

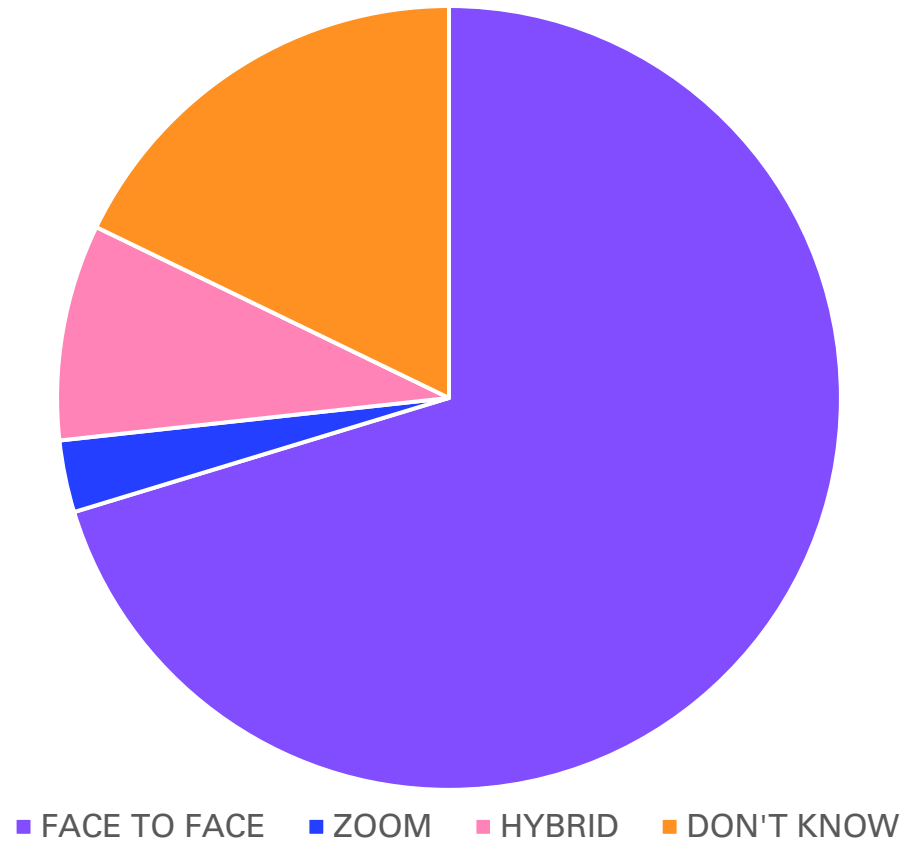


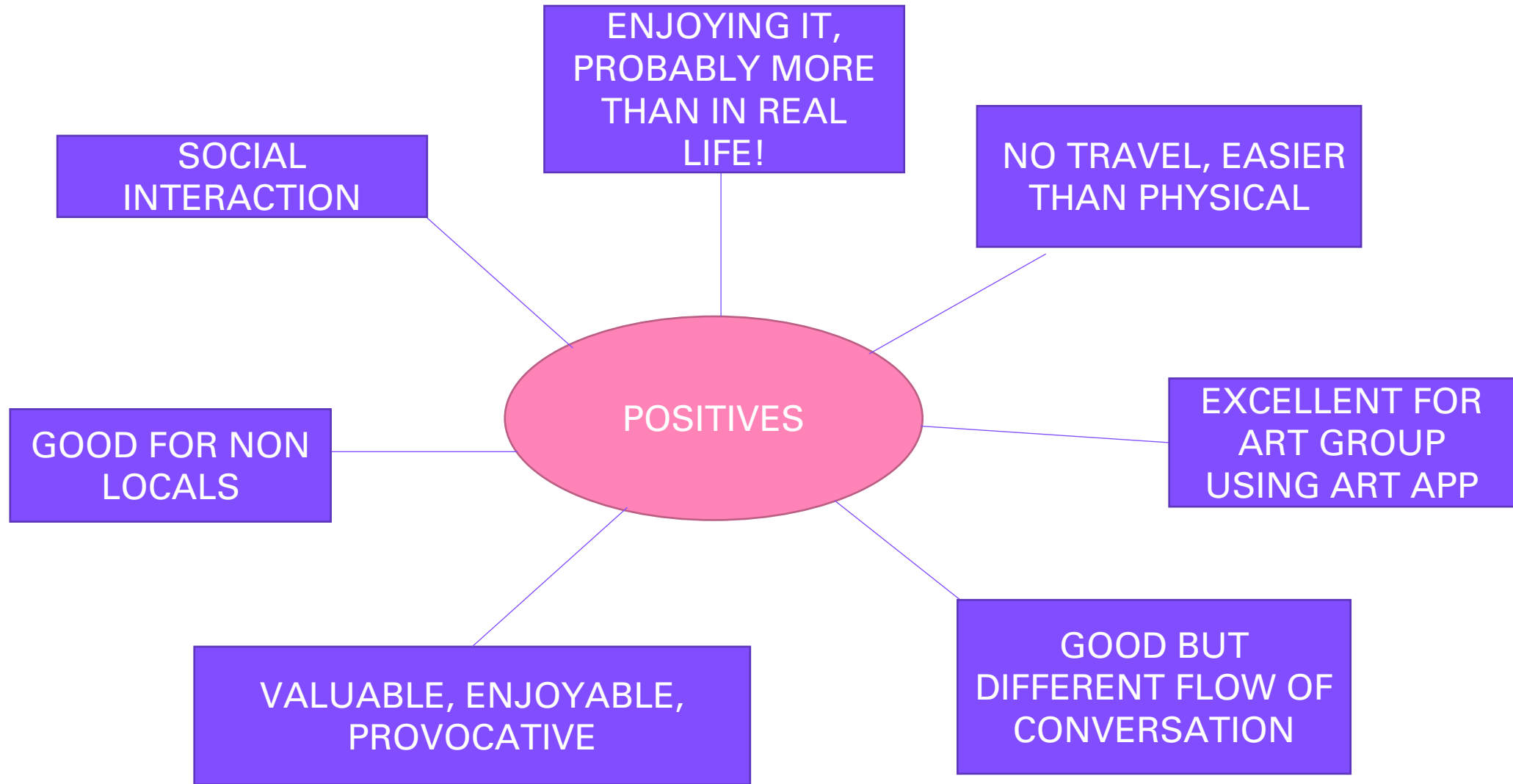
**LONDON
METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY**

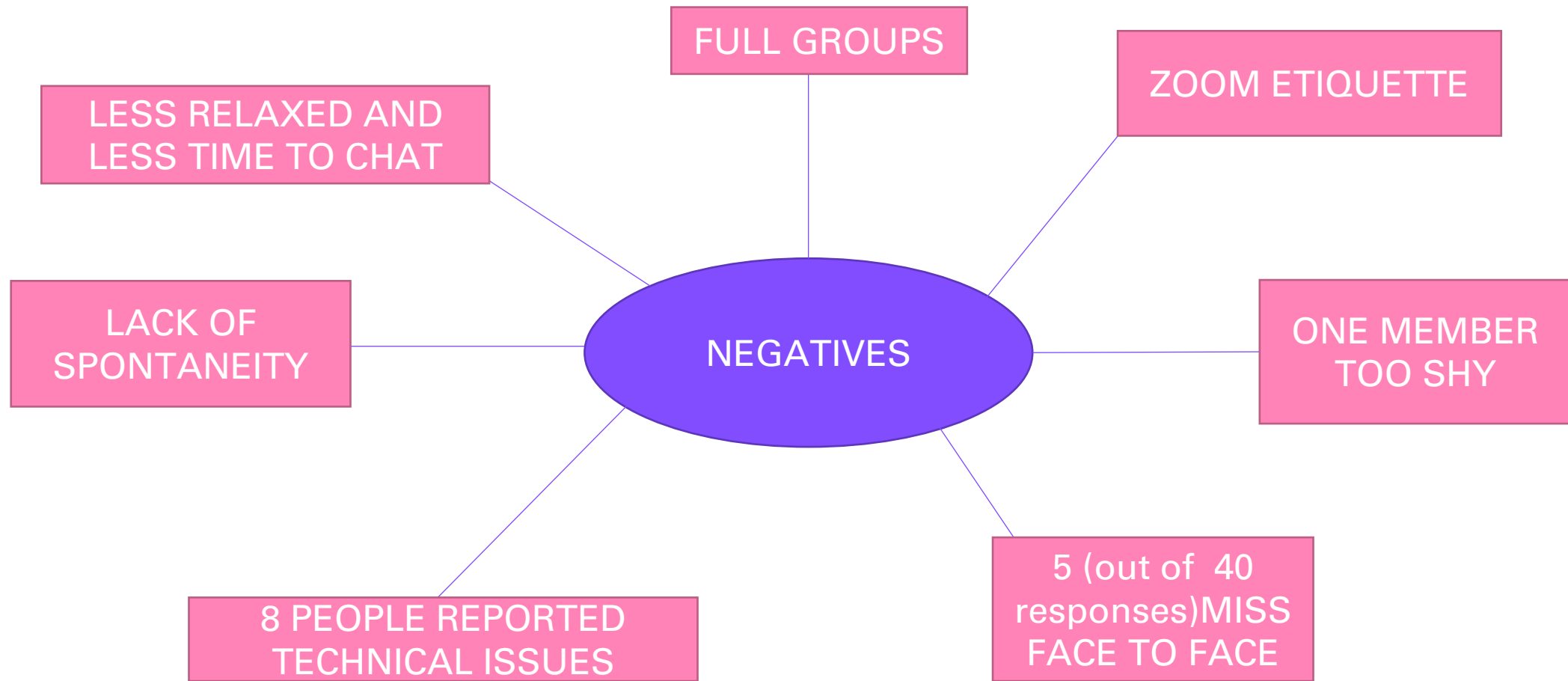
The Collaboration

- Collaboration was to create some 'Shared Learning Projects', hoping to explore possible new groups with our students' expertise and to create an ongoing pairing between the 2 institutions
- 'Empowering London-working within the community', opportunity for students to develop new skills, to learn about key issues currently affecting London and to work at a grass roots level to effect change
- The project has been considering what the 'new normal' will be as lockdown restrictions ease, incorporating the online methods which have facilitated the continuation of Interest groups thus far and looking at the potential for new hybrid methods of delivery of groups
- Survey to research Group coordinators' views on the last year during lockdown and to inform us on how they might like to move forward

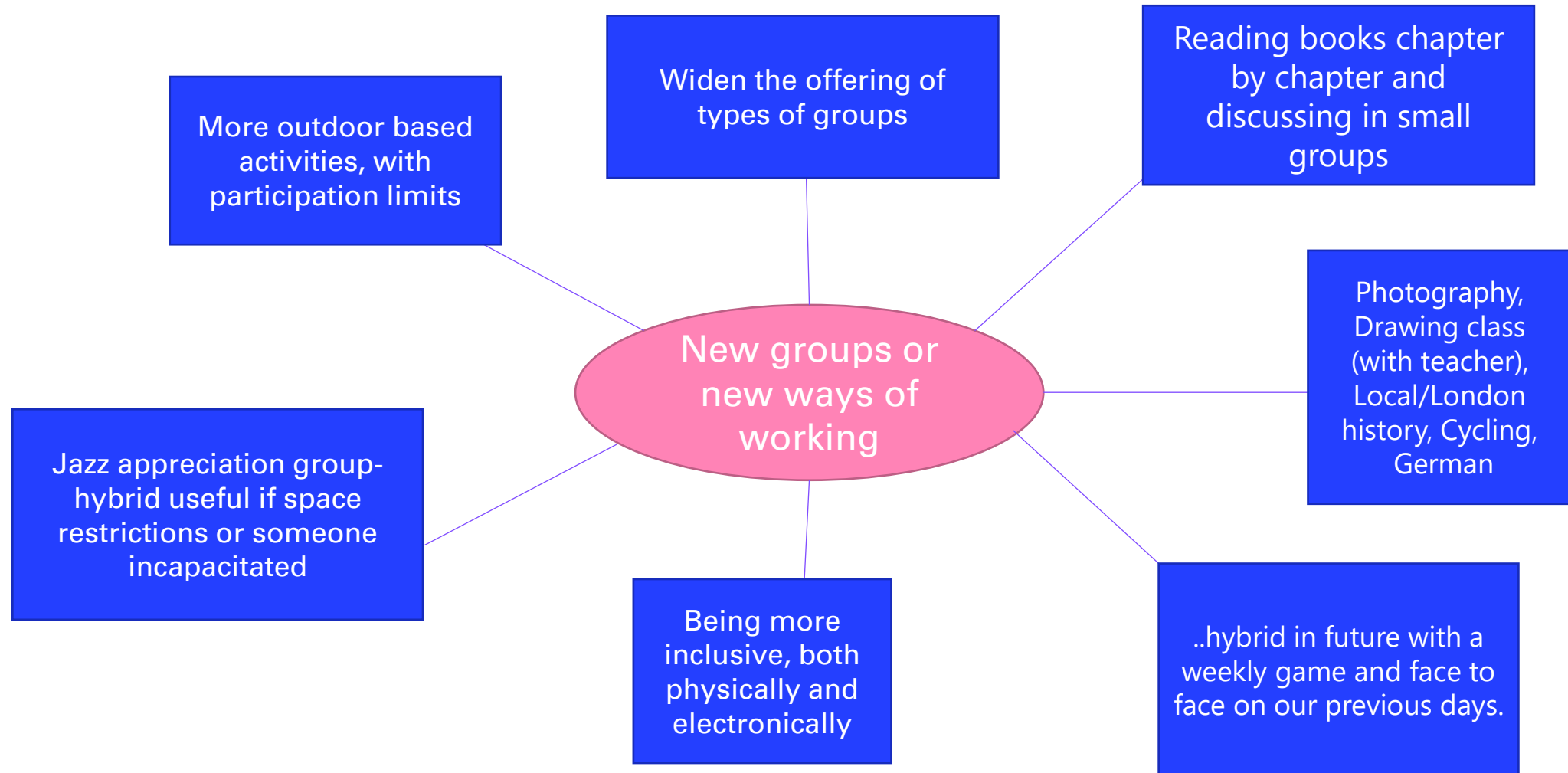
Survey results on preferred methods after lockdown







New Ideas...



The Focus Group

- Consider two new group ideas...

1. **Communal Cuisine**, in response to World Cuisine being unable to continue due to restaurants being closed and to aim to continue bringing people together over food

2. **Community Noticeboard** in response to Members on their own, (MOTO) not being fully launched in the end last year. It seemed there was a desire to facilitate putting members in touch, further than only if they happen to meet in the same interest group.

The Focus Group Participants

- A relatively new member based in Italy and a potential volunteer
- A long time member active in many Unlimited Life groups
- A Cambridge based facilitator of discussions in many Time Limited Groups and active member of many Unlimited Life groups
- Proactive Group Coordinator and active member of many Unlimited Life groups
- Current member of Executive Committee, Group Coordinator of multiple groups, both unlimited life and time limited, and active member of many other groups, both unlimited life and time limited
- A founder member with extensive experience at all levels from Executive Committee to Group Coordinator to active membership of many groups, including 2 Groups which used hybrid meetings in the Autumn of 2020

Focus group discussion

- Introduced 2 new ideas stimulated by our weekly meetings
- Film Groups advantages of blended learning included the flexibility, convenience and reduced cost including travel and cinema costs. Potential British Film Institute (BFI) group considered
- Time Limited Groups have been successful and a potential online cohort of students could be emerging, as even more new subject matter to study was being stimulated by the regular meetings.
- Advantages of learning online included the ability to concentrate well as the very nature of Zoom meetings requires

Communal Cuisine

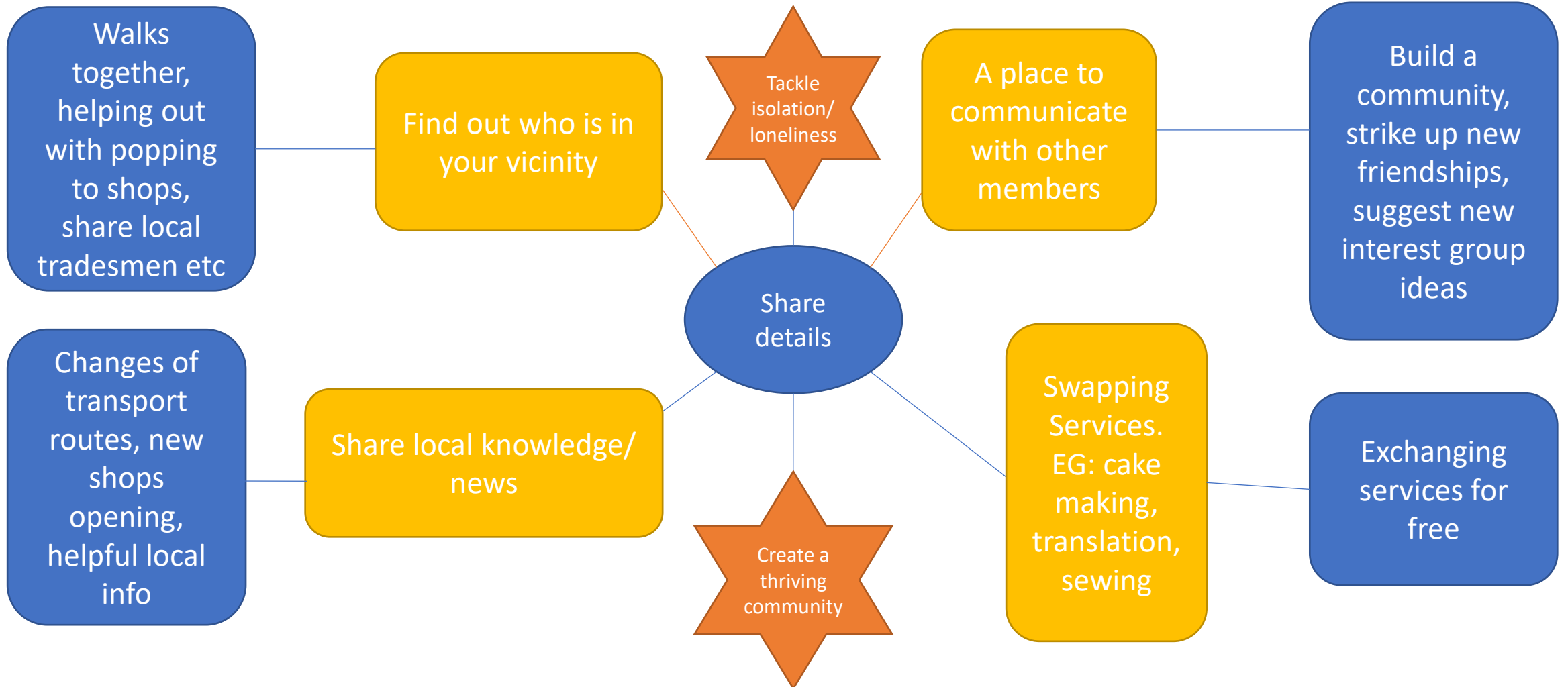
1. Choose a recipe and provide details on where to source the ingredients
2. Individually shop for the ingredients or in the future together...
3. At a mutually convenient time cook the meal and enjoy...perhaps on a Friday evening (maybe with a glass of wine) to provide a nice social way to start the weekend, and then online either eat together or maybe if that proves tricky with timings etc eat individually and then share experiences of shopping, preparing, cooking and the meal itself
4. Similar to World cuisine, the meal could be scored to gauge popularity/ease of cooking etc and maybe the recipes could even be collated into an online recipe book for other iU3a members to access and enjoy
5. Deciding the next recipes could be discussed within the group or maybe a choice of 3 could be suggested and a vote take place

Results

- Communal Cuisine was warmly welcomed, not to replace World Cuisine but as a potential new group using hybrid methods. People were generally enthusiastic although there were some concerns...
- Wendy from World Cuisine received feedback from some of her group's members which revealed people's worries about lack of vegetarian options and not wanting to eat whilst online, but these issues can be remedied as I intended for there to be a veggie option under the umbrella of inclusion, and of course there is no obligation to eat whilst online
- As no-one at this current time wishes to lead this group, despite my allocated time on this project ending this month, we discussed the potential for me to continue my work with iU3a in the summer/autumn and launch a pilot of Communal cuisine, which would give me immense pleasure to see it come to fruition

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Bringing People Together



Community

- The idea of a padlet as a community noticeboard received mixed reviews, some had fears regarding security and privacy but others thought it was a fantastic idea worth pursuing
- However, it was viewed that the social aspect of the iU3a is very important and something relevant to consider further
- As the iU3a is a community of like minded people with a common view of 'extending themselves' through learning I feel this is a concept that is worth celebrating and promoting further

- This brought the discussion to the philosophical concept of the iU3a
- The university gives people agency and there could be a need for this image of retired people 'doing for themselves' to be promoted in the wider world to counteract traditional views that some participants felt of a generation of people that 'need assistance'
- The idea of the institution being an 'influencer' was considered to provide a fresh perspective and potentially change the discourse around the older generations
- One idea was printing the Bulletin for people to read in libraries, once fully reopen, which also has the added advantage of potentially increasing membership numbers

- Overall, what is needed for the future of iU3a groups is a flexible approach and consideration for all members' views
- Further, and perhaps regular, discussion seems to be required to ensure inclusivity of all members, according to their preferences regarding interest group delivery going forward
- A plan for the new initiative of a Community Noticeboard, possibly with next semester's student from Londonmet will be considered
- I look forward to inviting you and the wider membership to the launch of Communal Cuisine soon...

u3a



Islington