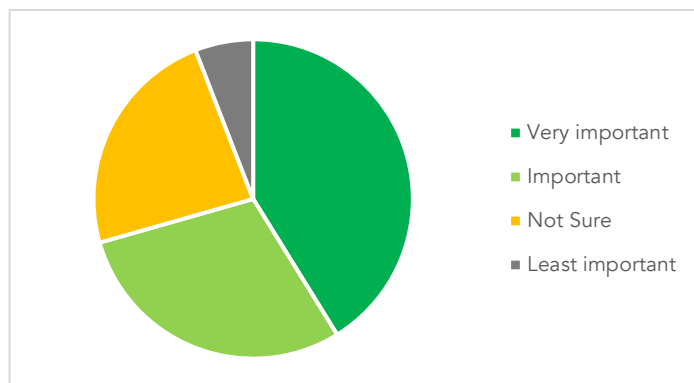
1.4.9 Promote responsible detecting for public benefit.

- Promotion of detecting and its role in achieving public benefit, was seen as very important to the majority (11) and important to five.
- Two respondents were unsure.



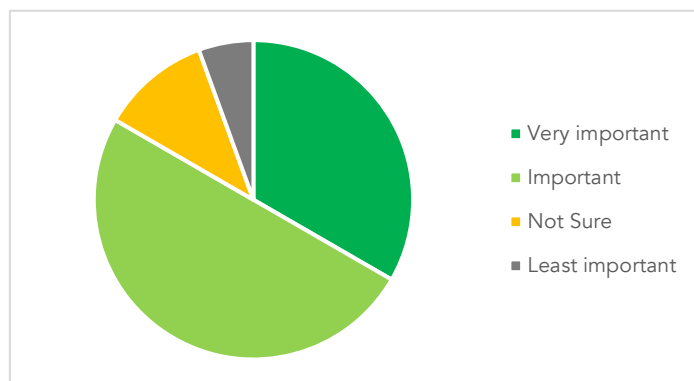
1.4.10 Promote detecting as a method to understand more about the past.

- Promotion of detecting as a research tool to understand more about the past, was seen as very important to many (7) and important to five.
- Four respondents were unsure and one felt this was least important.
- One respondent did not provide an answer to this function.



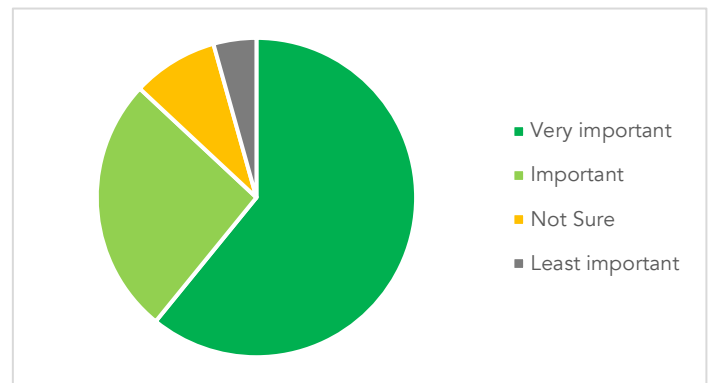
1.4.11 Promote the use of metal detectors on archaeological projects.

- Promotion of the use of detecting as a research tool within archaeological projects is also supported by the majority, either as important (9) or very important (6).
- Two respondents were unsure and one felt this was least important.



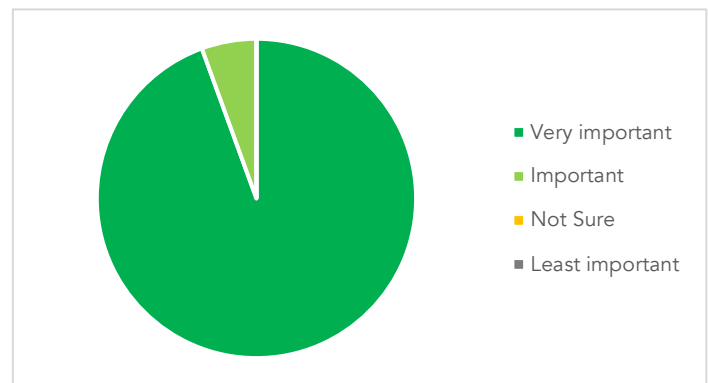
1.4.12 Promote conservation-led approaches for non-stratified topsoil finds from archaeological sites.

- Supporting and promoting conservation-led approaches to topsoil finds from archaeological sites was seen as very important by 14 and important by 6 respondents.
- Two respondents were unsure and one felt this was least important.



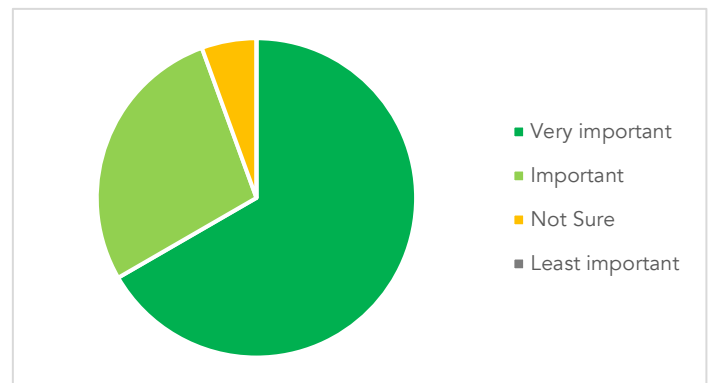
1.4.13 Work collaboratively with PAS, archaeologists and other heritage specialists to define and implement best practice guidance for detecting.

- This function was the most supported, with 17 respondents feeling that collaborative working with PAS and heritage professionals was very important and one that this role was important.
- No respondents were unsure and or felt this was least important.



1.4.14 Work collaboratively with museums to encourage display of local finds.

- Working collaboratively with museums was also seen as key function of the proposed Institute, with 12 seeing this as very important and 5 as important.
- One respondent was unsure.
- No respondents felt this was least important.



1.5 Membership

1.5.1 The perspectives of stakeholder groups on the membership structure of the Institute are an important consideration for the development of a robust framework viewed by external observers as meaningful. At this stage, the options are kept simple, based on the common structures seen across the professional body sector and including a non-accredited grade, two accredited grades, an option to be listed within an accessible directory and a grade for detecting groups and organisations. The question relied on a general familiarity of professional body structures, rather than providing details as to how each grade might be assessed and benchmarked. The idea was to gain an overall perspective as to what scenarios seemed useful and would be perceived as beneficial to stakeholder organisations and heritage professionals.

1.5.2 This section of the survey asked for free text responses against a series of possible membership scenarios:

- Supporting memberships – available to individuals and organisations who are passionate about detecting and want to be affiliated with the Institute, but not accredited.
 - 12 respondents agreed that an affiliate or friends of type membership would be useful, with free text responses highlighting the need for inclusivity, accessibility, and low-cost options for individuals.
 - One respondent was unsure, suggesting that clear benefits would need to be apparent for those joining at this level.
- **Accredited memberships** – offered at two distinct grades (Associate and Member) for detectorists who can demonstrate competency, experience and knowledge of responsible detecting to their peers.
 - 11 respondents agreed that having more than one accredited grade was useful, and also that the structure should be simple and clear. Terminology and the names of grades was something to consider carefully, especially around use of ‘Member’ as an accredited grade.
 - Two respondents were unsure, feeling that more detail would be needed around how the grades were benchmarked and validated before they were able to respond more fully.
- **Registered practitioners** - an additional peer-reviewed option for accredited members to add their name to an online Directory of Detectorists.
 - This was a popular idea, with 13 respondents agreeing. A register was seen by some as a great resource for supporting collaboration as well as for encouraging the wider community of detectorists to see the potential benefits of accreditation.
 - One respondent was unsure and felt the market for such a list needed to be fully evaluated.
- **Registered Organisations** - an accredited level membership for detecting groups and other appropriate organisations who would sign up to the same ethical codes as individual members.
 - Overall, the group had less enthusiasm for a Registered Organisations membership, with seven feeling it might be a good idea, five in agreement and three unsure.
 - Stakeholders felt there would need to be clarity around the difference between individual and organisational membership, and how organisation membership relates to those affiliated with a lofD member organisation who are not lofD individual members.

1.5.3 Very few respondents provided additional comments around membership, although those that did offered some useful points regarding the opportunities that linking up to schemes such as CSCS could offer or providing an option to endorse or accredit trainers, and the need to ensure accessibility for all detectorists both in terms of entry level grades and cost.

1.6 Pros and Cons, Challenges and Opportunities

1.6.1 The survey posed a series of free text questions regarding the opportunities, disadvantages and challenges that setting up a new Institute may pose. The responses were mostly consistent across the stakeholder group with the positives including an emphasis on training, collaboration and advocacy, and negatives linked to either the issues of hostility, division and meaningful representation or the very practical consideration of resources needed to get an Institute set up. The opportunities were seen as many, including collaborative approaches to training, standards and best practice and supporting greater participation in heritage. The positive feedback provided an encouraging response from key organisations who can see the potential opportunities in working collaboratively with the Institute. Finally, the survey asked what stakeholders felt might happen should no action be taken. Generally, most felt the status quo will very much continue which was seen as a missed opportunity and a move that may result in a decline in standards of detecting, as well as having a negative impact on relationship between detectorists and archaeologists.

1.6.2 The main **advantages** to setting up an Institute were:

- Development of standards and training (mentioned 11 times)
- Wider collaboration between archaeology and detecting (mentioned 8 times)

- Advocacy and representation (mentioned 6 times)
- Accreditation (mentioned 3 times)
- Identity (mentioned once).

1.6.3 Key points from the free text responses include:

Standards and training for detectorists. Acknowledgement of their skills and value as part of archaeological investigation. Seen as another method of remote sensing.

Form a bridge and collaborative agency to help bring detectorists and archaeologists together. Show positive side to detecting beyond the curse of treasure. Help wider participants understand all of the issues at stake.

Provides a formalised and coherent structure for education and would allow a route to greater trust between detectorists and heritage professionals...

Gives a level of creditability and visibility within industry and academia

It would provide a focus for raising the levels of responsible detecting and bring more detectorists and archaeologists together.

1.6.4 The Pros word cloud generated by encoded free text responses to the question: What do you think are the advantages of developing a new Institute?



1.6.5 The main **disadvantages** to setting up an Institute would be:

- The divisive nature of the Institute, potentially creating a rift within the detecting community (mentioned by 10)
- An inability to engage with many detectorists (mentioned by 5)

- The potential to exclude detectorists through creating barriers of cost and accreditation (mentioned by 2)
- Perceived or actual duplication of the roles of other bodies (mentioned by 1)
- The need to mobilise a lot of resources re costs, staff time and infrastructure (mentioned by 1)

1.6.6 Key points from the free text responses include:

The potential for this to be exclusive and divisive across the metal detecting fraternity and potential breakdown of relationships with pre-existing membership groups.

It will take a lot of work and will undoubtedly provoke opposition from other detectorist organisations. This is not a reason for not developing it!

Getting people to buy into the idea, attracting members.

[The Institute] is not proactively engaging with the majority who don't want to sign up to such a Scheme as they are already a member of an on-line group, or have their own permissions.

I think the disadvantage could be membership uptake. What is the Institute offering at the basic level of membership compared with a group like NCMD? Could create a rift in the metal detecting community with members vs non-members.

Hostility from detecting community!

1.6.7 The Cons – word cloud generated from encoded free text responses to the question: What do you see as the main disadvantages of developing a new Institute?



1.6.8 Three main **challenges** which would need to be addressed when setting up the Institute. These are:

- Representation – ensuring that detectorists are at the centre of the body (mentioned by 10)
- Resources – needed to develop the infrastructure and run the Institute (mentioned by 3)

- Hostility – the need to address and overcome the negative attitude held by many towards the proposal of a new Institute (mentioned by 3)

1.6.9 Key points from the free text responses include:

Representation at board/governance level

Legal implications, time and energy, people to do the work, initial funding, getting the goodwill of associated organisations as well as detectorists themselves.

Hostility from some sections of met dets and misinformation leading to low take up.

Hostility for other groups, making sure it is attractive enough to encourage people to join, making sure it is accessible enough to join.

Support and buy in from Detectorists and archaeologists alike.

It needs to include more people (detectorists) leading it.

Convincing "the hobby" to get onboard with it would be the main problem.

1.6.10 The Challenge – word cloud generated from encoded free text responses to the question: What do you think might be the issues in setting up an Institute, which you think would need to be addressed?



1.6.11 The **opportunities** were certainly present, with all responding stakeholders indicating they could see an opportunity to collaborate with the Institute should it be set up. Although many simply answered 'Yes' to the question (17, with 1 'possibly'), a few respondents provided thoughts on where they felt the key opportunities were. These included shared resources for training and best practice, provision of clear frameworks and benchmarks for standards, an improvement in the quality of information collected from detecting and supporting greater participation in heritage. The positive feedback provided an encouraging response from key organisations who can see the potential opportunities in working collaboratively with the Institute.

1.6.12 Finally, the impact of **doing nothing**... The final proposition asked what stakeholders felt might happen if the Institute was not set up and no actions were taken. Previous survey questions asked if stakeholders felt that doing nothing was an option and the overwhelming response was that something which supported responsible

2 FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 As a result of the communications challenge felt following the launch of the project, the planned public membership survey for October 2020 was not undertaken. Instead, we refocused the initial research to a pilot survey and workshop with our Focus Group members.
- 2.1.2 The outline survey was circulated to Focus Group members in December 2020, followed by a two hour workshop on the 16th December 2020. Of the 50 Focus Group members, 31 provided responses to the survey and 13 members attended the first Focus Group zoom workshop.
- 2.1.3 The final version of the survey is here, with questions also provided below:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScrDD7oMex0V4zUqMKozTr8E3wX90_CbnoqiWBDncfld-UKGg/viewform?usp=sf_link

2.2 Focus Group Workshop

- 2.2.1 During the two-hour session, we talked over the aims of the Institute and discussed the existing audiences for the proposed new body, as well as stakeholders. The discussion was informal, aiming to listen to the initial responses of those attending, rather the drive a conversation in a certain direction. We had a good range of detectorists, those representing media and ClfA also attended.
- 2.2.2 A key outcome was the broad agreement and recognition of the diverse audiences relevant to the Institute, and consensus that the focus of the Institute should be setting standards, increasing understanding and promoting responsible detecting through education and guidance.
- 2.2.3 Focus Group participants identified five main audiences which they felt needed to be considered at this stage, especially with regards to development of membership structures and educational resources, and how we communicate at this stage. These are broadly consistent with those the Project Team have identified and will feed into how we frame communications in the future.

2.3 Audience groups

Audience	Description	Communication routes
Detecting clubs and their members	self-regulating group already aware of standards and responsibilities	Clubs, networks and discussion forums
New hobbyist / wider interested public	Those considering taking up a new hobby or who may intermittently get involved	Social media networks and facebook groups
Rallies and rally organisers	A growing arena for detectorists, with the potential to become a significant audience for the Institute	Rally organisers, networks and discussion forums
NCMD and members	Key group with common interests with the Institute and clear differences in aims and objectives	Direct communications with NCMD board
Stakeholder group	Archaeologists, landowners, media, manufacturers and distributors	Direct communications

2.4 Focus Group – Survey Summary

- 2.4.1 In total, 31 members of the Focus Group responded to the survey, the majority (26) being detectorists with over five years' experience, with a smaller number being comparatively new to detecting (1 – 5yrs) and three who were interested but not active detectorists. Many members were also members of regional or national detecting groups / bodies (18), with most detecting as an individual (21), and some also as part of small group (13) or larger rally (4). A small group also cited involvement with community heritage or archaeology groups (4).

- 2.4.2 The survey has helped us understand a bit more about what motivates the members of our Focus Group and how they see the Institute developing its roles, member structures and activities over the coming months – including a small minority who are yet to be convinced of the need for an Institute at all. All respondents are interested and understand responsible detecting, and most see collaborative approaches as important. Most would agree that the Institute has a key role in promoting best practice in responsible detecting, training and education, leadership and advocacy.
- 2.4.3 Regarding key activities the Institute might undertake, all respondents felt the Institute should promote detecting in archaeological projects, provide a clear set of guiding principles and guidance, and supporting those taking up the hobby interested in responsible detecting. Strong support was also felt for activities supporting detecting as a means to understand the past and providing members with ways to demonstrate their skills and experience in a peer reviewed and self-regulated structure.
- 2.4.4 The proposed membership structure offering grades of membership to individuals (at different levels) and organisation seemed to work for most of the group, with about half being interested in attaining an accredited level of membership. Member benefits suggested were also found to be popular, with a high degree of support for best practice guidance, preferential rates for members attending workshops and training, and insurance offers. The group was also interested in an online directory of members and having access to online forums, case studies and other resources.

2.5 Widening consultation

- 2.5.1 A key motivation in undertaking this survey was to see if the mode of survey and the questions asked provided useful insights which will help the project team develop the membership structure of the Institute and inform key aims and activities. To this end, the survey has proven to be useful and some of the Focus Group responses provide a steer in tightening up the questions and leaving plenty of room for free text and comments.
- 2.5.2 Our intention is now to slightly tweak some of the questions and sections to make sure they are very clear. We are keen to use wider consultation to both raise awareness to the breadth and ambition of the Institute, as well as gathering greater numbers of responses from which we can build a more comprehensive understanding of the levels of interest in joining the Institute. This will not only help shape the Institute but will provide key data relating to income and sustainability. For example, the next version of the survey is likely to include more options for potential members to indicate how much they would consider paying for membership and / or training, and take on board some of the Focus Group feedback regarding audiences and activities.

2.6 Focus Group – Survey results

Have you heard of the project, and where did you hear about it?

- 2.6.1 Whilst the Focus Group are clearly aware of the project, we retained this initial question to see where the group had mostly heard about the project. Of the 28 responses to the question, the majority cited direct contact with Keith as their first introduction to the project, with other sources including training courses provided by Keith (6), social media and online forums (5), printed media (2) and contact from the Association of Detectorists (2).

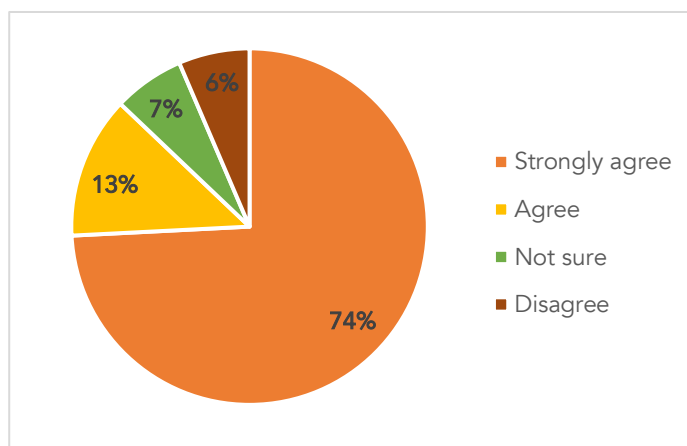
Do you agree with the following statements about responsible detecting?

- 2.6.2 This section of the survey posed a series of statements and asked the group if they agreed or disagreed. Again, within this group, it is useful to bear in mind that there is already broad support for the Institute and that members of our Focus Group are known to be practitioners of responsible detecting. Of interest is that people do have a clear idea of what they believe responsible detecting to be, and that they would agree that it is beneficial for detectorists to work collaboratively with archaeologists. Whilst there will be a positive bias within this group, it is useful to affirm the principle that responsible practice and collaborative approaches are intricately connected.

Do you support the idea of an Institute for Detectorists?

Strongly agree	23
Agree	4
Not sure	2
Disagree	2

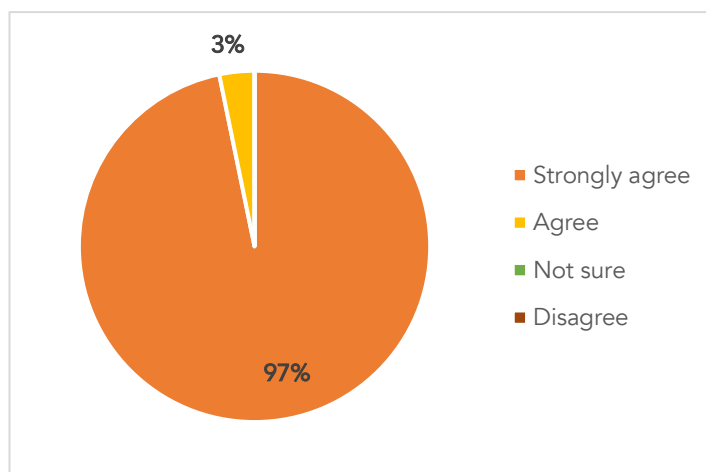
The majority of respondents strongly agree with the idea of setting up the Institute. We would obviously expect strong support for the idea from this group, but it is useful that we have some who remain to be fully persuaded within our Focus Group.



Are you interested in supporting responsible metal detecting?

Strongly agree	30
Agree	1
Not sure	0
Disagree	0

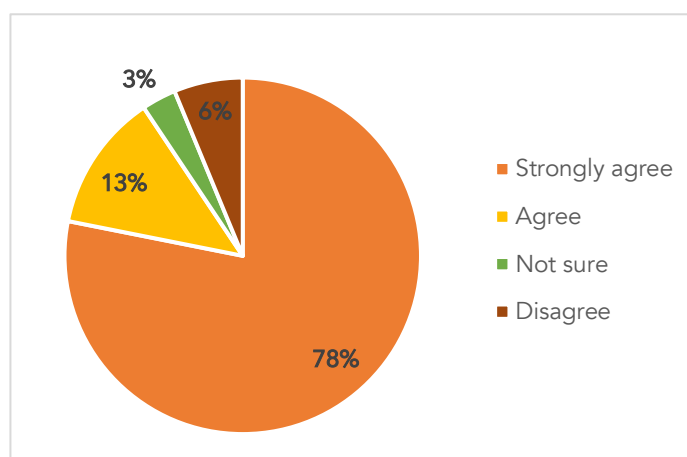
Strong agreement from almost all the responding group that there is an interest in supporting responsible detecting.



Do you consider it beneficial for detectorists to work collaboratively with archaeologists?

Strongly agree	25
Agree	4
Not sure	1
Disagree	1

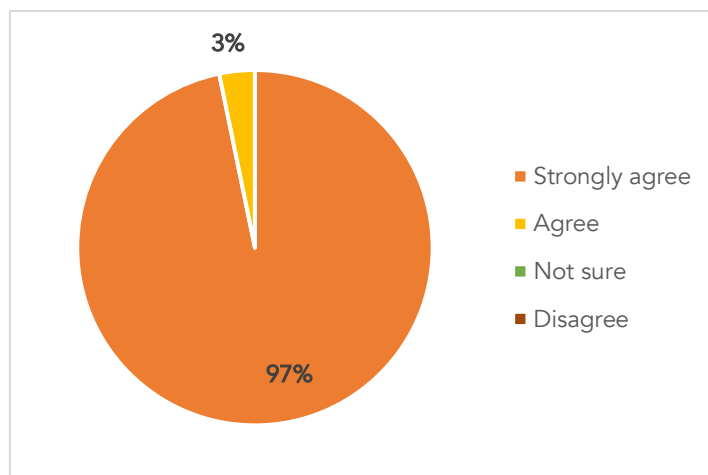
A large percentage of the group agree with this statement, with only 1 person not sure and 1 in disagreement.



Do you feel like you have a good understanding of what responsible detecting is?

Strongly agree	30
Agree	1
Not sure	0
Disagree	0

Strong agreement from almost all of the responding group that they are clear of what is meant by responsible detecting.



Thoughts about the roles the Institute might take

2.6.3 We asked the group what aspects of the Institute's role they would like to see us think about, providing a free text response. The responses were broadly assigned to seven key roles, based on the free text comments provided. Of those, training is mentioned most often (10), followed by leadership (8), advocacy (7), providing a forum for discussion with detectorists (7), a means for detectorists to have accreditation in some form (4), provision of standards and best practice (3) and as a body spearheading research and development (2). The responses to this question were used to create the word cloud at the start of the report, which gives a sense of the importance of guidance, training and responsible detecting to this group.

Training	10
Leadership	8
Discussion Forum	7
Advocacy	7
Accreditation	4
Standards	3
R&D	2

Free text comments

Providing practical advice for all detectorists and the archaeological community
Guidance and assistance of PAS?
A body of knowledge and expertise willing to openly listen to the membership
Training responsible detectorists, to tutor others in responsible detecting, through online, in the classroom, or in the field. To build up a core group of tutors across the UK, to deliver regional training.
The option of obtaining an accreditation in the submission of club finds to PAS
Different levels of training, as not all are beginners, nor do most want to work with archaeologists.
To encourage further research on its members' collections and enable/ encourage joint projects with universities and also provide training and tools to allow members to further research and set their sites in context. Maybe should consider providing public liability insurance, like NCMD, for detectorists as part of the membership.
Influencing Govt Policy on Metal Detecting/Treasure Act Consultation/PAS Development/Working Closely/Constructively with Existing Bodies eg NCMD
Lobby County Archaeologists to get detecting imbedded in all developer funded archaeology.
Be the recognised governing body to administer best practice, education, cpd, code of practice etc. including special interest groups and representing members in discussions with other bodies such as heritage and govt,
Education, licensing, links to museums, accreditation

Representation of the hobby, whilst allowing for casual, responsible detecting to continue. Potentially, a licensing scheme, but without damaging the recreational aspect and whilst acknowledging the contribution from responsible hobbyists.

The IoD should consider firstly supplying a specific niche insurance for members, and avenues toward CSCS cards for working on building sites etc.

Need to be careful to represent the interests of Detectorists and not become dominated by those Archaeologists who want to stifle Detectorists. It would be wise to encourage the NCMD who could easily seem threatened by IOD.

Offering the same to interested landowners, archaeology students and non detectorists who may also be interested in learning about some of the above

To promote responsible detecting

Lobbying the government on behalf of the Detecting Community

Responsibility for Finds recording app development.

I would have thought that gaining acceptance for producing and promoting best practice in regard to ethical detecting and recording finds would be a good first step. Such guidance could be stand alone or incorporated into practical instruction on detecting. It might also be a focus for promoting metal detecting on archaeological sites and perhaps provide a central register of detectorists who are trained to work on archaeological sites.

Ensure that all relevant parties such as retailers and landowners are engaged and involved with responsible detecting.

The name Institute will not encourage the majority of the MD hobby to join.

2.7 Do you agree with the following statements about best practice guidance and training?

2.7.1 The next section of the survey posed a series of statements and asked the group if they agreed or disagreed. Again, within this group, it is useful to bear in mind that there is already broad support for the Institute and that members of our Focus Group are known to be practitioners of responsible detecting.

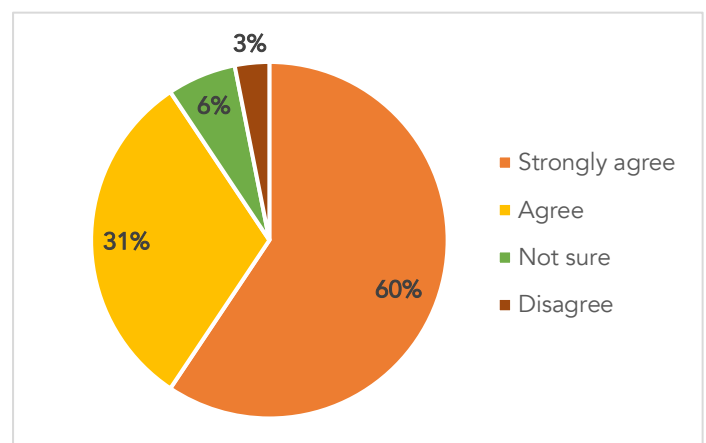
2.7.2 Of interest is that people do have a clear idea of what they believe responsible detecting to be, and that they would agree that it is beneficial for detectorists to work collaboratively with archaeologists. Whilst there will be a positive bias within this group, it is useful to affirm the principle that responsible practice and collaborative approaches are closely connected. The group see the need for best practice guidance for responsible detecting, and a smaller majority feel that the guidance would be useful for their own practice. A majority were also supportive of best practice guidance and resources being available online and forming the basis for in-person training.

2.7.3 Areas of training which were specifically mentioned related to a wide range of topics, including archaeological practice, survey and GPS, finds identification and conservation. Other suggestions related to more practical guidance on working with stakeholders or training in becoming a trainer in responsible detecting.

There is a need for training about responsible metal detecting

Strongly agree	19
Agree	10
Not sure	2
Disagree	1

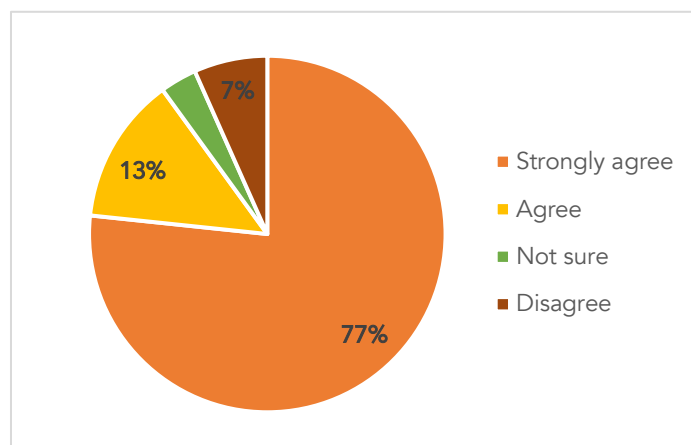
The majority of respondents agree with the need for training about responsible detecting, although with a greater split between agree / strongly agree.



There is a need for training in legislation relevant to detecting

Strongly agree	23
Agree	4
Not sure	1
Disagree	2

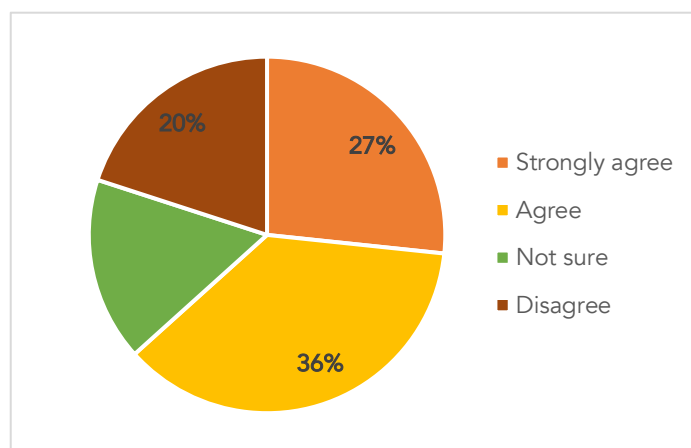
The majority of respondents strongly agree with the need for training about legislation which is relevant to detecting, with only 2 respondents disagreeing and 1 unsure.



Guidance on best practice for responsible detecting would be useful to me?

Strongly agree	8
Agree	11
Not sure	5
Disagree	6

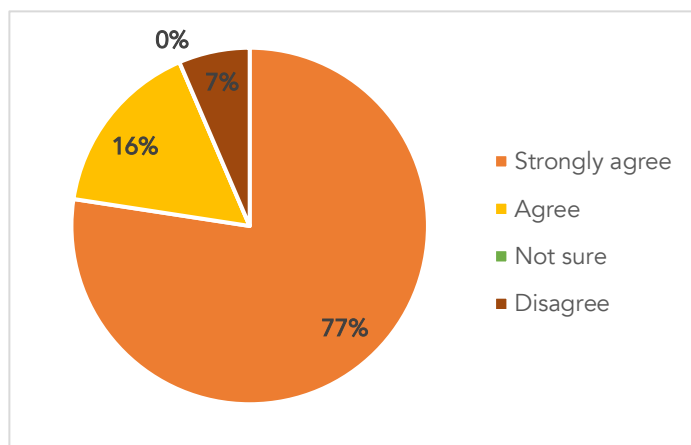
A more evenly spread range of responses for this statement, with the majority agreeing that best practice guidance would be useful to them (19 in agreement) and 5 unsure, with 6 disagreeing.



Guidance on best practice for responsible detecting would be useful to others?

Strongly agree	24
Agree	5
Not sure	0
Disagree	2

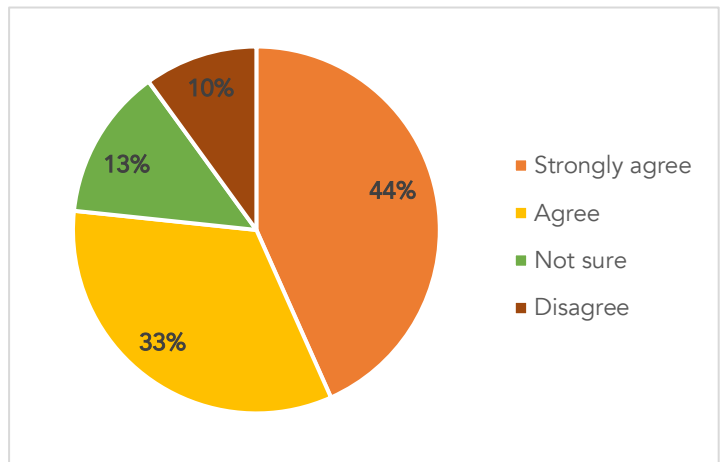
Strong agreement (80%) from most of the group for the need to provide best practice guidance on responsible detecting for others. Only 2 disagree this would not be needed.



I would be interested in online training opportunities

Strongly agree	13
Agree	10
Not sure	4
Disagree	3

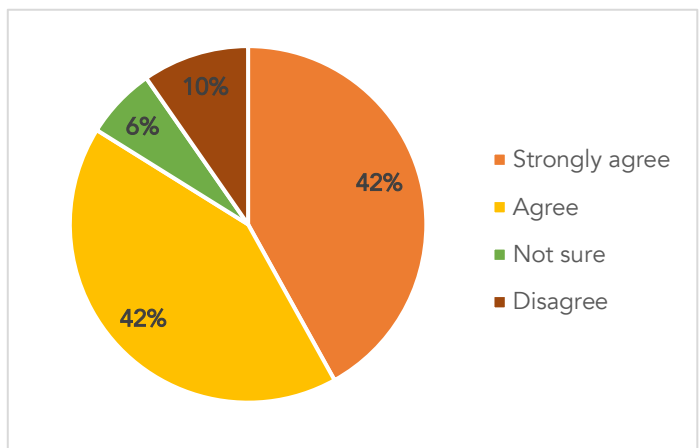
A general agreement that online provision of training opportunities would be attractive to them (23), with 4 unsure and 3 in disagreement.



I would be interested in practice based training opportunities

Strongly agree	13
Agree	13
Not sure	2
Disagree	3

A general agreement that practice-based training opportunities would be attractive (26), with 2 unsure and 3 in disagreement.



2.8 Are there any specific areas of training or promoting best practice that you think the Institute should offer?



2.8.1 As a free text comment, the responses provided were diverse, although there are some common themes and great suggestions for training content and areas of best practice that the Institute could support. The most popular suggestion was training in archaeological techniques relevant to detecting (10), as well as recording and surveying findspots (7). Understanding legislation is also of interest (6) and working with museums and archaeological teams is an area mentioned which could loosely be defined as collaborative working (4). Finds feature very loudly, as the word cloud above shows, and several potential topics can be distinguishing including finds identification (5), conservation (6), self-recording with PAS (3) and what to do when you find a hoard (3). Finally, recognition for the different levels of knowledge and experience provides another area to consider. Keith Wilkins' existing day workshop is cited as an excellent beginner's introduction to detecting (3), with another suggestion for an introduction to ethics / Code of Practice (1). Finally, two respondents suggested the Institute consider training courses linked to qualifications and accreditation, providing a means for members to become recognised as IoD trainers or regional advisors (2).

Archaeological practice	10
Survey techniques and GPS	7
Legislation	6
Conservation	6
Finds identification	5
Collaborative working – eg with museums, archaeologists	4
Beginners Intro	3
What to do when you find a hoard	3
Self-recording with PAS	3
IoD Trainer or Advisor Qualification	2
Ethics / Code of Conduct	1

Free text comments

Keith's one day seminar covers everything anybody new to detecting needs to know.
Accurate Recording of spatial data of all finds, not just for significant finds
Recording and site protection, Conservation and preservation and education with the community.
Recording of 'finds spot' and post extraction care of finds
There needs to be stepped grading so that the less enthusiastic can "get on board" rather than turn away. The associate membership (first stage) should be simple, informative, and free. It should have a good commitment to the correct practices of detecting. This will encourage people to become a part of the bigger picture in time, and allow people to engage with the Institute without feeling governed by it.
the art of recording, the value of recording, an intro to basic archaeology to understand the importance and value of context! ... to build up a recognised/approved list of responsible detectorist, whom private archaeological groups can call upon with confidence to support their work, whilst being under the direction of the site director at all times.
Statements of support from FLO's to clubs within their area.
Basic theory (free online)= how detectors work & the law. Then practical (paid courses)= Tier 1 beginners, one day, classroom & Test bed training, leading to basic operator certification (maybe an additional tier 1 for experienced detectorists) Tier 2, two day classroom course, leading to archaeological competency certificate. (possibly with an additional practical accreditation once a practical placement has been gained and accredited) Tier 3 course to gain IoD teaching qualification.
Best practice whilst detecting building on the PAS code of conduct, systematic detecting and findspot location.
Lithics/Ceramics ID, Comprehensive Advice if Find a Hoard(Leaflet/Online),How to Self Record on PAS,Where to go for Legal Advice on detecting matters
Good find preservation practice with relevant materials recommended to prevent unintentional damage before professional assessment.
How to use GPS, and manipulating data. What to do when hoard found, cleaning finds.

Systematic detecting on archaeological projects, finds interpretation, gps and mapping of finds, legislation affecting detecting
Recognising archaeological levels, careful extraction of finds, recognition and preservation of contextual materials, bagging and tagging, recording locations accurately, GPS usage, networking with local museums.
Simple, online, tutorials, but without compulsion.
Protection and basic conservation of finds.
Working on Archaeological sites
Finds recording and understanding the treasure act, recognising hoards and important deposits and what to do if and when that happens (good for dig organisers)
Conservation, recording practices
Treasure Act and PAS responsibilities
Working on social media AND with FLO's at detecting clubs to INFORM members of best practice and other associated relevant best practice.
Digging and Substrate levels I. E. Teaching about how to determine at what point to stop digging when a target is found and how to re over a find / or leave it.
My experience is that there is a demand for all levels of training. However, what will appeal to a beginner may not appeal to an experienced detectorist. Also, as far as I know, there isn't an accepted best practice for metal detecting on archaeological sites yet.
"Meeting of minds" where members of the hobby, the industry, landowners and the heritage sectors can actually meet physically or via Zoom meetings for example and discuss issues, concerns etc.
The Institute should be educating all interested parties, not just detectorists, so also courses, meetings etc. for landowners, heritage groups and the general public.
Finds identification, law, working with Archaeologists
Conservation, recording practices.
Explanation of ploughsoil and in situ archaeology, stratigraphy and why we excavate. Most detectorists don't understand or consider these horizons

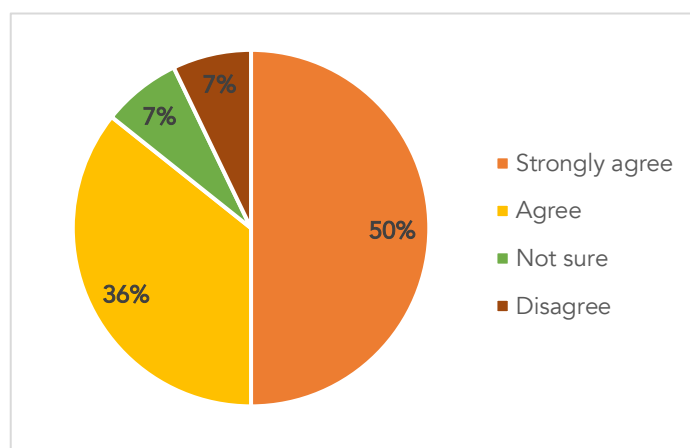
2.9 What do you think the Institute should do?

2.9.1 With regard to key activities the Institute might undertake, agreement from all respondents was achieved for the promotion of detecting in archaeological projects was the most popular (30), having a clear set of guiding principles (30), and supporting those taking up the hobby interested in responsible detecting (30). Strong support was also felt for activities supporting detecting as a method to understand the past (28), providing a means for skills demonstration (27), self-regulation (25), working with archaeologists to develop best practice (27), and promotion of detecting for public benefit (24).

Promote responsible detecting for public benefit

Strongly agree	14
Agree	10
Not sure	2
Disagree	2

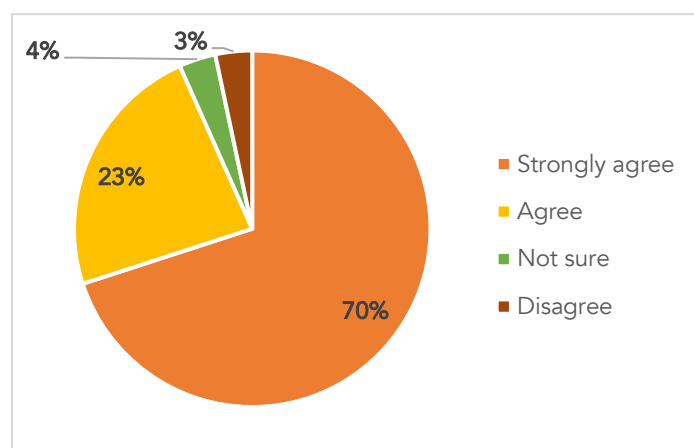
Most responding individuals agreed that a key activity for the Institute would be promotion of responsible detecting for public benefit (24).



Promote detecting as a method to understand more about the past

Strongly agree	21
Agree	7
Not sure	1
Disagree	1

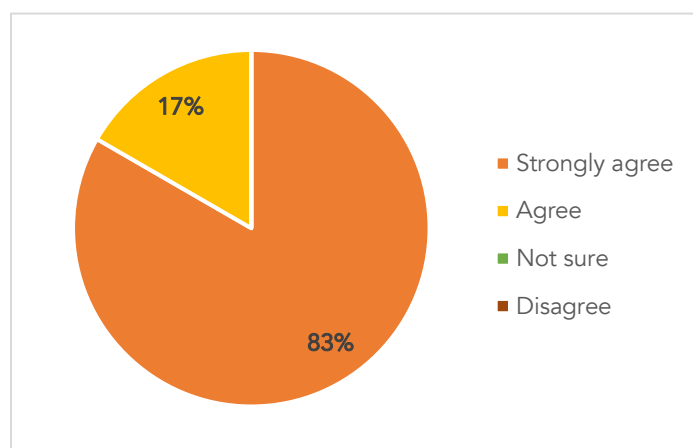
Strong agreement was felt for the Institute's role in promoting the positive benefits of detecting as a method for understanding the past (21), with most of the remaining group agreeing (7).



Promote the use of metal detectors on archaeological projects

Strongly agree	25
Agree	5
Not sure	0
Disagree	0

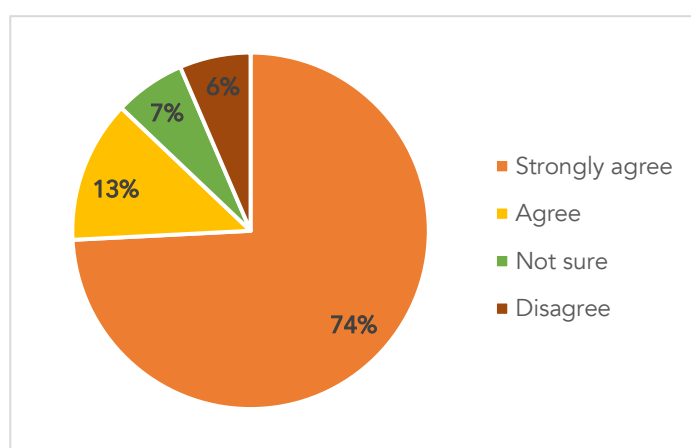
All responding agreed that the Institute should engage in activities which promote the use of detectors on archaeological projects (25 strongly, and 5 in agreement).



Represent responsible detectorists, promoting best practice to landowners, the heritage community and to government agencies

Strongly agree	23
Agree	4
Not sure	2
Disagree	2

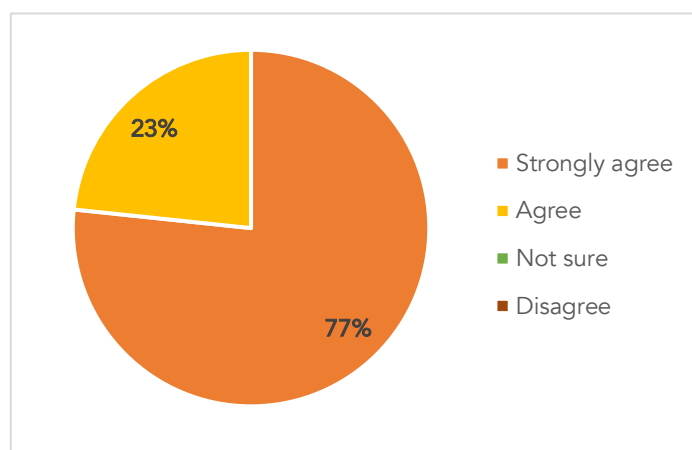
The Institutes role as an advocate for responsible detecting, with activities which promote best practice to stakeholder groups also received support, with 23 in strong agreement and 4 agreeing.



Support detectorists who are keen to undertake the hobby responsibly

Strongly agree	23
Agree	7
Not sure	0
Disagree	0

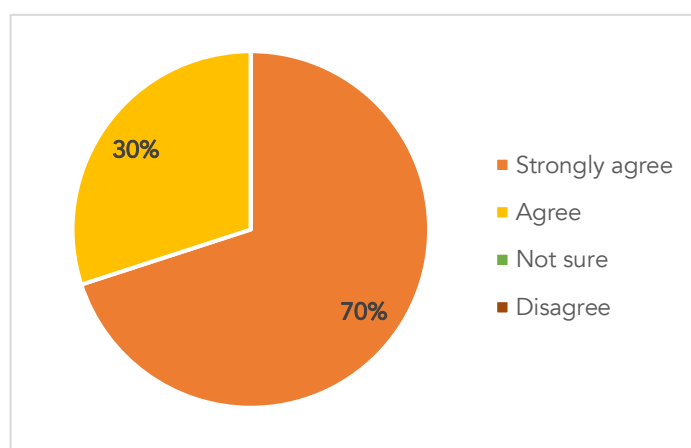
As well as promoting responsible detecting more generally, the Focus Group respondents also supported the idea that the Institute would take an active role in encouraging and supporting detectorists who wanted to get to grips with responsible detecting.



Have a clear set of guiding principles which members can sign up to

Strongly agree	21
Agree	9
Not sure	0
Disagree	0

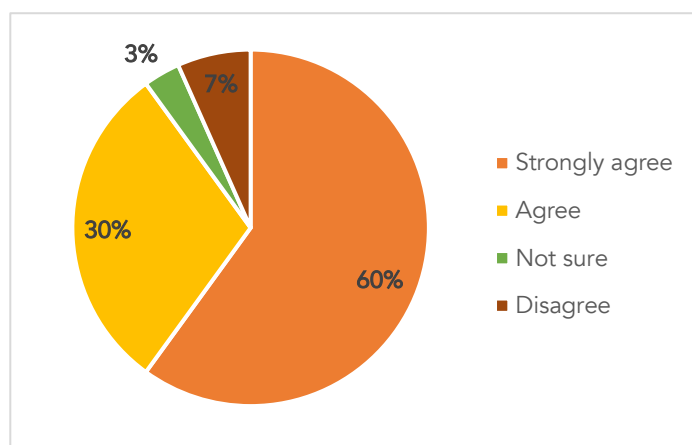
Another area of strong support (100% agreement) is having strong set of guiding principles – such as a Code of Conduct or Code of Professional Values and Behaviours – which members would sign up to supporting.



Provide a way that detectorists can demonstrate their skills and experience

Strongly agree	18
Agree	9
Not sure	1
Disagree	2

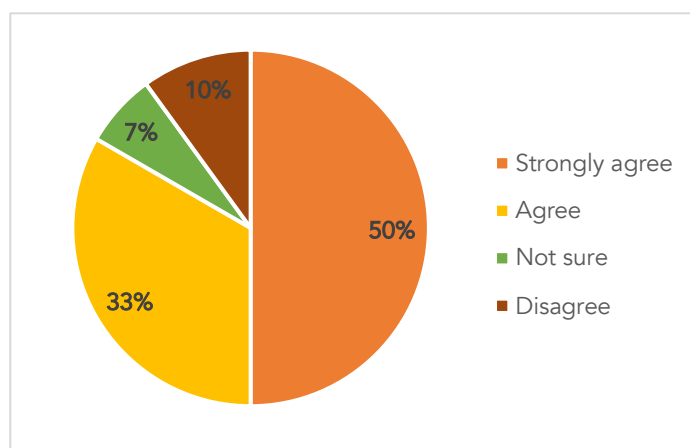
Most respondents (18, strongly agree and 9, agree) were also keen on the Institute having structures which would allow members to demonstrate their capacity and experience. This might take the form of member accreditation levels, or CPD certificates which indicate achievements in learning.



Offer a system of self-regulation, providing a quality stamp for responsible detectorists

Strongly agree	15
Agree	10
Not sure	2
Disagree	3

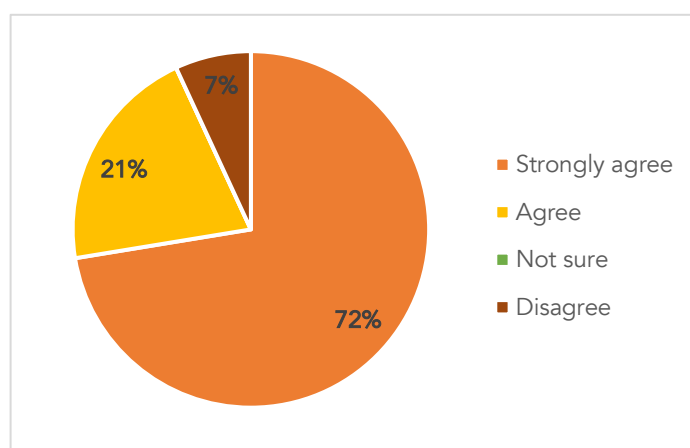
Similar numbers also agreed that the Institute should enact a model of self-regulation, offering assurance to stakeholders that members are peer-reviewing and monitored. Only 2 members were unsure and 5 disagreed.



Work collaboratively with PAS, archaeologists and other heritage specialists to define and implement best practice guidance for detecting

Strongly agree	21
Agree	6
Not sure	0
Disagree	2

The majority (27) of responding Focus Group members also support the Institute in working with key archaeology and heritage stakeholders to define and implement best practice guidance. Two respondents disagreed with this as a key activity for the Institute.



Anything else?

2.9.2 Our final section of this question provided a free text comment box for the group to provide additional thoughts on the things the Institute should consider providing. Although there is not one strong common response in the comments provided, themes which run through include advocacy and representation (7), offering club membership (2), and accrediting and regulating members (3).

Free comments

Actively address the negative 'propaganda' being circulated by NCMD and You Tubers with many followers. IE: 'Man with hat' recently posted a video full of negative speculation which concluded in him asking Detectorists to 'rise up, unite, and stand against' AOD.
Be the body to represent detectorists at government level
Can't think of anything else at this time
Community involvement and audience
Enable/help Detectorists to take part in Archaeological digs and training on Archaeological site techniques.
Hold a register of membership based upon demonstrated competence, which can aid the archaeological world. Perhaps different levels of membership to cover all levels of interest and expertise.
I have always been concerned with the ever-growing numbers of detecting rallies, their apparent increase in size and commercialisation. Such events must be impossible to police. It takes little imagination to realise the amount of artefacts and coins that must certainly be never declared! Perhaps this is something that the institute could discuss?
If the IoD does supply a working passport then that should have a five-year limit whereupon a refresher course/day is needed to keep up with industry rules and changes.

Involve landowners as a priority as they are the key "supplier" to the hobby side of metal detecting.
Target retailers as a main "first point of contact" with training and information to pass on to their customers, especially those new to the hobby. Will there be a membership category for those retailers interested?
Listen to and heed the voice of the proposed membership considering the Institute intends to categorise members by skill and/or expertise [remembering that most members would of course be classed and are indeed hobbyists]. If one can compare numismatics and stamp collecting as a like hobby [although a little less physically active] when most of its practitioners do not belong to groups or institutions they the collectors handle millions of pounds worth of national heritage daily and mostly uncatalogued and unregulated; try commanding and badgering them into a virtually compulsory graded membership. Listen and heed I say.
Lobbying Govt on key Issues, Internal Regulation vs External, Lobbying Govt on Unacceptable standards and practices relating to contaminated Green Waste, help develop International links/responsible detecting standards with emerging detecting countries, Supporting carefully selected charities eg Air Ambulance/Forces/NFU related/NHS
Maintain list of accredited practitioners available to commercial archaeological organisations.
Not at this initial stage.
Please consider that there are indeed local clubs [NARC], who could also be on such a list, and whose members can be trusted to work on projects. [after training!]
Consider group membership, rather than individual if appropriate!
Some aspects of artifact conservation should be considered

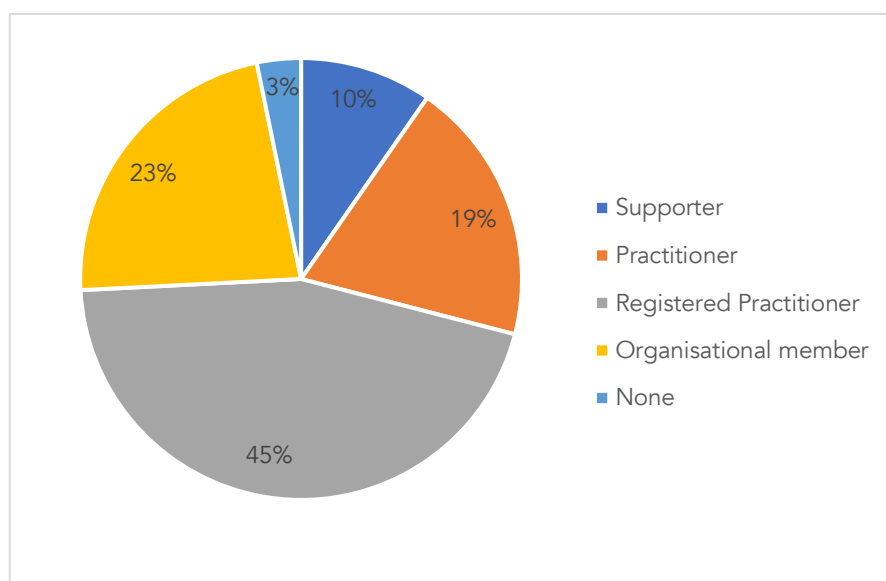
2.10 Which membership types would you be interested in?

2.10.1 We were keen to establish what the interest of Focus Group members is on different levels of membership, including not joining at all. The suggested levels are based on common membership types within professional bodies and offer a range of options for individuals.

- Supporter – a supporter of the organisation, interested in aims but not in a position to become a Practitioner or Registered Practitioner
- Practitioner – an active detectorist, who has signed up to the guiding principles of responsible detecting
- Registered Practitioner – an accredited detectorist, who has been assessed by the Institute and is registered as working within the guiding principles of responsible detecting
- Organisational Member – open to groups, societies, or forums within the detectorist community who are keen to demonstrate support for the aims of the Institute
- I'm not interested in being a member

Supporter	3
Practitioner	6
Registered Practitioner	14
Organisational member	7
Not interested	1

The responding group showed interest in all grades, with Registered Practitioner being the most significant group (14), and Organisational (7) and Practitioner (6) receiving similar levels of interest. The Supporter category was of interest to 3 responders and only 1 was not interested in joining.



2.11 Membership benefits

- 2.11.1 A range of potential membership benefits were highlighted, asking Focus Group members to indicate which they felt would be useful options for the Institute to offer. All options were popular, with training and best practice guidance for detectorists being the top hits, including responsible detecting (25), step-by-step guidance (23), case studies (15) and structured support for skills development (17). Membership offers, such as access to free training (19), reduced rates for workshop (20) and insurance offers were also popular. Providing an online method for members to show their level of accreditation, in the form of a Directory of Registered members (17) was popular with about half the respondents. Additional resources for members, such as tools they can use (15), a discussion forum (16) and access to exclusive content reporting new finds and discoveries (14) are all of interest.

Advice on best practice for responsible detecting	25
Step-by-step guidance for members, such as advice on cleaning and conservation of finds	23
Reduced rates for training workshops and accredited courses	20
Access to free training and learning resources	19
Insurance offers	18
Structured support for skills development	17
Access to an online forum for members	16
An online <i>Directory of Detectorists</i> – a directory of practitioner members and accredited members	17
Best practice case studies	16
Tools and resources for members to use	15
Access to exclusive content about new finds and discoveries	14

- 2.11.2 In addition to the suggestions we made, the survey also asked Focus Group members to provide some thoughts on any other ideas which would help attract and retain members. Some useful additions include discount codes for relevant retailers, a member card for ID purposes, contacts and advice for emergency finds.

Free comments

A list of emergency contacts within the Institute and/or a contact list for help and guidance
A membership card or document; proof of identity and membership.
AOD member discount code at major retailers such as Regtons, LP etc. Average across the board is 10%, a negotiation of 12.5% or 15% would serve to help promote AOD inclusivity.
Dedicated Finds Liaison Officers / Treasure Coroner
Discounts from key manufactures on machines and accessories/Online Magazine/Annual Best Practice Award, eg David Williams Award/Legal Advice/Hoard Hotline/ B&B/Farms Offering detecting Opps
I think it would be good to have access to reports to projects that people have worked on to see what impact their efforts have had. A kind of follow up to the finds they discovered on site after conservation has taken place.
Include Insurance in membership fee.
Insurance that allows for working on private/commercial archaeological digs, that covers public liability and is approved by the commercial outfits like, Cotswold, Mola etc.
Majority of training should be chargeable with different rates for members and non-members.
Special interest groups to develop competencies and new ways of thinking including policy making
Online Directory should have option to hide full address etc
Regular newsletter with updates etc
The insurance will remove the need for NCMD membership and their PL cover? Keith and I chatted re this a year ago and I think its now a good idea. The forum idea is good. Facebook is very popular as well? Hard to get members using a forum these days.

2.12 Survey Questions

Exploring membership options for an Institute of Detectorists

As part of a feasibility study exploring the development of the Institute of Detectorists the project team are looking at the goals and structure of the organisation.

The aim of the project is to put together a business plan which maps out how the Institute would be developed and set up. To that we are considering:

- What the Institute of Detectorists can offer members
- What the Institute's wider roles would be, including promoting detecting and protecting portable heritage
- How metal detecting can be further integrated into archaeological practice
- The interest in an Institute being established
- Any pros and cons associated with setting up the Institute
- What success looks like for the new Institute

The project

Q1. Have you heard about this project before?

Yes

Yes, via an Online forum

Yes, via a magazine article Magazine

Yes – I'm a member of the Project Focus Group

Yes – I'm a member of the Project Advisory Board

Yes – I'm a member of the Association for Detectorists Committee

No

Aims of the Institute

The Institute will provide a representative body for detectorists and detecting groups who are interested in best practice and working collaboratively with archaeologists. As an ambassador organisation, the Institute will promote the positive benefits that metal detecting can contribute to society, providing guidance and setting standards for an ethical and best practice approach to detecting.

When we talk about *responsible metal detecting*, we are referring to detecting which is undertaken in line with the Treasure Act 1996 and with guidance provided by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, endorsed by multiple organisations: *Code of practice for Responsible Metal Detecting in England and Wales 2017* (<https://finds.org.uk/getinvolved/guides/codeofpractice>).

This includes the use of detecting with minimal damage to archaeological deposits, such as exploring disturbed soils (eg ploughed agricultural soils) or detecting as part of an archaeological project. This might be undertaken independently (with landowner permission) or as one activity within a wider project, such as a historic landscape research project.

The Institute's mission will be to promote best practice, by providing training, support and guidance to detectorists keen to work within a set of guiding principles driven by public benefit.

Do you agree with the following statements?

- I support the idea of an Institute of Detectorists
- I am interested in supporting responsible metal detecting
- I agree that it is beneficial for detectorists to work collaboratively with archaeologists
- I have a good understanding of what responsible detecting is
- Any other thoughts on the role of the proposed Institute?

Key roles of the Institute will be developing and promoting best practice guidance, to maximise the information recovered whilst minimising damage to undisturbed archaeology.

- Q2. Do you think there is a need for training about responsible metal detecting?
- Q3. Do you think there is a need for training in legislation which is relevant to detecting (such as the Treasure Act or laws which are linked to Scheduled Monuments or Sites of Special Scientific Interest?)
- Q4. Would guidance on best practice for responsible detecting be useful to you?
- Q5. Do you think guidance of this sort would be useful to others?
- Q6. Any other thoughts on training and guidance?

Our aims and objectives

2.12.1 We think that the Institute has two big aims:

- A) *to represent the positive benefits that detecting can provide to heritage professionals and to the wider public.*
- B) *to provide a way for practitioners to demonstrate their skills and experience to others, supported by guidance and training.*

Q7. What do you think we should do?

- Promote responsible detecting for public benefit
- Promote detecting as a method to understand more about the past
- Promote the use of metal detectors on archaeological projects
- Represent responsible detectorists, promoting best practice to landowners, the heritage community and to government agencies
- Support detectorists who are keen to undertake the hobby responsibly
- Have a clear set of guiding principles which members can sign up to
- Provide a way that detectorists can demonstrate their skills and experience
- Offer a system of self-regulation, providing a quality stamp for responsible detectorists
- Work collaboratively with PAS, archaeologists and other heritage specialists to define and implement best practice guidance for detecting
- Anything to add? [FREE COMMENT BOX]

About being a member

2.12.2 The Institute will be a membership body which serves public interest – like a professional Institute or Chartered body. For us to understand what members want, we're interested in your opinion on the potential membership structure and benefits we could offer.

- Q8. The Institute could offer different types of membership – which of these examples would you be interested in?
- Supporter – a supporter of the organisation, interested in aims but not in a position to become a Practitioner or Registered Practitioner
 - Practitioner – an active detectorist, who has signed up to the guiding principles of responsible detecting
 - Registered Practitioner – an accredited detectorist, who has been assessed by the Institute and is registered as working within the guiding principles of responsible detecting
 - Organisational Member – open to groups, societies, or forums within the detectorist community who are keen to demonstrate support for the aims of the Institute
 - I'm not interested in being a member

- Any other suggestions? [FREE COMMENT BOX]

Q9. As a potential member of the Institute, which of the following membership benefits do you think the Institute should offer?

- Insurance offers
- Access to free training and learning resources
- Reduced rates for training workshops and accredited courses
- Tools and resources for members to use
- Step-by-step guidance for members, such as advice on cleaning and conservation of finds
- Access to an online forum for members
- An online *Directory of Detectorists* – a directory of practitioner members and accredited members
- Best practice case studies
- Advice on best practice for responsible detecting
- Structured support for skills development
- Access to exclusive content about new finds and discoveries
- FREE COMMENT BOX

About you

2.12.3 This section asks a bit more about you and your background – this is because it is useful for us to know more about people currently involved in detecting and take a look at the detecting community as a whole.

Q10. How long have you been detecting?

- I'm not a detectorist myself, but am interested in the hobby
- Just getting started (0 – 6 months)
- Some field experience (6 – 12 months)
- For a while (1 to 5 years)
- For a long time (over 5 years)

Q11. Are you a member of a detecting group or society?

- Yes, my local group
- What is your main reason for being a member of the organisation?
- Yes, a National body
- What is your main reason for being a member of the organisation?
- No
- Any comments?

Q12. How do you most regularly undertake metal detecting?

- I'm not an active detectorist
- As an individual
- Within a small group
- As part of a Detecting Group activity

- As part of an organised rally

Q13. Where are you based?

- (List UK regions)
- UK Postcode

Stay in touch

2.12.4 If you would be interested in hearing more about the Institute and this project, please provide your contact details here and we'll add you to the Association for Detectorists mailing list. Responses to the survey will be treated as anonymous.

- Your name
- Your email address

3 DETECTORISTS SURVEY

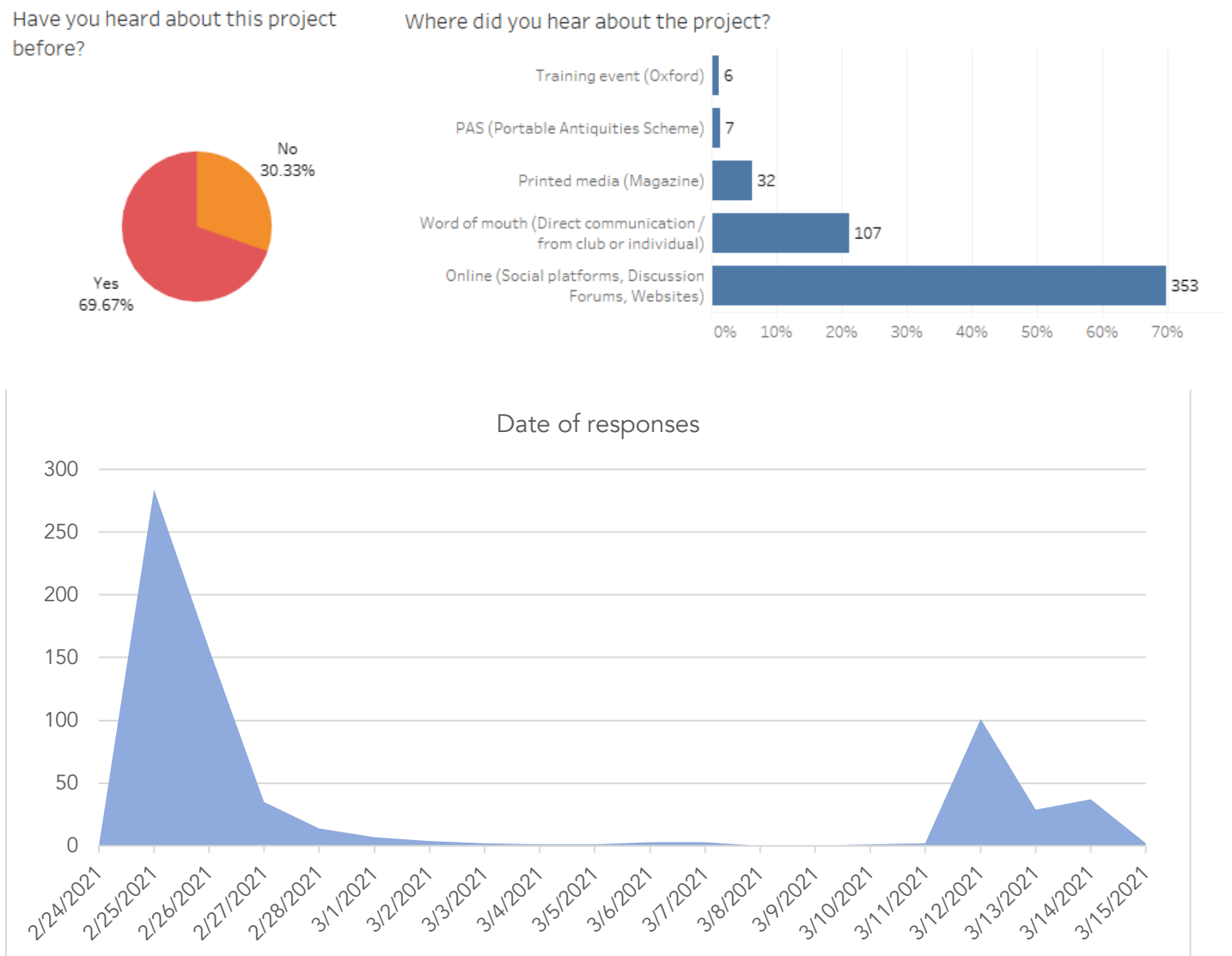
3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The membership survey was circulated widely in March 2021, following a pilot survey and workshop with Focus Group members in December 2020. The full list of questions asked are included at the end of this Section.

3.2 Survey Respondants

3.2.1 Over the course of two weeks, 684 individuals responded to the survey, approximately 50% of the group answering within the first three days of the survey (Figure 1). Of those responding, 70% had heard of the project prior to the survey, with over half highlighting online social platforms, discussion forums and web-based media as the place they had heard about the proposals for an Institute of Detectorists (Figure 1). Many survey participants were prompted via a negative promotional campaign via NCMD and through an article published by the detectorist blog, Detecting Finds, following an FOI request (Spencer, published 12/3/21, [*The Hidden Agenda*](#)). The latter has a visible impact, as seen in the graph below.

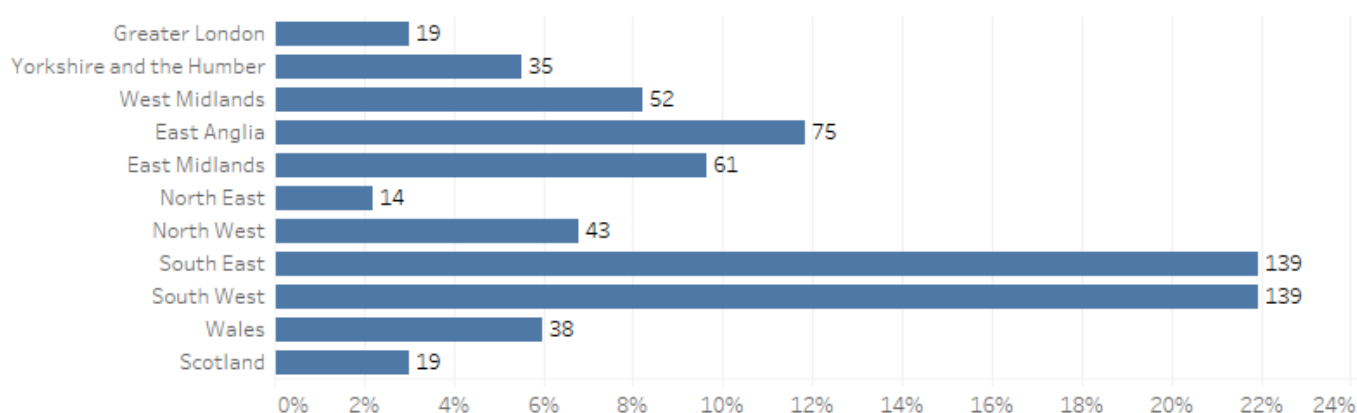
Figure 1 Responses: date and knowledge of project.



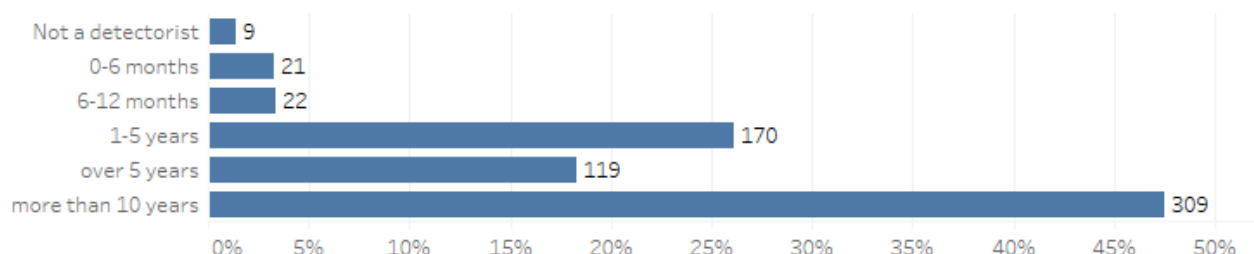
3.2.2 The location of survey participants showed a good overall distribution across England (see Figure 2), with the largest groups located in the South West (22%), the South East (22%), East Anglia (12%) and the East Midlands (10%). Representation was also included from Scotland (3%) and Wales (6%). Approximately 50% of those responding had been detecting for over 10 years (47.5%, n=309), and nearly 20% had over 5yrs experience (18.3%, n=119). A quarter had been detecting for between 1 and 5 years (26%, n=170) and a small number for under 1 year (6%, n=43). Only 9 responding were not from the detecting community, and 11 were not active. Most participants were a member of a National or Local detecting group, with only 5% stating they were not involved in either. In total, a third were a member of both National and local groups (33%, n=197), with smaller numbers being a member of a National body only (25%, n=147) or members of a Local Society (36%, n=217). Nearly 50% indicated that they most often undertake detecting as an individual (48%, n=484), with the remainder detecting regularly as part of a small informal group (22%, n=230), with a Detectorist Group (15%, n=148) or as part of an organised rally (13%, n=129).

Figure 2 Location and experience of survey participants

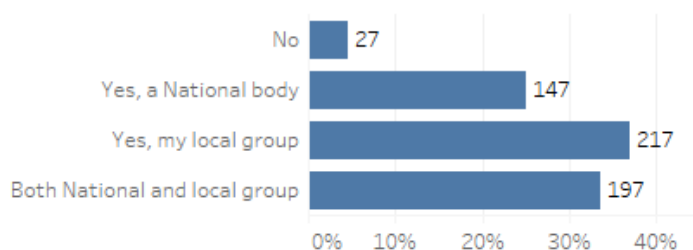
Where are you based?



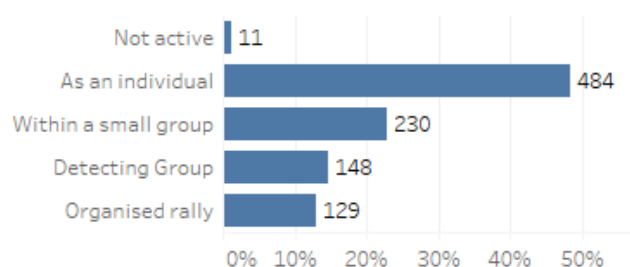
How long have you been detecting?



Are you a member of a detecting group or society?



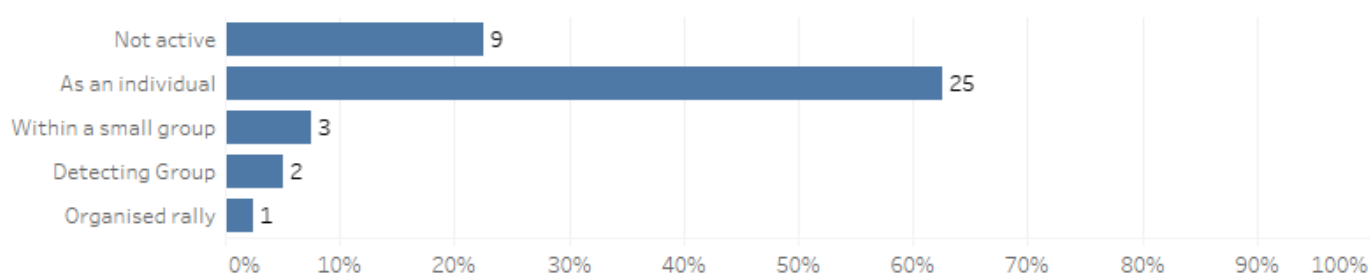
How do you most regularly undertake metal detecting?



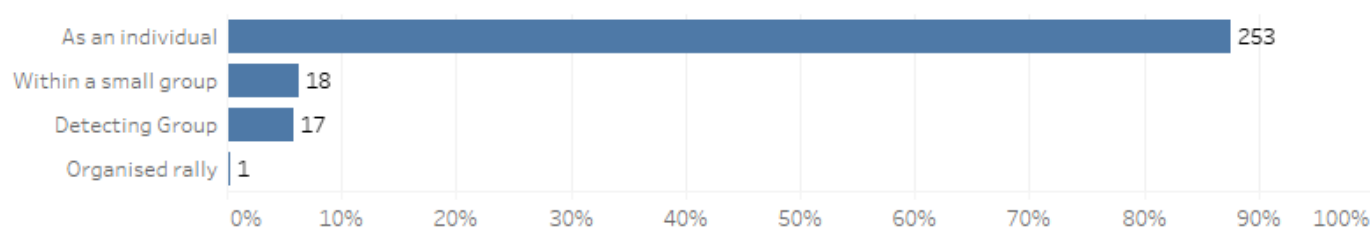
3.2.3 Further interrogation of the data provides some reflection of how individuals take part in detecting as they gain more experience, eg through comparison of how individuals who have been detecting for different lengths of time most regularly undertake the activity (Figure 3). For example, those with little experience (less than 1 year) are most likely to detect as an individual (62%, n=25), with fewer involved with a small informal group (7%, n=3), as a member of a detecting group (5%, n=2) or taking part in organised rallies (2%, n=1). Those active for between 1 and 10yrs, follow a similar general pattern although a far larger majority will more regularly detect as an individual (88%, n=253), with both small informal groups and organised Detecting groups the most regular option for 6%. Only one person in this group indicated that they most often detect as part of an organised rally. Finally, of those who have been detecting for over ten years, the proportion undertaking the activity as individuals is slightly lower (67%, n=196), and an increase is seen amongst more regularly taking part in group organised activities (15%) and rallies (2%, n=7). From this group of respondents, it appears that however experienced a detectorist is, they are most likely to undertake the activity as an individual. Those at the beginning of their journey show a similar pattern to detectorists with over 10 years' experience, with more people regularly engaging in group organised activities as their main mode for detecting.

Figure 3 How do you most regularly detect – focus on number of years active

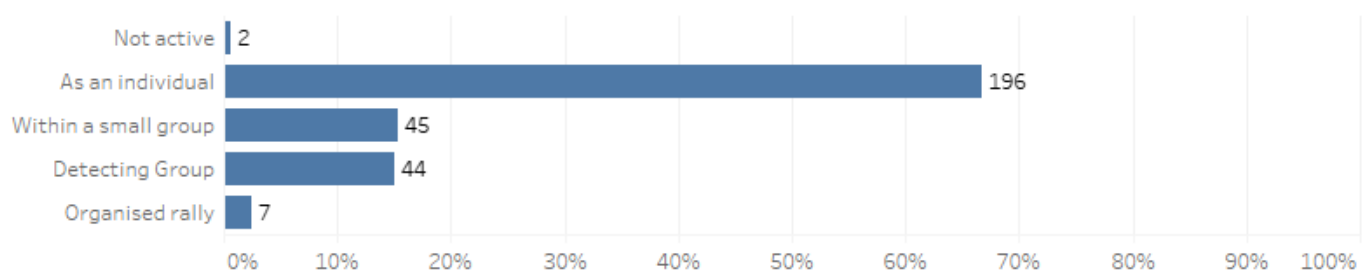
Detecting for up to 1 yr



Detecting from 1 to 10yrs



Detecting for 10yrs +

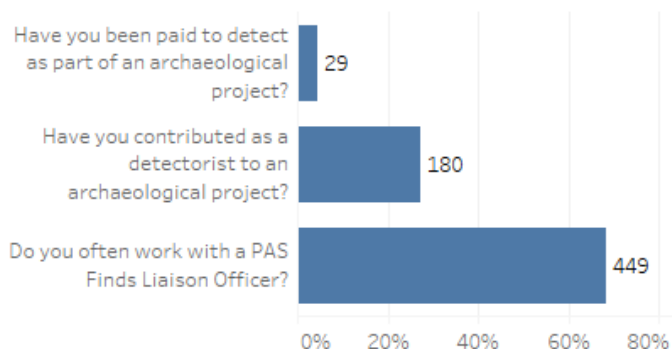


3.2.4 A large proportion of the responding group were often in contact with a PAS Finds Liaison Officer (95%, n=447), and 50% reported between 80 and 100% of finds recovered to the PAS (n=275) (see Figure 4). Just under a third of the group had worked collaboratively with archaeologists (27%, n=180) with a small proportion of those having been paid for their contribution to an archaeological project (4=<1%, n=2). Reviewing the same question against the length of experience the survey participants had, those who were in their first year of detecting all indicated they had been in contact with a PAS Finds Liaison officer (n=14) and regularly reported finds. Of those with between 1 and 10 years' experience almost all has been in contact with a PAS

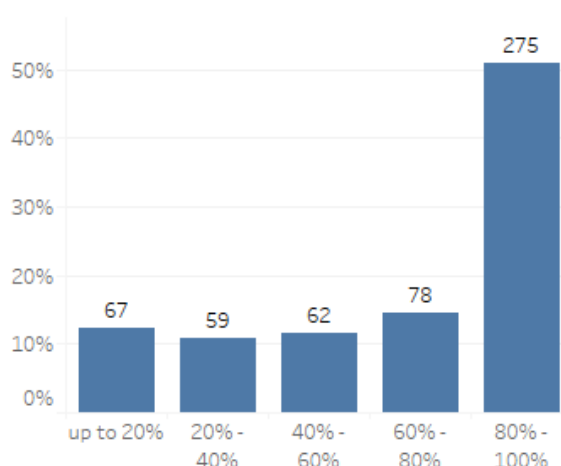
FLO (96%), and a small number had been involved with an archaeological team (3%, n=7). Only one of this group had been paid to undertake detecting work as part of an archaeological project team. Of those with more than 10 yrs experience, a larger proportion had worked within an archaeological team (7%, n=17) and most had regularly worked with a PAS FLO (93%, n=228).

Figure 4 Working with PAS and archaeologists

Working with archaeologists and PAS



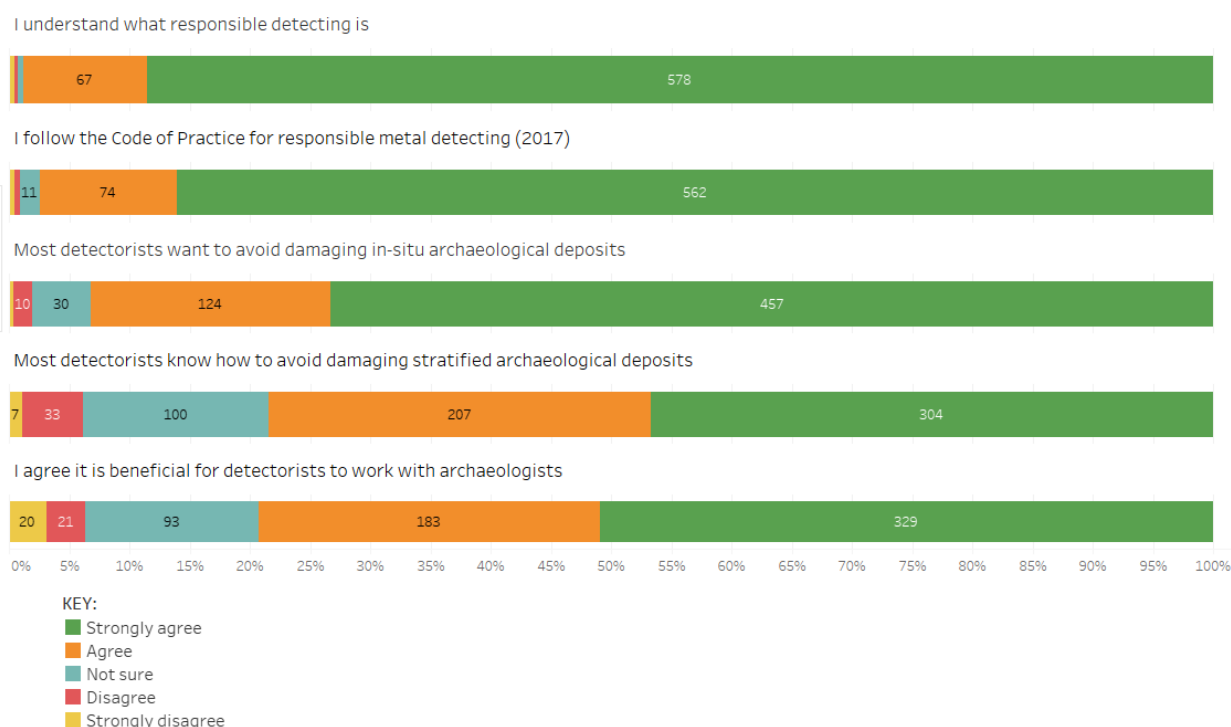
What percentage of finds do you report to PAS?



3.3 Responsible detecting and the role of the Institute

3.3.1 Most of the initial respondents completed this section of the survey, providing an indication of general viewpoints on responsible detecting. Of the group, nearly 90% strongly agreed they had a good understanding of what responsible detecting is (88% Strongly Agree, n=578), with a further 10% agreeing (n=67). Almost the same number believe that they follow the Code of Practice for responsible metal detecting 2017 (86% Strongly Agree, n=562; 11% Agree, n=74). Just over 90% also believe that most detectorists are keen to avoid damaging in-situ archaeological deposits (73% Strongly Agree, n=457; 20% Agree, n=124), and 77% agree that detectorists also know how to avoid disturbing archaeological deposits (47% Strongly Agree, n=304; 33% Agree, n=207). Finally, a large proportion of the group agreed that working with archaeologists was beneficial for the detecting community (51% Strongly Agree, n=329; 28% Agree, n=183).

Figure 3 Opinion: responsible detecting



- 3.3.2 Around 615 of the survey participants completed the question about the potential roles of the Institute, with around 46% of those indicating they were strongly opposed to the idea of setting up an Institute (n=297) and a further 70 (115) disagreed with the concept. However, despite the large number of those opposed to the proposal of an Institute, the responses around the functions and roles of the proposed organisation, and the relative importance of these to all individual stakeholders, were extremely informative.
- 3.3.3 Of all respondents, the most popular role for the Institute was to promote the use of metal detectors within archaeological projects (42% Strongly Agree, n=258; 22% Agree, n=136), with the role of a supportive organisation for those detectorists keen to take up the hobby following closely (40% Strongly Agree, n=248; 19% Agree, n=118). Other popular roles included working collaboratively with museums to encourage display of local finds (38% Strongly Agree, n=233; 22% Agree, n=138) and the promotion of detecting as a research tool to find out about the past (38% Strongly Agree, n=233; 22% Agree, n=137). The least popular was to provide a means to support detectorists in demonstrating their skills and experience, with around a third of total respondents supporting this role (17% Strongly Agree, n=106; 16% Agree, n=102).
- 3.3.4 Aside from the functions suggested, several common threads were seen within the free text responses when asked if any other roles would be of interest. Most common was the idea that an Institute could provide support for regional clubs as well as individuals (suggested by 40 individuals), that the Institute would take a key role in promotion of responsible detecting (suggested by 31), that the organisation might tackle unethical detecting (suggested by 23) and that an important role would be wider public engagement (suggested by 16).

Figure 4 Opinion: What should the Institute do?



3.4 Membership

3.4.1 Of the responding group, 633 individuals provided answers to questions about potential membership. Of that group, 385 (60%) stated that they would not be interested in joining the Institute as an individual member and 69 (11%) were unsure. In total, 173 (27%) individuals indicated an interest in membership of the Institute. Four main member categories were included in the survey, including accredited and non-accredited membership:

- Individual Supporter – an affiliated member grade open to anyone interested in responsible detecting
- Associate Detectorist – accredited and peer-reviewed membership for detectorists able to demonstrate knowledge and experience of responsible detecting.
- Member Detectorist – higher level of accredited, peer-reviewed membership, for experienced detectorists with a high level of competence and knowledge of responsible detecting.
- Registered Practitioner - an accredited grade for those keen on working within archaeological projects and landscape investigations, who wish to be added to a 'Directory of Registered Practitioners'

3.4.2 The non-accredited 'Supporting' category was of interest to 48 individuals, 38 of whom would be willing to pay a £10 annual subscription for membership and a further 7 would pay £20. Of the total population, 164 responded that they would pay £10 for membership at this level, and 26 would pay £20).

3.4.3 For accredited grades, 10 respondents felt they would join at Associate level, with a willingness to pay from £10 (2), £20 (3) and £50 (2) for an annual subscription. From the general population, 83 responded that they would pay £10 for membership at this level, 65 would pay £20, and 14 would pay £50. At Member level, 23 indicated they would be interested in joining, paying from £10 to £100, with most settling on £20 (7) or £50 (7). From the general population, 69 responded that they would pay £10 for membership at this level, 58 would pay £20, and 39 would pay £50.

3.4.4 Finally, at Registered Practitioner level, 98 individuals showed an interest in membership, with a willingness to pay between £10 and £100 per year. Most support was seen for £50 per annum (36), with 15 indicating that £60 would be reasonable and 13 suggesting £100 was possible. Of the general population, aside from £10, most opted for £50 per annum (56) with £20, £60 and £100 all supported by 25 individuals.

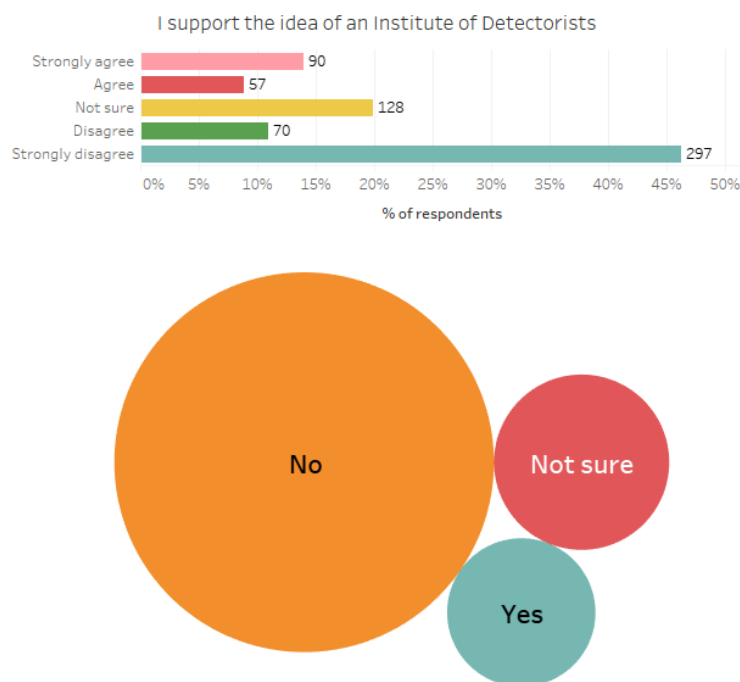
		Subscription level willing to pay per annum					
Potential member group	No of individuals	£10	£20	£50	£60	£80	£100
Supporting (Y)	48	38	7	0	0	0	0
Associate (Y)	10	2	3	2	0	0	0
Member (Y)	23	1	7	7	2	1	3
Registered Practitioner (Y)	98	10	14	36	15	2	13
General responding group							
Supporting	199	164	26	3	1	1	4
Associate	170	83	65	14	4	1	3
Member	183	69	58	39	7	3	7
Registered Practitioner	192	59	25	56	25	2	25

3.4.5 A final question asked if the Institute should consider supporting organisational membership. Of the general population who responded to the question (608), the majority (57%, n=350) felt this should not be included, whilst 26% (n=163) were unsure and 15% (n=95) were supportive. Of the group who are positive supporters of the Institute the numbers were significantly different, with 48% supporting organisational members (n=71), 36% were unsure (n=53) and 15% (n=23) were not supportive.

3.5 Do you support the idea of an Institute?

3.5.1 As indicated above, a large proportion of the responding group did not support the idea of an Institute of Detectorists. When asked directly, 46% strongly opposed the development of an Institute (n=297) with a further 11% (n=70) opposing the idea (see Figure 6). Several people stated they were unsure (20%, n=128) whilst positive support was indicated by approximately 25% of survey participants (14% Strongly Agreed, n=90; 9% Agreed, n=57). The bubbles below the bar chart indicate the response in a simpler, Yes, No or Not Sure, format.

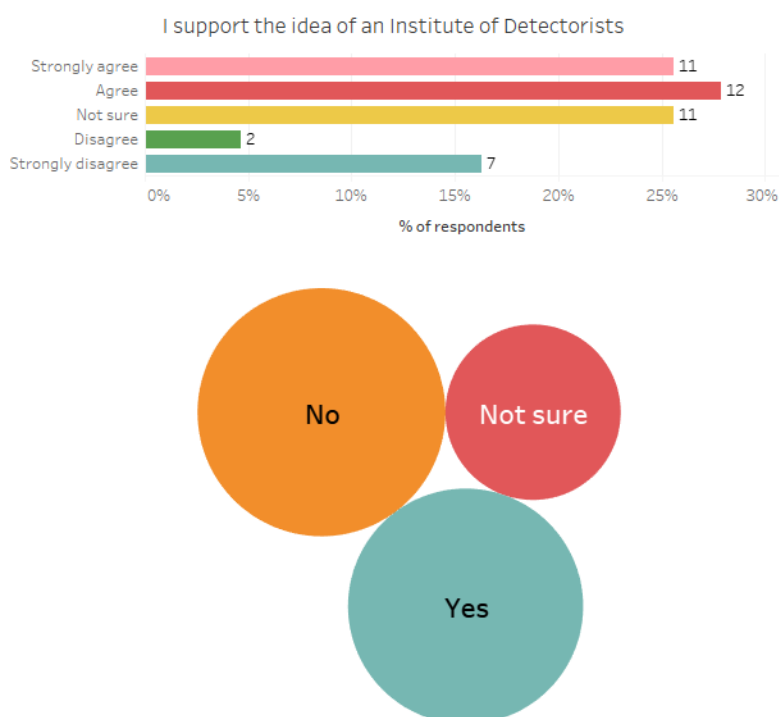
Figure 5 Supporting the Institute – total survey population



3.5.2 Of interest to the development of the Institute is an indication from survey data that those entering detecting are more supportive of the idea that those with more experience. Survey participants with 1 to 5 years' experience show a similar level of support as seen in the general population – and the same can be said for those with over 5 years and over 10 years' experience.

3.5.3 Detectorists with less than 12 months experience demonstrate a more positive response (Figure 8). In this group 50% were supportive (25% Strongly Agreed, n=11; 28% Agreed, n=12) with around 25% unsure (25%, n=11) and 20% opposed (16% Strongly Disagreed, n=7; 4% Disagreed, n=2) (see Figure 8). Those starting up are therefore likely to be more open to the Institute, and to the training, advice and support as provided to individuals wanting to learn more about responsible detecting methods.

Figure 6 Supporting the Institute – detecting for up to 12 months



3.7 Member benefits

3.7.1 Finally, a key consideration of any membership organisation is what benefits might be included within a subscription. As part of the survey, several options were provided, asking survey participants which they would be interested in seeing as part of a membership offer. Around 369 individuals responded to this section of the survey and were able to select more than one benefit.

3.7.2 The most popular, supported by around 80% of respondents, was the potential to have access to a free recording application which linked detectorist members to the PAS and Finds Liaison Officers. Guidance and training support were also popular, with around 70% of participants interested in Step-by-Step guidance and 65% in access to learning resources. Best practice information was also popular, with 63% interested in advice on responsible detecting and 50% keen on the idea of access to best practice case studies. Being in contact with other members was attractive to 55% of participants and hearing about new discoveries to 46%. An online Directory of accredited members was of interest to 40% of respondents and insurance offers to 53%. The table below provides the list of potential benefits in order of support, with the righthand column showing the number of individuals interested in the benefit.

A free recording app to assist in recording with PAS	299
Step-by-step guidance for members, such as advice on cleaning and conservation of finds	264
Access to free training and learning resources	243
Advice on best practice for responsible detecting	231
Access to an online forum for members	204
Insurance offers	198
Tools and resources for members to use	194
Best practice case studies	178
Access to exclusive content about new finds and discoveries	170
Reduced rates for training workshops and accredited courses	160
Structured support for skills development	157
An online Directory of Detectorists with a directory of accredited members	150

3.8 Survey Questions

Q1. Have you heard about this project before? If yes, where did you hear about the project?

Q2. What do you think about the idea of responsible detecting? How much do you agree with the following statements? (Answers: Multiple choice – Strongly agree / Agree / Not sure / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

- I support the idea of an Institute of Detectorists
- I have a good understanding of what responsible detecting is
- I agree with and follow the Code of practice for responsible metal detecting (2017)
- Most detectorists want to avoid any damage to archaeological deposits of sites
- Most detectorists know how to avoid damaging stratified archaeological deposits
- I agree that it is beneficial for detectorists to work collaboratively with archaeologists

Q3. What do you think the Institute should do? (Answers: Multiple choice – Strongly agree / Agree / Not sure / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

- Support detectorists who are keen to undertake the hobby responsibly
- Develop training and education resources
- Endorse relevant training provided by others
- Have a clear set of guiding principles which members can sign up to
- Provide a way that detectorists can demonstrate their skills and experience
- Offer a system of self-regulation, providing a quality stamp for responsible detectorists
- Represent responsible detectorists, promoting best practice to landowners, the heritage community and to government agencies
- Promote responsible detecting for public benefit
- Promote detecting as a method to understand more about the past
- Promote the use of metal detectors on archaeological projects
- Promote conservation-led approaches for non-stratified topsoil finds from archaeological sites
- Work collaboratively with PAS, archaeologists and other heritage specialists to define and implement best practice guidance for detecting
- Work collaboratively with museums to encourage display of local finds

Q4 Is there anything you would like the Institute to do that is not on the list? Please include any other comments about the role of the Institute here. (Answer: Free text)

Q5 Tell us more! Whether you support the idea of an Institute or not, please share any thoughts here... (Answer: Free text)

Q6 As a potential member of the Institute, which of the following membership benefits do you think the Institute should offer? (Answer: checkboxes)

- Insurance offers
- Access to free training and learning resources
- Reduced rates for training workshops and accredited courses
- Tools and resources for members to use
- A free recording app to assist in recording with PAS
- Step-by-step guidance for members, such as advice on cleaning and conservation of finds
- Access to an online forum for members
- An online Directory of Detectorists – a directory of accredited members
- Best practice case studies
- Advice on best practice for responsible detecting
- Structured support for skills development
- Access to exclusive content about new finds and discoveries

Q7 The Institute could offer different types Membership of Individuals – which of these examples would you be interested in? (Answer: Multiple Choice)

- Individual Supporter – an affiliated member grade open to anyone interested in responsible detecting
- Associate Detectorist – accredited and peer-reviewed membership for detectorists able to demonstrate knowledge and experience of responsible detecting.
- Member Detectorist – higher level of accredited, peer-reviewed membership, for experienced detectorists with a high level of competence and knowledge of responsible detecting.
- Registered Practitioner - an accredited grade for those keen on working within archaeological projects and landscape investigations, who wish to be added to a 'Directory of Registered Practitioners'
- Not sure
- I'm not interested in being a member

Q8 To help recognition for detectorists and support collaboration with other groups (such as archaeologists or community heritage groups), we are considering having a Directory of Registered Practitioners for some accredited members. Would you be interested in that? (Answer: Multiple Choice)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q9 What would you be willing to pay for Individual Membership at the different grades suggested? (Answer: Checkboxes)

- Individual Supporter – £10 / £20 / £50 / £60 / £80 / £100
- Associate Detectorist – £10 / £20 / £50 / £60 / £80 / £100
- Member Detectorist – £10 / £20 / £50 / £60 / £80 / £100
- Registered Practitioner - £10 / £20 / £50 / £60 / £80 / £100

Q10 The Institute could also offer Organisational Memberships – do you think this is a good idea? (Answer: Multiple Choice)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q11 Do you have any other membership suggestions or ideas about benefits you think we should offer? (Answer: Free text)

Q12 How long have you been detecting? (Answer: Multiple Choice)

- I'm not a detectorist myself, but am interested in the hobby
- Just getting started (0 – 6 months)
- Some field experience (6 – 12 months)
- For a while (1 to 5 years)
- For a long time (over 5 years)
- For over a decade (more than 10 years)

Q12 How do you most regularly undertake metal detecting? (Answer: Checkboxes)

- I'm not an active detectorist
- As an individual
- Within a small group
- As part of a Detecting Group activity
- As part of an organised rally

Q13 Are you a member of a detecting group or society? (Answer: Checkboxes)

- Yes, my local group
- Yes, a National body

Q14 What do you see as the benefits of being part of a regional and / or national group (please state which!)? (Answer: Free text)

Q15 Experience of working with others (Answer: Checkboxes)

- Do you often communicate or work directly with PAS Finds Liaison Officers?
- Have you contributed as a detectorist to an archaeological project?
- Have you undertaken paid detecting work as part of an archaeological project?

Q16 What percentage of finds do you report to PAS? (Answer: Scale from 0% to 100%)

Q17 What are your experiences of working with other groups, such as archaeologists (Answer: Free text)

Q18 Where are you based? (Answer: UK Regions)

Q19 Contact details

Q20 Would you be happy for us to contact you about this survey?

Q21 Are you happy for us to add you to the Association for Detectorists mailing list?