Lincoln Film Society Membership Survey 2019

The response level was much higher than the norm for user surveys at 37%, being 131 of 350 members. The membership are generally satisfied with things as they stand, but this does not mean that they don’t wish or seek improvement and some changes.

1. **Films**

Members are happy that LFS provides access to films that they wouldn’t normally be able to see. This is the reason they are members and don’t want LFS to change to offering more mainstream or cult films during the main season.

A significant number have commented upon the programming – most particularly in relation to the tonal mix and the country of origin – and wish for the season to include a higher proportion of lighter films and more from outside Western Europe.

A small number of comments relate to a lack of opportunity (as they see it) to have an impact on the programming. There are some calls for a suggestion box for members and for members to be able to vote on one film selection (i.e. a member’s choice).

There was no material support for splitting the season or changing the mix of films shown but there was strong support for having a summer season. However, the commentary does indicate some confusion as to whether this would be part of the main membership (and therefore season) or a separate thing.

**Action to be taken**

* The Programing Committee will look beyond the ICO screenings (which are being dominated by US/Euro indie films) to seek a more even mix of light/dark films and more non-European films.
* The Programming Committee will be debating the mechanics of leaving one slot in the 2019/20 season open for a member’s choice of a new film from a selected short list and that the “classic” is a members’ choice.
* An ad hoc sub-committee has been constituted to explore putting on a summer season of four films in June/July 2019.
1. **Screening Nights**

Members report positively on the comfort, convenience and general atmosphere at The Venue. Of particular note is the confidence that some female members have expressed at being able to attend alone.

Some commentary relates to noise, with some adverse comments on the permitting of food and drink into the screenings. This is not something LFS can/should control (it flows from The Venue’s policies).

There are a number of comments relating to the raffle which mainly express concern at the impact on the time the film screening starts. One adverse comment related to the occasional queue which gathers at the front entrance, due to the siting of the raffle.

The most significant commentary relates to the starting time of the film. There is frustration at the start time being advertised as 7:30, when that is actually the start point for the raffle/announcements.

Another issue mentioned several times is the use of sub-titles for English language films, both for the hard of hearing and for clarity.

Suggestions have been received about the ability of members to reserve seats, which flows from a small concern that LFS is becoming “too popular”.

**Action to be taken**

* LFS will gradually move towards asking members to take their seats by 7.20, using the period 7:20 to 7:30 to perform the raffle and make announcements, and for the sale of the temporary members’ tickets. This to be fully in place for the start of 2019//20 season.
* The full committee will debate the introduction of sub-titles for English language films.
1. **Organisation**

There is an undercurrent of confusion and mystification relating to the committee – how it is selected, what it does, who they are. This includes why there is reserved seating.

There were two suggestions about having an under-18s membership.

Value for money was identified as a positive, with the very low price recognised, and some people expressing surprise at how low it is.

There was support for wider community activity and the return of social events, but there were clear questions surrounding the need for LFS to be a charity.

**Action to be taken**

* To update the website to describe what the committee does and how it is elected; what the sub-committees do and who is in each; and consideration for lanyards/badges for committee members for visibility at screenings.
* To consider introducing an under-18 membership category
* Committee to consider introduction of one special film and one social event per season outside the main programme
* LFS will away from reliance on pre-film announcement for communication with members and make greater use of notices on the website, in the pre-film display and weekly email.
1. **External**

Concern about the range offered at the bar (no food, as some come directly from work) and its layout.

A suggestion was made for a meal deal on film nights (NB this can be positively explored as the Refectory is going to experiment with late opening on Friday. It is out of our control, but we can act as facilitators).

There is some dissatisfaction with the sound quality at The Venue, and the temperature/climate.

**Action to be taken**

* To feed back to The Venue in the quarterly liaison meetings.
* To communicate any changes to members via email, website and pre-film display