More than research intermediaries: A descriptive study of the impact and value of learned societies in the UK Social Sciences

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Abstract

The role of learned societies, mutual organisations of scholars with a common interest in an academic discipline or research field, is a poorly understood part of the ecosystem for knowledge exchange and dissemination. As such, that role is vulnerable to the unintended consequences of actions by other institutions within this ecosystem. This paper reports a study of the social science learned societies operating in the UK in 2012/13. It describes their current activities and sustaining revenue streams, develops a methodology for documenting these, and establishes a baseline for future work to assess the impact of changes in their organisational environment.

1. Introduction

The role of learned societies, mutual organisations of scholars with a common interest in an academic discipline or research field, is a poorly understood part of the ecosystem for knowledge exchange and dissemination. As such, that role is vulnerable to the unintended consequences of actions by other institutions within this ecosystem. This paper reports a study of the social science learned societies operating in the UK in 2012/13. It describes their current activities and sustaining revenue streams, develops a methodology for documenting these, and establishes a baseline for future work to assess the impact of changes in their organisational environment.

2. Background

Learned societies are a long-established part of the UK intellectual landscape. The Royal Society was founded in 1660. It is the prototype for all subsequent organisations of this kind. The Society's founders created an institutional structure through which a dispersed group of scholars in the natural sciences could come together and form a community for the purpose of sharing and testing ideas, disseminating those that were considered to be valid, and promoting the general development of the field. The model was later extended to the humanities and social sciences. What are now the Royal Statistical and Economic Societies, for example, were founded in 1834 and 1890, and the British Academy in 1902.

Contemporary societies maintain the same *raison d'être*. Waltham (2008) notes that almost all declare a mission to promote understanding in their respective fields, to encourage interaction between people, and to use the resulting knowledge for the common good. As Hopkins (2011) notes:

> 'Modern learned societies exist to promote an academic discipline, sub-discipline or field. They do this through encouraging research, providing a forum for exchange and the means for research to be disseminated. They are not-for-profit organisations that do not exist primarily for the benefit or prestige of their members and are highly accessible to interested individuals and groups.'

The role of learned societies within the knowledge exchange and dissemination ecosystem has, however, received relatively little attention from researchers. There are a few case

studies of individual societies (American Chemical Society: Strauss and Rainwater 2011; British Sociological Society: Platt, 2002; Regional Studies Association: Hopkins, 2011; Royal Society of New Zealand: McCarthy and Rands, 2013) and cross-sectional studies (learned societies in the UK social sciences: Benyon and David, 2008; all disciplines in the UK: Johnson and Fosci, 2015). These studies highlight the evolving role of learned societies, driven both by their own internal dynamics and by the external environment in which they operate.

One recent major external change is the policy shift by other ecosystem actors, particularly governments and some major funders, to favour Open Access (OA) publishing. Traditionally, learned societies published scholarly journals via a subscription funding model. These subscriptions were both individual, generally through the society membership fee, and institutional, from the library budgets of universities and other research organisations. Over the last fifty years, changes in the technology and economics of journal publishing have led all but the largest societies to partner with one or other of a small number of international publishing companies. Institutional subscribers now tend to pay through licensing arrangements for access to aggregations of the journal titles owned or managed by a particular publisher (Houghton and Oppenheim, 2010). Open access shifts the basis of funding from journal users to authors, their employing organisations, their research funders or philanthropic sponsors. In principle, all would-be users then have access to content without charge. This alternative funding model has been particularly promoted by the UK and Dutch governments, the European Union and the Wellcome Trust. It has also been taken up by the US government. A number of reports and publications have drawn attention to the potential risks for learned societies if journal access ceases to become a specific membership benefit (e.g. Waltham, 2010; Bennett, 2013; Johnson and Fosci, 2015).[1]

Our investigation was prompted by the concerns of UK learned societies in the social sciences about the implications of their government's intention to drive a switch to OA publication models for academic journals. These concerns were acknowledged in the first report (Finch, 2012) from a government working group chaired by Dame Janet Finch, and emphasized in their second report (Finch, 2013):

> 'The potential damage to learned societies that may result from moves to OA – by whatever route – remains a matter of great concern to the Group; and it is

> disappointing that many commentators, including the Commons BIS Committee, have ignored this issue (para 5.3).'

Some societies depend on revenue from journal publication for a substantial part of their income. As the 2013 Finch Report notes:

> 'Publishing and communicating the results of research are central to the missions of most societies. They disseminate high-quality research through journals that are often among the leading international publications in their fields. Journals have also come to play a key role in providing the surpluses that sustain societies' core activities; many societies depend heavily on their overall publication revenues – often drawn in the main from overseas subscriptions, which are thus supporting UK research. Concerns about the risks to these revenues, and to the sustainability of their journals, have made some societies reluctant to embrace OA (para 5.2).'

The present paper does not discuss the general justifications for OA or the economic models developed to assess the impact of the redistribution of publication costs: these are extensively covered elsewhere (e.g. Houghton and Oppenheim (2010)). As an acknowledged major risk, however, OA is a trigger for clarifying the role of learned societies in the ecosystem for knowledge exchange and dissemination and how this is presently resourced.

The study reported here was, then, commissioned by the UK Academy of Social Sciences (AcSS), with funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), in order to better understand the activities of learned societies in the social sciences and the revenue streams that support them. The activities are considered under two broad headings: their impact in terms of public benefit and their impact on the promotion of the discipline.

3. Evaluating Impact and Value

The team reviewed a number of approaches to the evaluation of the impact and value of social science research, particularly those developed by ESRC in a series of reports between 2009 and 2013 (e.g. ESRC Evaluation Committee, 2009). These have informed the direction taken here but are not directly applicable because learned societies are not primarily in the business of generating research. Societies do not produce new knowledge so much as

promote the dissemination and exchange of knowledge, including new knowledge, from the research efforts of others. This places them as 'intermediaries' within the ESRC research impact framework (ESRC Evaluation Committee, 2009). This is also the view taken by Bastow et al. (2014: 54-7) in their discussion of the general impact of the social sciences. Moreover, learned societies have a variety of other functions in representing the discipline for public and member benefit that are not captured by a narrow approach to knowledge exchange. Our approach is, then, more substantially influenced by the UK Cabinet Office (Nicholls et al., 2009) work on the Social Return on Investment (SROI). This has encouraged us to attempt to explore impact and value through an investigation of counterfactuals – what would have happened without this activity? – and attribution – how much of this impact can be attributed to this specific activity? It also acknowledges the potential contribution of voluntary or non-market actions.

Both ESRC and SROI approaches underline the conceptual and methodological difficulties of producing simple metrics for impact and value. Any purely quantitative evaluation must always be reported with a large degree of caution. There are three main reasons for this: first, research-policy interaction is complex and non-linear (e.g. Weiss, 1982); second, the difficulty of establishing the counterfactual state and the attribution of causality; third, the lack of tools and prospective data capture systems adequately to measure the impact. Taken together, these factors introduce potentially large sources of error into quantitative assessments. Qualitative assessments are likely to be more fruitful, both in terms of evaluating impact and in gaining insights into the processes of impact and value generation. As the recent study of the impact of social sciences in the UK, led by Patrick Dunleavy from the London School of Economics, has noted, learned societies are among a substantial number of bodies that work to influence policy and practice and, in turn, generate wider social and economic value through their activities (Bastow et al. 2014). In common with researchers and research organisations, they face the key challenges of attribution and the counterfactual when attempting to assess their impact. They also have very limited data capture resources. Nevertheless, some activities by learned societies may be amenable to estimates of economic value. A few outputs can have a market value or a suitable proxy can be identified.

In describing learned societies primarily as intermediaries, this is not to downplay their contribution in bringing different interests together. Linkages and connections are

increasingly seen to be critical to the success of knowledge-based organizations. They are, though, difficult to cultivate within the bureaucratic structures that characterize many contemporary UK universities.

4. Design and Methods

The diversity of the sector has been a major challenge for this research. A full list of the 44 learned societies in the social sciences identified and invited to participate in the study can be found in Appendix 1. They vary from small organisations with membership in the low hundreds, sustained almost exclusively by individual subscriptions and run entirely by voluntary effort, to large organisations with membership in the tens of thousands, diverse income streams and substantial professional staffing. At the lower end, societies are unincorporated third sector 'associations' often focussing on a sub-discipline or specific field of interest, many with incomes of less than £50,000 per annum. At the higher end, they are substantial enterprises, mostly operating as charities regulated by the Charities Commission.

Societies have different histories but share the fundamental characteristics of mutual organisations, namely that their design and operation reflect the concerns and practices of their members to a high degree. There are few pressures towards what organisation theorists call isomorphism, the tendency of enterprises operating in the same sector to converge on a similar structural model (Powell and DiMaggio 1991). There are no standard quantitative performance indicators. The ability of many learned societies to produce these would be severely constrained by the transaction costs involved in doing so. For the most part, they only collect and analyse information about their activities to the extent that is useful for their own purposes and in a form relevant to these. The main exception is in financial reporting. Here, the requirements of the Charities Commission (2005) impose a relatively standard form of accounts on those societies that have the legal status of charities, although there is scope for variation in the detail of income and expenditure streams.[2] While the Charities Commission requires evidence of public benefit to be presented in annual reports to sustain that legal status, it does not prescribe the form that this should take. Mostly, learned societies provide qualitative rather than quantitative evidence of compliance, which appears to satisfy the regulator. Publication contracts also generate relatively standard annual reports from publishers but the team's access to these was restricted by confidentiality agreements.

A mixed method, multiple-case design study (Yin, 2013) was undertaken to provide a mainly descriptive analysis of the activities and income streams of the learned societies. Qualitative data collection included a mixture of randomized and key informant recorded interviews (Chief Executive Officer or Director level from 20 different societies). Documents such as annual reports and/or financial returns were acquired from the public domain, supplemented with any other internal documents volunteered by the organisations, for subsequent analysis. For the interviews a semi-structured interview schedule was devised. This focussed on the main activities of the society (self-selected by each interviewee) in terms of input, process, outcomes and impact, consistent with the SROI method. From the interviews, a survey tool was designed for online completion by the remainder of the societies. This reflected the same SROI headings to describe societies' activities as used in the interviews. It was considered that this approach would minimize the overall administrative burden on the sector and ensure that a reasonably homogenous data set was secured. The aggregated findings would be validated by the respondents, either through review of a draft report or through participation in a collective feedback meeting, as convenient for the society's representatives. Given the diversity of learned societies the survey tool had to be designed at a high level of generality. Many societies found this difficult to interpret and their completion of the form had to be supported or replaced by additional telephone interviews.

The main source of quantitative data was the societies' annual/financial returns as part of the reporting requirements for registered charities. From pilot work, it was apparent that the societies could not generally provide the level of quantitative detail required by the SROI method for specific activities. Thus, the majority of the estimates of value and impact of their activities presented below are descriptive and/or qualitative in nature. These were derived from notes made during the recorded interviews supplemented with examples of value and impact from the documentation review. The cases and examples were then grouped across the societies following a thematic analysis of the material. This gave rise to commonly observed categories of activities such as 'Schools outreach and education', 'Conferences' etc. as presented in the results section.

At least one source of information (annual report, interview or survey) was available for 40 out of the 44 societies, representing 90.9% coverage. The overwhelming majority of the financial and activity data included in this report relates to 2012 (data available in the public domain from 2013). All societies were offered two opportunities to review and comment on

drafts of the findings. This process revealed some discrepancies between websites, annual reports and interview data, which we have done our best to reconcile – and to which societies were alerted.

The results section presents a small selection of examples (from the 81 collected) to demonstrate the range of activities that societies are involved in. We have tried to ensure that these are not restricted to the larger or best documented societies but the paper would be unreasonably long if we included every example of every type of activity that we have been able to identify. The fact that a particular society is not reported as engaging in an activity does not mean that it is not doing so, merely that this is a common activity and we have chosen to use another example.

5. Results

Overview of the sector and the principal revenue streams

This section describes the main sources from which learned societies derive their income and discusses the different patterns that can be observed, depending mainly on the scale of operation and on whether the society is working in a field where there are both accredited practitioners and academics in membership.

Collectively, the societies record just over 161,000 members, although some individuals will be members of more than one society. To put this in context, Bastow et al. (2014: 8) estimate that UK universities employed around 35,000 academic and research staff in the social sciences in 2010-11. The majority of societies report stable or steady increases in membership numbers over the 5 year period 2008-2012.

Data from annual financial returns shows that the societies generated approximately £40.8m income during 2012. Figure 1 shows a box plot of the data available for analysis. The annual income ranges from approximately £4,500 to £11.8M. The median income value is £210,515 with the interquartile range £591,058 (£51,723 to £642,781). The distribution of income per annum across the societies is positively skewed. This is best illustrated by considering the societies with highest 5 incomes, each one over £2m: combined they received £30.8M and account for 75.6% of the total income.

[Figure 1 near here]

The total level of income has remained fairly steady over the 5 year period, at a level between £40m and £43m. Analysis of 2012 income by 3 commonly occurring categories, namely Publications, Conferences and Membership subscriptions reveal that the largest source of income for the sector is from Membership subscriptions (45.4%, £18.5M), followed by Publishing (17.5%, £7.1M) and conferences (7.0%, £2.8M).

Variations in sources of income by scale of organisation are explored by further analysis of the financial return data. Income data reported under the 3 commonly occurring categories (Publications, Conferences and Membership subscriptions) are presented below for different groups of society. Significant 'other' sources of income are also presented. The listed activities (presented in Tables 1 to 3) account for the large majority of total income per society (minimum 78.5%, maximum 100%, mean 92.3%). The grouping reported below is derived from a *post-hoc* analysis of the data.

Group 1: Income > £4M

The societies with incomes over £4m derive the largest proportion of their income from membership subscriptions (Table 1). Most of these societies also serve a practitioner community where membership is a professional requirement: as Bastow et al. (2014: 276) observe, membership in academic-oriented societies tends to be treated as decidedly optional, with important implications for their ability to raise revenue from subscriptions.

[Table 1 near here]

Group 2: Income £200K to £2.2M

The majority of the 16 mid to upper-income societies (Group 2, Table 2) have significant (> 60%) income from two or more of the highlighted activities. Publishing contributes over 40% of income in 11 out of the 16 societies in this group.

[Table 2 near here]

Group 3: Income less than £200k

Nine of the 13 societies with incomes less than £200K (Group 3, Table 3) have significant (> 60%) income from just one of the highlighted activities. Only 2 societies in the group have significant income from publishing activities. Information was not available in 5 cases.

[Table 3 near here]

From the information available on 40 societies, the sector employed at least 415 staff in 2012. It was not possible to estimate the whole time equivalency. In common with other non-profit organisations and sectors, most learned societies benefit hugely from volunteer input. However, as the reporting of voluntary input is not required in annual financial statements, its value often remains unquantified. In this study some estimates of volunteer time were provided by a small number of societies. We have calculated an estimate of the value of this time using a cost of time method (Mook et al., 2009).

For learned societies, volunteer effort typically takes the form of academics' time given for editorial duties and participation in committee meetings, and event or conference organisation. Six societies provided estimates of volunteer input to these activities. A total of 7,163.75 hours were reported. To produce a monetary value, the total number of hours is multiplied by a cost of time figure. For this purpose we have used the 2012 UK median hourly wage of £11.21 (Office for National Statistics, 2012), as is standard practice in such calculations. The total value (cost of time) for the volunteer input is estimated to be £80,306. This is a lower bound estimate, given that much of the reported voluntary input was by senior academics with higher than average hourly wage rates. A second calculation based on the median hourly wage for 'higher education teaching professionals' of £23.56 (Office for National Statistics, 2012) yields a cost of time value for the 7,163.75 hours at £168,142. This figure is an upper bound because a significant amount of volunteer effort is provided by postgraduate and early career researchers whose wage rate would be much lower. Although reporting of volunteer input is uncommon in accounting statements, Mook et al. (2009) recommend that it should be detailed as both as an income and an expenditure (see Mook et al. for the rationale). This is useful as it enables calculations of the percentage contribution of volunteer input to income and expenditure and hence provides context. Applying the method to the data from 6 societies, volunteer input contributed on average 3.8% to income and 4.0%

to expenditure. These typical figures rose to represent 6.6% of income and 5.1% of expenditure for the higher hourly rate calculation.

In addition to the above data, one society in the >£4m income category provided a full and detailed analysis of their volunteer input. A total of 5,982 days input was reported. Using the same cost of time method as above, this represents £486,172 cost of time for the society when based on the UK median hourly rate, and £1,021,785 when based on the median 'higher education teaching professionals' rate. As a percentage contribution to this society's income and expenditure the lower hourly rate represented 10.2% of income and 9.5% of expenditure and the higher rate represented 19.3% of income and 18.0% of expenditure.

Main Areas of Activity

All learned societies operate to different degrees in three main areas.

1. *Provision of Public Benefit.*
   UK charity law requires all bodies enjoying the legal and financial privileges of charities to serve a wider constituency than their own members and subscribers. This is clearly a major concern for trustees and chief executives because of the risks attached to non-compliance. The specific activities involved are discussed below.

2. *The Promotion of the Discipline*
   There is a particular benefit to practice and policy from the provision of a range of services that integrate the research and higher education sector on a horizontal rather than a vertical basis. A number of commentators have remarked on the importance of the matrix form of organisation within which the academic profession works, where the contributions of disciplines and of employing institutions complement each other, although coming into occasional tension. While it may seem untidy for academic professionals to divide their loyalties and career orientations, this may also be an important source of dynamism and innovation, as well as a restraint on institutional over-reaching. Although most learned societies are relatively weak in direct resource terms, compared with major universities, they represent one dimension of the matrix and derive considerable strength from the goodwill, commitment and voluntary labour of their members.

3. *Services to their own members*.

   As mutual organisations, this should be self-evident but clearly some external observers have difficulty in grasping this: the 2013 Finch report (para 5.2), for example, laments some learned societies 'reluctance to embrace' the UK government's OA policy in the same way as Research Councils and HEFCE – but they are independent, member-driven organisations and have no *prima facie* obligation to comply.

Sectoral benefit and membership benefit are often hard to distinguish as separate dimensions of learned societies. Since the focus of this report is on the wider impact of the learned societies, membership benefit will not be discussed separately here, although we shall comment on its importance at later points. In the absence of any particular theoretical framework for the findings, we have chosen to present the results in two categories, namely Public Benefit and The Promotion of the Discipline. These reflect the two main remits of learned societies in general.

Public Benefit

Influencing policy and practice. As Bastow et al. (2014: 275-78) and McCarthy and Rands (2013) note, an important part of the work of learned societies involves mediating academic knowledge into policy, practice and public debate. Their methodology tends to understate the role of social science learned societies in this respect. Our more detailed work finds twenty-two of 40 societies (55.0%) reporting activities aimed at informing national policy and practice. Given the diversity of the sector, this is not necessarily a role that all societies would, or should, see as essential. However, all the larger societies make a substantial commitment to this challenge. This often takes the form of submitting responses to governmental consultations but includes other activities as illustrated below.

> The **British Psychological Society** (BPS) submits in excess of 50 responses to consultations per year. The BPS also contributes to, and sponsors, parliamentary seminars to help policymakers.

> The **Economic History Society** made approximately 10 submissions in response to consultations or lobbies between 2010 and 2012.

International outreach and promotion of UK knowledge, culture and values. Fifteen of 40 societies (37.5%) report activities that can be classified as international outreach and promotion of the UK's knowledge, culture and values.

Learned societies have extensive outreach beyond the UK, creating international communities of academics and practitioners. For some societies, this is central to their objectives as illustrated here.

> The **Royal Geographical Society (**with the Institute of British Geographers, RGS-IBG) has significant levels of international outreach through its work including an international conference, awards, field research, scholarly publishing, and affiliated branches in Singapore and Hong Kong. It has contributed to the international profile of UK human geography, one that was ranked first in the world in a recent international benchmarking review (ESRC, 2013). The review noted the following in relation to the Society:
>
> > 'The RGS-IBG is a most significant dimension of the institutional capacity of UK human geography, and is unequalled in any other country. It is an extraordinary disciplinary resource with the capacity to act as a research depository, to launch pilot initiatives, to lobby for geography, and to present the discipline to a larger membership and public audiences through publications and frequent lectures and outreach events.'

> The **European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology** (EAOHP) runs its international conference on an alternate biennial basis. The International Co-ordinating Group for Occupational Health Psychology (ICG-OHP) was initiated in 2000 to coordinate international developments in occupational health psychology research, education and professional practice. The ICG-OHP meets periodically and includes representatives from the European and North American representative bodies for the discipline, the two pre-eminent OHP journals (Work & Stress; Journal of Occupational Health Psychology) and supportive organisations (American Psychological Association; National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health; European Agency for Safety and Health at Work).

International outreach is a feature of other activities discussed here such as journal publication and scholarly conferences. Taken together, these make a substantial contribution to the UK's 'soft power' through the promotion of partnerships in development and through

exchanges about knowledge, values and culture. They may have particular impact from their perceived independence of government, although they may facilitate government objectives in the maintenance of international relationships and the dissemination of a positive image of the UK as an international actor. This image is also likely to be important in attracting high-quality students and academics to the UK, contributing both to export earnings and income for higher education institutions (HEIs) and to enlarging the pool of talent available for recruitment.

Accreditation and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of practitioners and academics. Twenty one of 40 societies (52.5%) report offering accreditation and/or CPD and training opportunities for their members and/or for degree programmes in their field. Technically, the accreditation of members involves various forms of certification, where competence is affirmed but the practitioners do not acquire a legally-backed monopoly of practice, which would be described as licensing. Both certification and licensing are said to benefit the public through the quality assurance of practitioners providing skilled services where consumers are not well-placed to evaluate the specialist expertise involved. This asymmetry creates a risk of market failure, particularly where services are highly consequential for their users or for public health or safety. Certification may be done privately, by mutual associations or by statutory bodies. Licensing always has a statutory basis because of the nature of the sanctions for practicing without the licence.

In a number of fields, then, learned societies play an important role as certifying bodies, maintaining standards of individual practice. These tend to be the larger societies because they have a dual practitioner and academic membership, often organized into separate sections. Nevertheless, the two communities are mutually dependent, with the academics looking to the practitioners in ensuring the relevance of their research and educational work and the practitioners looking to the academics to sustain the intellectual standards and integrity of the field. Typical examples would be the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), the Royal Statistical Society (RSS), the British Psychological Society (BPS), and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

Many societies also accredit training and education at various levels, and provide CPD opportunities for their members, which may be tied to continuing certification but need not be.

Some of the course accreditation activities have an international dimension. For example, the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) accredit a number of degree programmes offered at universities outside the UK.

Financially, these activities are reported to be broadly self-sustaining, although there is some concern that the accreditation of degree courses may not recover its full costs. Academics who take part in accreditation panels tend to receive expenses and a nominal fee rather than being paid an economic rate. On the other hand, they also derive benefit from participation in the review of other providers and exchanging experiences that may improve their own programmes. There is also felt to be some subsidy in terms of office costs. Most societies in this group expected that charges to universities would be likely to rise over the next few years as cross-subsidies are identified and phased out.

Schools outreach and education. Ten of 40 societies (25.0%) report specific programmes of work with schools and/or the promotion of educational material for the general public.

This category covers activities oriented towards school or further education students and educational activities directed towards other public groups. More general interest work, often in association with various media outlets, is described under 'public engagement'. Most societies take part in this to some extent, even if at only at the level of creating materials that members can use or in helping to find speakers for events in schools or at science fairs or similar events. The work is important in increasing awareness of educational opportunities for potential undergraduates, particularly from non-traditional backgrounds and especially in relation to subjects that are not widely offered at A level (pre-university level qualification). They also help to inform student choices where A level and university courses differ, notably in helping potential recruits to identify the importance of quantitative skills in some areas. As such, the societies' work contributes to key policy agendas as well as to general public benefit. Examples of activity include:

The **Royal Geographical Society's** (with the Institute of British Geographers, RGS-IBG) main website has more than 400 pages of online resources, lesson plans and support relevant to geography in Key Stage 2 (7-11 year olds), Key Stage 3 (11-14 year olds), GCSE and A Level. By the end of 2012 the educational resources on the Society's website had received more than 700,000 'user sessions', making

them one of the most visited parts of the Society's online work. The Society's Geography Ambassadors scheme saw ambassadors provide 1020 presentations to approximately 30,000 pupils in visits to over 1,000 schools in 2012. The Ambassadors scheme sends geography undergraduates into high secondary schools to talk to students who would not necessarily be thinking about the relevance of geography to further study and to the world of work.

The **Royal Statistical Society** (RSS) runs a number of projects to support the teaching of statistics in schools such as the Centre for Statistical Education Statistics Competition, the CensusAtSchool project and an annual schools lecture.

Media Engagement. Ten of 40 societies (25.0%) report activities specifically geared to constructive engagement with the media.

Media engagement is important to some societies in promoting their members' work and increasing public awareness of their discipline. In this respect, it complements the work of university and research funder press offices, extending the number of channels by which information about newsworthy research can reach the public domain. This is particularly important where research may span several institutions or policy issues may be best served by briefings that require information from different sources to be brought together. Learned societies provide a point of contact that is neutral as between the specific interests of universities or funders. A number of societies also offer training opportunities to their members and some have taken a particular lead in promoting the use of social media.

In 2012 the **Development Studies Association** secured a major blogspot on the Guardian's Global Development website, and participation by Guardian staff members at their annual conference.

In addition to specific actions of this kind, most societies regularly deal with one-off media enquiries and facilitate interactions with their members. These do not necessarily involve a dedicated media officer or a formal record being maintained.

Public engagement. School outreach, education and media engagement represent the majority of formal and explicit public engagement by the learned societies. However, all societies have websites that represent the public face of their discipline: some of these report large number of hits per year e.g. Royal Geographical Society's websites attracted 1,218,247 visits in 2012. Societies vary in the extent to which they use their websites as promotional vehicles, in addition to member communication, and these have not been specifically analysed.

> The **British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy** (BACP) reports continued development of the interactive, public-facing, website (www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk). The website aims to de-mystify counselling and psychotherapy through education and understanding, raise awareness and engage with those interested in mental health and wellbeing. It is a valuable resource for people seeking information about the profession and BACP, as evidenced by the 30,000+ visitors to the site each month.

The Promotion of the Discipline

Conferences. Most societies have an annual conference which will typically draw between 10% and 30% of its participants from outside the UK. Some of these are recognized as leading international or European events.

> The **Regional Studies Association** runs events at all scales including an annual global event (Beijing, China) and a European Conference (Delft, Netherlands) in 2012. Numbers that attend these and other events vary but would typically be around 950 - 1,200.

Twenty-four societies reported data on delegate attendances at annual conferences in 2012. To estimate an overall value of conference attendance, a cost of time method is used (Frontier Economics, 2009). In essence, the method uses the time individuals use to access a product as a measure of the value they place on the product. The method can be useful in providing an estimate of willingness to pay for a good or service.

In the case of conference attendance, the attendance figures for each society's main annual conference (n=24) are multiplied by each conference duration (in hours, based on 7 hours per day), and then multiplied by a cost of time figure. For this purpose we have used the 2012 UK median hourly wage of £11.21 (Office for National Statistics, 2012). The total value (cost of time) for the 24 annual conferences is estimated to be £3.24m. This is very much a lower bound estimate of the value that conferences provide for the members of the societies; it would be much higher if the value of the registration fee, travel time and expense, and

accommodation were factored in. A second calculation based on the median hourly wage for 'higher education teaching professionals' of £23.56 (Office for National Statistics, 2012) yields a cost of time value of £6.82m. Again, this omits the value of registration fees, etc. and is subject to the same qualification as stated earlier about the unknown mix of wage rates among the beneficiaries.

The cost of time method has potential for societies themselves to use in order to understand and quantify the value of their conferences, and other events. This would supplement other evaluation data such as feedback gathered through questionnaires.

Publications. This section focuses mainly on journals, although a number of societies also have arrangements for book publishing, either in support of CPD activity for those societies with a practitioner membership or, more generally, to provide an outlet for specialist monographs written by their members. However, no society considers such publishing as a significant source of income, although it may serve other goals such as knowledge transfer, in the case of CPD, or the dissemination of research, in the case of monographs. Given the acknowledged problems in the economics of monograph publishing, society involvement may be important in sustaining opportunities for members to publish in this format. As such, they may have a high value for particular niche groups of authors and readers.

The journals of 27 of the societies have an entry in the ISI's (Institute for Scientific Information) Journal Citation Reports or the SCImago journal ranking database for the year 2012. In total, these 27 societies publish 53 journals (listed in Appendix 2).

Detailed information is difficult to access because the contracts between learned societies and publishers normally contain confidentiality clauses. Our analysis of society accounts identifies £7.1 million as the total society income from publishing but this would include journals with other publishers, and books, and might exclude some direct payments for editorial support. For commercial reasons, it was difficult to determine what proportion of the total revenue from journals this would represent. An educated guess, from discussions with a number of journal editors, would be that societies collectively receive somewhere between 50% and 60% of total revenues but this would vary widely between societies. A significant proportion of this income, perhaps as much as 90%, comes from overseas sales, representing a substantial international subsidy to UK learned societies. Typically, journals would be

available in 3-4,000 institutions world-wide through subscription deals. UK institutions were less than 5% of this total. Many journals will also be available under the Research4Life (2015) programme, a partnership between United Nations agencies and scientific publishers to provide free or low-cost access to research institutions in developing countries. Currently, this covers about 6,000 institutions in more than 100 countries.[3]

These data underline the international reach of UK learned society journals. This is not just in the passive form of volumes sitting on library shelves but in the active form of online access, where potential users have made a specific choice to engage with an article. Learned society journals clearly play an important direct role in communicating UK social science to the international academic community. Indirectly, the associated revenue also makes it possible for societies to fund other activities.

Networks, events and knowledge exchange. Annual conferences are just one of many activities undertaken by learned societies to promote networking and knowledge exchange. Many societies support regional networks, events and specialist interest groups (SIGs). Overall, 36 of 40 societies (90.0%) report specific events and activities that promote networking and knowledge exchange. Some examples are presented below.

> The **British Academy of Management** (BAM) has over 20 special interest groups (SIGs). They are active in holding events such as workshops and seminars, as well producing newsletters and contributing to BAM's annual conference.

> The **British Accounting and Finance Association (BAFA)** has 4 area groups and 8 SIGs. These are active in holding workshops, conferences, as well producing newsletters and contributing to BAFA's annual conference.

Higher education policy and practice. Fifteen of the 40 societies (37.5%) reported contributions to higher education policy and practice. These generally took the form of responses to policy consultations about sector-specific concerns and reviews. Examples include:

> The **British Society of Criminology** (BSC) responded to a number of consultations relating to research funding, ethics and the REF including the ESRC Capital Investment Roadmap, the UUK/RCUK/HEFCE/Wellcome Trust Concordat to support Research Integrity and the working of the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods.

The **British Association for American Studies** (BAAS) produced a report on the state of American Studies in the UK 2000-2010 with Fulbright funding, which has been the basis for lobbying HEFCE and other groups to recognize the challenges to the discipline.

Early career support. Most societies regarded this as a priority and, even where they were unable to fund specific additional activities, would offer networking opportunities for early career members, either online or within their main conference, or develop materials available through their website to assist in professional development. These are the means by which new members are inducted into communities of academics and practitioners. Fourteen of the 40 societies (35.0%) report specific activities that support the development of early career researchers, both postgraduate and postdoctoral. These activities take a variety of forms but include poster and paper prizes, travel grants, subsidised conference fees, and fellowships. Some societies also provide undergraduate research awards, 'filling gaps in university provision' as one informant put it. This support is largely funded by income streams generated from their main activities – some events have a nominal fee but are normally heavily subsidised. Data on this expenditure category is not always explicitly reported. However, we were able to identify at least £249,508 being directed by the learned societies to supporting early career researchers.

The **Economic History Society** (EHS) award up to five one-year postdoctoral fellowships which provide their holders with an opportunity to both develop their doctoral research for publication and make that first but difficult step into independent academic work.

Project and small research grants. A number of societies run competitive project and small research grants schemes. These are designed to act as pump-priming funds with the expectation that the results and findings are used to support future grant applications to national funding bodies such as the ESRC. Overall, 23 of the 40 societies (57.5%) report specific funds for this activity. Data on this expenditure category is not always explicitly reported. However, we were able to identify at least £402,252 being directed by the learned societies to project and small research grants schemes.

The **Royal Geographical Society** (with the Institute of British Geographers, RGS-IBG) report that 70 field research projects in 34 countries across seven continents were supported by modest Society grants (total value of c. £170,000).

Prizes and awards. Thirty-one of the 40 societies (77.5%) present awards and prizes to reflect notable or outstanding contributions to their particular field or discipline. These are particularly important as signals of peer recognition, either for scholarship or service, that would not necessarily be visible to other observers.

Summary of the Main Activities

The broad categories of activities and the percentage of societies engaging in those activities reported above are summarised in Figure 2. The networking/knowledge exchange activity is reported most often with 90% of societies explicitly reporting it.

[Figure 2 near here]

6. Discussion and Conclusions

Learned societies in the social sciences are a very diverse set of organisations. At one end of the scale are a 'Big Five[4]', running multi-million pound businesses with cadres of highly professional staff co-ordinating volunteer effort on a large scale: at the other, we find small societies with incomes of £20-30,000 per year that depend wholly on volunteers, possibly with some undocumented assistance from university administrative or clerical staff. It is easy for debates about the sector to become dominated by the largest societies, which are better organized and resourced to work in a strategic fashion and to represent their interests. However, for their members, the smaller and medium-sized societies are equally valuable, particularly as they constitute communities of academics and practitioners that focus the work of otherwise isolated individuals who are dispersed across the higher education and research system, and, potentially, link this into policy and practice. As such, their role in setting standards of scholarship, providing early-career development opportunities and promoting collaborations may not easily be reproduced elsewhere.

While larger societies generally take the legal form of charities, which, under UK law, requires them to show public benefit from their activities, all societies are fundamentally membership organisations that have been created to advance the

disciplines and fields in which their members make their careers and to act as a focus for the discipline and the communities that it incorporates. Learned societies are independent voices for their disciplines or fields. Through the various activities described in this report, they act as advocates for the interests of discipline-oriented teaching and research within a policy community that is increasingly focussed on problem-oriented interdisciplinary work. Their sources of revenue give them a considerable measure of independence and the opportunity to challenge the agendas set by other funders.

Most learned societies do not have a research generating function, although their small grant programmes may be an important and flexible source of support for innovation. The societies' role is less to produce new knowledge than to promote its exchange, particularly within a disciplinary community. This community is not exclusively academic: in some fields, societies play a significant role in connecting scholars, practitioners and policymakers. Societies also support the transmission of knowledge to new generations, through their work with schools, their support for developmental work in undergraduate and postgraduate education, and their programmes for early-career scholars and practitioners. In the terms of the ESRC research impact framework, they are 'intermediaries' (e.g. ESRC Evaluation Committee, 2009). Bastow et al. (2014: 276-7) are critical of the achievements of learned societies in this role. However, their study has no direct data to support this conclusion: that part of their work seems to be largely anecdotal.

The societies' 'horizontal' axis of connections across a system that has strong 'vertical' components, in the form of universities, can also extend across national boundaries. This study identifies the important transnational role of learned societies, particularly through their conferences and journals, which help to benchmark the quality of UK social science. These activities are key vehicles for 'soft power' – promoting the UK's capacities, skills and values in ways that contribute to its global interests and strategic concerns. This will be reflected in international student recruitment to HEIs, particularly at postgraduate level, and the attraction of leading researchers to work in the UK, boosting the nation's innovative capacity. Such engagements increase the UK's absorptive capacity – its ability to benefit from internationally leading-edge science and innovation thinking because of its contribution to shaping those

developments through the reach of its ideas and published work and its global professional networks. Finally, international connections also make a significant contribution to the societies' collective achievement of generating over £40 million per year to invest in developing and promoting UK social science without any direct government support.

Learned societies also provide a space to articulate the values of mutuality and collaboration within an ecosystem that is increasingly driven by competition between universities and research organisations. They are relatively disinterested actors in this context, organizing activities for the promotion of their field rather than for any particular team or institution. To the extent that competitive tensions between universities undercut the more collaborative approaches preferred by major research funders in the UK, and internationally, the availability of neutral fora is likely to increase in importance.

Risks

There is a risk, noted by the Finch Reports (Finch 2012; 2013) that other members of the ecosystem for knowledge exchange and dissemination may fail to attach sufficient value to the societies' challenge function: learned societies are neither clients of research funders nor captives of universities. Hayek (1982) makes an important distinction between 'taxis' and 'cosmos', planned orders and spontaneous orders. In a period of austerity, there are obvious attractions in strengthening planning and co-ordination to rationalize and direct the use of scarce resources. However, Hayek suggests that this is an important strategic error because it is generally achieved at a cost in the flexibility and diversity that create conditions favourable to innovation. The distinctive perspective brought to research and higher education policy debates by learned societies may be inconvenient and occasionally disruptive – but these challenges force other policy actors to reflect on their contributions and to ensure that they are fully reasoned, evidenced and justified. Voices for social science that are not dependent on government funding, like ESRC or the British Academy, or the pragmatic operating concerns of universities may be a critical element in sustaining a dynamic policy ecosystem in research and higher education.

The importance of volunteer work has already been noted. Some threats to this were identified in interviews, from the UK higher education sector's adoption of the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) accounting for the allocation of academic time and its links to university performance management. Our informants clearly saw a growing threat from growing external and internal pressures to manage academic staff time in greater detail and for purposes designated by their employers. Learned societies have always depended on the availability of 'slack resources' in universities and research organisations (Cyert and March 1963), which are gradually being squeezed out or brought under central managerial control. Nevertheless, volunteer input extends the opportunities for personal and professional development available to many academics and creates particularly important opportunities for early-career scholars to interact with potential mentors outside line management relationships. Above a certain scale, however, volunteer input clearly needs the support of a paid staff infrastructure. This may create problems for Group 2 societies in the mid-size band where they do not have sufficient, or sufficiently reliable, sources of income to employ many staff but where the load on volunteers, especially in financial and event management, may be excessive. These are also the societies that tend to be most dependent upon journal revenues (Table 2). Any disruption of that stream would have serious consequences, unless other sources of revenue could be expanded.

Unfortunately, it is not clear that the market would bear much increase elsewhere. Academic salaries in the UK have lagged significantly behind inflation since 2009, declining in real terms by 14.5 per cent (University and College Union 2015). There has been an additional loss from increased pension contributions since April 2016. Moreover, although the data are contested, there seems to be an increasing trend for universities to engage academic and research staff on more precarious types of contract, where incomes are much lower (University and College Union 2016 a, b). Some learned society informants have commented on the particular importance of their society for people in this position, as a means of maintaining contact with the world of scholarship and creating networks of support and mentoring that are not otherwise available. On the other hand, this group are not in a position to support economic subscription rates. If societies choose to subsidize them, the costs must be recovered elsewhere. Similar arguments would apply to fees for conferences or other events.

There must also be some concern that the current accounting practices of many societies would not allow them to see risks coming. The diversity of societies, in scale and form, if not in function, means that current metrics are of limited value, except possibly in the comparison of financial information. Even here, though, societies vary in the detail of their accounts. Some of the larger societies do keep activity records from which quantitative information could be extracted and many other societies have uncollated data that could be organized and summarized: basic lists of conference attendances could be used to generate data on national and international participation, for example, or committee minutes and expense records examined to produce estimates of volunteer time input. However, this would be a substantial cost for many societies.

Alternatives

Some functions of learned societies could be assumed by other organisations but it is not clear that they could be carried out as efficiently or effectively. In some areas, learned societies compete with commercial conference promoters and trainers. These generally seem to have higher cost structures and to be less attractive to potential international partners. Time contributed to learned societies on a voluntary basis has to be paid for in a commercial context and for-profit providers may look for higher returns: although learned societies seem to have some trade-off between subscriptions, publications and conferences that may push up conference and event prices if either of the other sources of revenue fail to keep pace with costs. Universities are increasing their efforts in relation to the training, mentoring and professional development of early-career scholars. However, these are frequently criticised for their generic nature and lack of sensitivity to the specific challenges of particular fields. The societies offer a complementary contribution at relatively low cost that extends and enriches what can be offered by any institution acting alone. Learned society publishing models have evolved, and the partnerships with commercial publishers reflect the considerable capital requirements and economies of scale in the delivery of the online, intertextual, articles that scholars now demand. While learned society journals co-exist with publisher-owned journals, they seem to have a distinctive attraction in terms of their global impact and the loyalty of their community.

Futures

This study has benefitted immensely from the goodwill of the UK learned societies but it has also underlined the constraints on any such exercise – and the difficulty of generating a common policy for the support of such a diverse set of associations. However, it has established a baseline for understanding their contributions to their disciplines, their communities, to the research and education policy ecosystem and to the public. While the Big Five may be able to address some of the issues of data quality and lack of routine and comparable metrics ahead of any future exercise, it is hard to see that the available information will improve greatly without some wider initiative being taken. Although many of the small and medium size societies in the UK would struggle to repurpose data, support from the larger societies might facilitate the creation of a uniform reporting template that could inform a more structured approach to routine data collection. If this can be done prospectively, most societies would seem capable of moving towards the creation of a dataset that would help them in their own self-management - and make future benchmarking studies of this kind easier to conduct. Greater interaction between societies and awareness of the different business models at different scales might also help to identify opportunities to share back office resources, allowing some of the middle-sized societies to get professional assistance with finances and event management that they would find hard to afford on their own.

The public enjoys remarkable value for money from the learned societies in terms of their contribution to a vibrant and dynamic ecosystem in research and higher education that promotes innovation and enterprise in science for the creation of national wealth and the enhancement of quality of life. UK social science has been consistently acknowledged, in ESRC benchmarking reviews (See http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/research-and-impact-evaluation/international-benchmarking-reviews/ Accessed 6 January 2017), to be at the leading edge internationally. The learned societies have made a considerable contribution to this. The 'public benefit' test of charity law has also reinforced their interest in outreach and engagement to promote an appreciation of the value of social science to evidence-based public policy and governance, to public life and to education more generally. This value is reflected in the £40.8 million that is raised each year by the societies from the beneficiaries of their work, of which at least 10 per cent is contributed from users outside the United Kingdom in the form of journal subscriptions, membership subscription, accreditation charges, and conference fees. They are an important source

of energy and dynamism in the ecosystem for knowledge transfer and dissemination that deserves recognition and respect from other actors.

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[1] In a study from the early 1960s, for example, Strauss and Rainwater (2011) found that journal access was the most significant benefit for members of the American Chemical Society.

[2] This has now (2015) been replaced by Charities SORP (FRS 102) http://www.charitysorp.org/ but this does not affect the substantive point about the degree of standardization that results.

[3] It may not have been sufficiently recognized that the Gold model of Open Access, based on Author Publication Charges, has the effect of shifting costs from other developed countries paying to read UK work to UK institutions paying to disseminate it. Instead of the international community subsidising UK social science, the UK will subsidise other developed countries. The position of the poorest countries remains unchanged to the extent that UK social science journals are already freely available under the Research4Life programme.

[4] The Group 1 societies plus the largest society in Group 2. This does not offer professional accreditation but is in other respects more like Group 1 than Group 2 societies.

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Appendix 1. List of learned societies invited to participate in the study

Association for Learning Technology (ALT)
Association for Psychosocial Studies (APS)
Association for Tourism in Higher Education (ATHE)
British Academy of Management (BAM)
British Accounting and Finance Association (BAFA)
British Association for American Studies (BAAS)
British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE)
British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES)
British Association of Applied Linguistics (BAAL)
British Educational Research Association (BERA)
British International Studies Association (BISA)
British Psychological Society (BPS)
British Society for Population Studies (BSPS)
British Society of Criminology (BSC)
British Society of Gerontology (BSG)
British Sociological Association (BSA)
Council for Hospitality Management in Education (CHME)
Development Studies Association (DSA)
Economic History Society (EHS)
European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology (EAOHP)
European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA)
Housing Studies Association (HSA)
Joint University Council (JUC)
Leisure Studies Association (LSA)
Media, Communications & Cultural Studies Association (MECCSA)
Political Studies Association (PSA)
Regional Science Association International: British & Irish Section (RSAI)
Regional Studies Association (RSA)
Royal Economic Society (RES)
Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) (RGS-IBG)
Royal Statistical Society (RSS)

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

Scottish Economic Society (SES)

Social Policy Association (SPA)

Social Research Association (SRA)

Social Services Research Group (SSRG)

Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE)

Society for the Advancement of Management Studies (SAMS)

Society for the Study of Organising for Health Care (SSOHC)

Society of Legal Scholars (SLS)

Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA)

UK Evaluation Society (UKES).

University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES)

Appendix 2 Learned Society Journals

Learned Society and journal(s)	ISI Journal Citation Reports Impact factor 2012		SCImago Journal Rank Cites per doc 2012	
	2 year	5 year	2 year	4 year
Association for Learning Technology				
Research in Learning Technology	-	-	0.660	-
Association of Social Anthropologists				
Social Anthropology	-	-	0.616	0.716
British Academy of Management				
British Journal of Management	2.044	2.391	2.174	3.221
International Journal of Management Reviews	3.333	4.981	4.449	5.466
British Accounting and Finance Association				
British Accounting Review	-	-	1.487	1.890
British Association for American Studies				
Journal of American Studies	-	-	0.088	0.124
British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy				
Counselling & Psychotherapy Research	-	-	0.742	-
British Association for International and Comparative Education				
Compare	-	-	0.686	0.716
British Educational Research Association				
British Educational Research Journal	1.660	1.680	2.237	2.328
British Journal of Educational Technology	1.313	1.888	1.981	2.564
British International Studies Association				
Review of International Studies	0.739	1.019	0.806	1.021
British Psychological Society				
British Journal of Psychology	2.103	2.861	1.931	2.226
British Journal of Clinical Psychology	2.333	2.846	2.290	2.681
British Journal of Developmental Psychology	1.330	1.671	1.343	1.748
British Journal of Educational Psychology	2.093	2.648	2.158	2.623
British Journal of Health Psychology	1.991	2.781	2.144	2.868
British Journal of Social Psychology	1.816	2.671	1.624	2.632
Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice	-	-	2.017	1.918

Learned Society and journal(s)	ISI Journal Citation Reports Impact factor 2012		SCImago Journal Rank Cites per doc 2012	
	2 year	5 year	2 year	4 year
British Journal of Mathematical and Statistical Psychology	-	-	1.349	1.672
Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology	2.419	2.944	2.438	2.851
Legal and Criminological Psychology	1.708	1.773	1.700	1.747
Journal of Neuropsychology	2.438	2.685	2.455	2.857
Evidence-Based Mental Health (with RCPsy and BMJ)	-	-	2.308	1.086
British Society of Criminology				
Criminology and Criminal Justice	-	-	1.275	1.406
British Sociological Association				
Sociology	1.504	2.161	1.769	2.373
Work, Employment and Society	1.255	1.965	1.621	2.199
Cultural Sociology	0.391	1.031	0.522	0.854
Sociological Research Online	0.619	0.742	0.680	0.661
Economic History Society				
Economic History Review	1.045	1.073	1.289	1.238
Joint University Council				
Public Policy and Administration	-	-	0.233	0.526
Leisure Studies Association				
Leisure Studies	0.887	-	1.038	1.065
Political Studies Association				
Political Studies	0.917	1.558	1.123	1.719
British Journal of Politics and International Relations	0.725	-	0.884	1.266
Politics	0.604	-	0.849	0.729
Political Studies Review	1.286	-	1.618	1.085
Regional Studies Association				
Regional Studies	1.465	2.165	1.661	2.020
Spatial Economic Analysis	1.375	-	1.800	1.526
Royal Economic Society				
Economic Journal	2.118	3.095	2.174	3.089
Econometrics Journal	1.000	1.252	1.095	1.422
Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)				
Area	1.685	1.958	2.036	2.186
The Geographical Journal	1.635	2.210	1.400	2.343

Learned Society and journal(s)	ISI Journal Citation Reports Impact factor 2012		SCImago Journal Rank Cites per doc 2012	
	2 year	5 year	2 year	4 year
Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers	4.122	4.275	4.442	4.641
Royal Statistical Society				
Series A: Statistics in Society	1.361	2.292	1.435	2.515
Series B: Statistical Methodology	-	-	5.827	5.973
Series C: Applied Statistics	-	-	1.284	1.448
Royal Town Planning Institute				
Planning Theory and Practice	-	-	0.679	1.056
Scottish Economic Society				
Scottish Journal of Political Economy	0.367	0.575	0.417	0.525
Social Policy Association				
Journal of Social Policy	1.075	1.195	1.259	1.438
Society	0.257	0.262	0.494	0.359
Society for the Advancement of Management Studies				
Journal of Management Studies	3.799	4.744	4.142	5.574
Society for Research into Higher Education				
Studies in Higher Education	1.036	1.664	1.554	2.304
Higher Education Quarterly	-	-	1.209	1.163
Society of Legal Scholars				
Legal Studies	-	-	0.080	-
University Association for Contemporary European Studies				
Journal of Common Market Studies	1.603	1.624	1.789	1.885

Figure 1. Box plot of the annual income (2012) of 40 learned societies. There are 5 high income outlier values (numbered).

Group	Publishing	Conference	Subscriptions	Other	Other (details reported)	Activity areas income (as a percentage of total income)
Group 1 Income >£4m n=4	15.0%	9.8%	47.9%	13.7%	Other income and grants	86.4%
	6.5%		76.6%	6.6%	Professional standards	89.7%
			70.9%	12.5%	Planning aid	83.4%
	4.8%	6.7%	34.8%	32.2%	Gift aid	78.5%

Table 1. Group 1: Percentage of income derived from common activities

Group	Publishing	Conference	Subscriptions	Other	Other (details reported)	Activity areas income (as a percentage of total income)
Group 2 Income ≥£200k and <£2.2m n=16	36.1%	6.4%	27.7%	9.9%	Education, careers and recruitment	80.1%
	53.4%	18.0%	7.3%	10.9%	Investment income	89.6%
	46.8%	23.7%	20.2%			90.7%
	63.0%	25.3%	8.9%			97.2%
	61.7%	14.9%	12.8%			89.4%
	26.9%	45.2%	13.8%			85.9%
	46.0%	29.6%	22.1%			97.7%
		40.8%	27.4%	17.3%	Grants	85.5%
	99.8%					99.8%
		96.9%	3.1%			100.0%
	40.0%	12.6%	21.7%	12.7%	Other	87.0%
	63.7%	20.5%	8.4%			92.6%
	63.5%	20.4%	12.1%			96.0%
		64.2%	33.3%			97.5%
	68.0%	19.4%	9.4%			96.8%
	55.4%	20.9%	10.4%			86.7%

Table 2. Group 2: Percentage of income derived from common activities

Group	Publishing	Conference	Subscriptions	Other	Other (details reported)	Activity areas income (as a percentage of total income)
Group 3 Income <£200k n=20	8.5%		19.3%	58.8%	Training courses	86.6%
		73.8%	23.8%			97.6%
		77.7%	20.6%			98.3%
		7.6%	88.6%			96.2%
	93.1%		6.8%			99.9%
	Data not available					
		32.5%	66.7%			99.2%
		9.9%	29.0%	49.1%	Fellowship Fund	88.0%
		77.6%		14.1%	Grants	91.7%
		55.0%	35.8%	4.1%	Sponsorship	94.9%
	5.3%	55.6%	35.8%			96.7%
	3.2%	58.8%	36.1%			98.1%
		13.8%	52.8%	30.9%	Miscellaneous	97.5%
		28.1%	56.9%	14.9%	Bursary receipt	99.9%
	71.7%	13.2%	15.0%			99.9%
	Data not available					
	Data not available					
	15.0%	35.0%	50.0%			100.0%
		86.6%	3.3%	10.1%	Sponsorship	100.0%
	Data not available					

Table 3. Group 3: Percentage of income derived from common activities

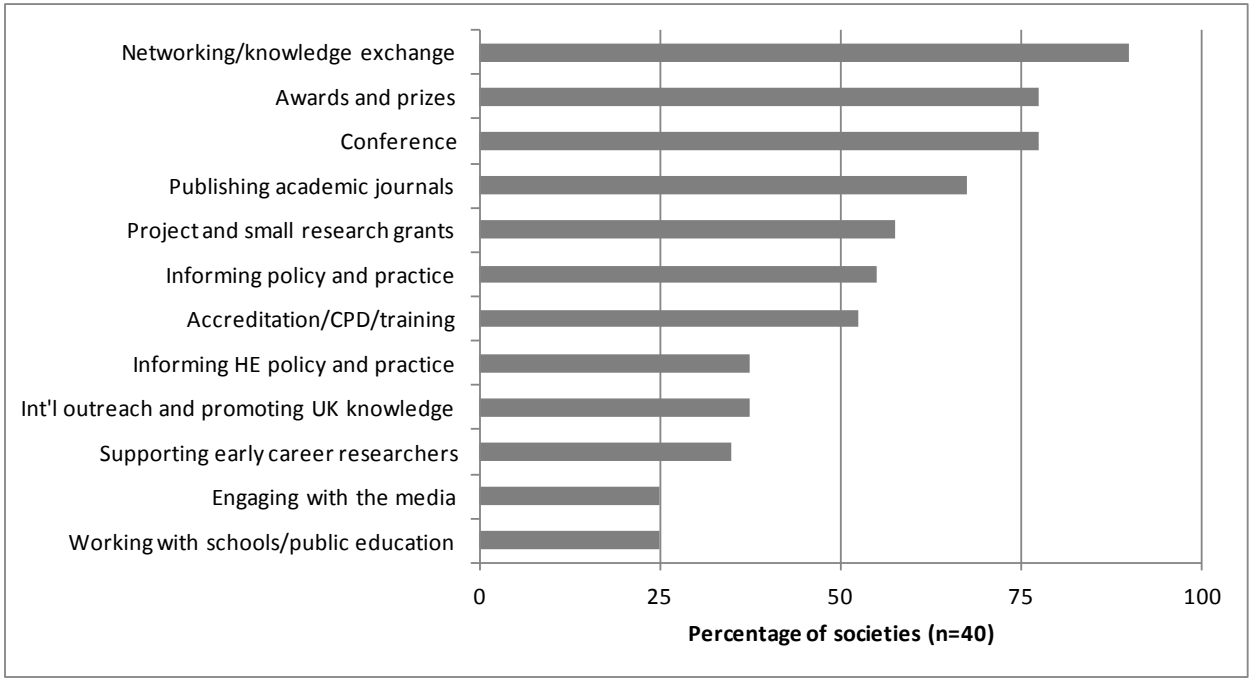

Figure 2. Percentage of societies reporting engagement in the categories of activities.