

CCL SURVEY RESULTS BIGGEST CHALLENGES

SEPTEMBER 2026



CONTEMPORARY
CLUB LEADERSHIP

Throughout our ten years supporting the industry, CCL has regularly surveyed golf clubs to identify what current trends challenges our Club Managers are facing.

This year we have seen a very clear indication that whilst Clubs are continuing to benefit from the spotlight that lock-down placed on the joys of playing golf, those golfers are starting to drift away again, leaving more clubs than ever fearing for their longer term survival.

You should not be suffering alone with this challenge, particularly when so many well-intentioned Board Members are experience rich but theory poor when it comes to the unique industry in which we work. In no other field do the customers set the price, and ultimately, someone needs to shine a spotlight on how to plot your way through that short-term thinking.

Here are a list of the main challenges we have seen come through the annual survey. If you would like to discuss any of them, don't hesitate to get in touch. If we can't help with your specific challenge, we will definitely know a "man that can".

Kevin

Top recurring challenges facing Managers & their Clubs for 2027

1. Water & Irrigation

Concerns included water security, irrigation investment, water storage, drought resilience and sustainability.

2. Capital Investment & Funding

Clubs are struggling to fund major projects such as irrigation systems, reservoirs, machinery replacement, clubhouse improvements and other infrastructure.

3. Membership Retention & Recruitment

Many clubs highlighted retaining existing members, attracting new ones, managing churn and handling subscription renewals.

4. Cost Pressures & Inflation

Rising labour costs, utilities, machinery costs, taxes and general inflation were repeatedly cited.

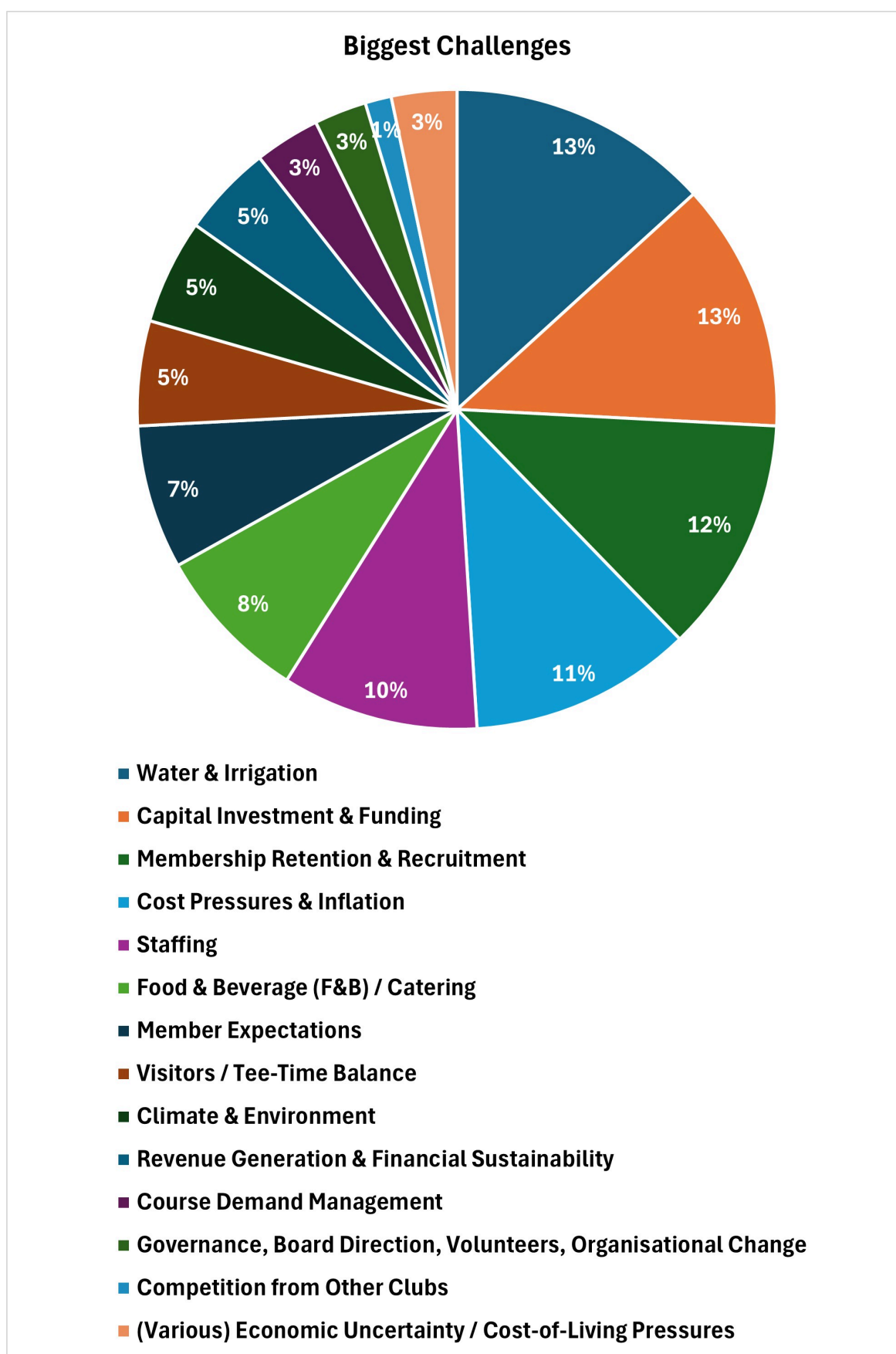
5. Staffing

Recruitment of greenkeepers, chefs and other staff, together with wage increases and employment legislation changes, were major concerns.

6. F&B / Catering

Catering performance, profitability and member satisfaction emerged as one of the most frequently discussed operational challenges.

Challenge Theme	
Water supply, irrigation, water resilience, drought management	20
Capital investment, major projects, funding reserves, raising capital	19
Membership retention, recruitment, churn, renewals	18
Rising costs, inflation, cashflow, overheads, utility costs	17
Staff recruitment, retention, wages, employment law changes	15
Food & Beverage (F&B), catering profitability, member satisfaction	12
Member expectations, fee increases, entitlement, value perception	11
Visitor golf / society business / tee-time balance	8
Climate change, extreme weather, coastal erosion	8
Revenue generation and financial sustainability	7
Tee-time access and course demand management	5
Governance, board direction, volunteers, organisational change	4
Competition from other clubs	2
Economic uncertainty / cost-of-living pressures	5





Two Golf Club Captains walk into a golf club bar.....

It sounds like the start of a joke doesn't it, but think for a minute about that scenario.

Those two Club Captains would compare experiences, and inevitably this would turn to comparing performance at their respective clubs.

But what exactly would they compare? The price of their open days, the cost of fish and chips, free coffee refills, a member's guest rate or perhaps the number of greenkeepers they employ? They may return to their respective clubs with a new vision of what good looks like, and how they may want to be more like the club down the road.

In reality, none of these topics discussed truly evaluate the financial performance at their clubs, and until now our industry has not helped Office Bearers to evaluate performance in a business-like manner. This has often led to much wasted time around the board table and I am sure much frustration amongst those who strive to run their clubs in a more business-like fashion.

CCL has developed a common set of metrics, financial indicators and critical industry ratios that are specific to golf that we would like to introduce to you.

The CCL Barometer Report now includes data from more than 300 UK private members clubs. This Barometer will help you and your fellow decision-makers to analyse and compare the right things and put you in the driving seat when it comes to informed decision making.

We look forward to supporting you in your analysis of your club's performance and answering any questions you may have.

The report is personalised to your club and provides illuminating insight in to a manageable number of key performance indicators and includes :

- + The accounts of over 300 UK private member golf clubs
- + Three tiers of analysis according to club size
- + Over 50 KPIs to aid your decision making
- + A written report for your board
- + A virtual (Zoom) meeting with your board

All for £750 (+VAT)

Take this opportunity to move your club from emotional decision making to data driven decision making, and in doing so establish yourself as the person with the greatest knowledge of the industry in your boardroom. Call or email Kevin: 07398 155 908 / kevin@ccl.services

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