

The Valley Bowmen of Huddersfield

Membership Survey 2025

Introduction

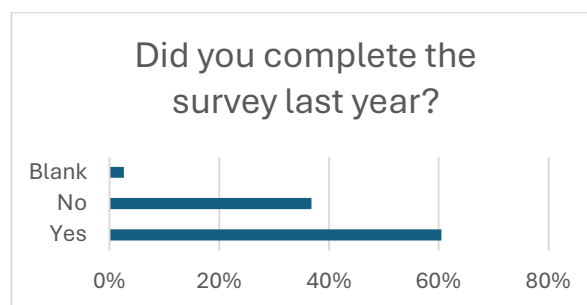
The one standout item that was mentioned by a significant number of respondents was the state of the car park. By now I hope that most of you will have seen the groundwork carried out to remedy the situation.

Aggregating all the likes, dislikes and general comments, if you exclude any relating to the car park and those giving generic positive feedback, there were a total of 48 unique “suggestions” all of which will be fed back to the committee for consideration. Hopefully over the coming months you will again see improvements to the club, or new initiatives, as a result of your input.

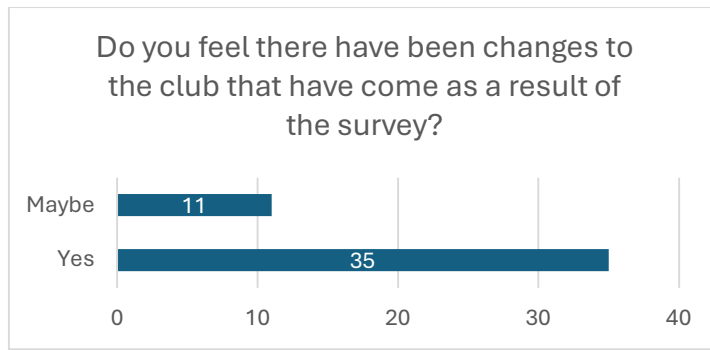
Survey Results

The survey was open over Christmas and New Year and received a total of 76 responses (up from 65 in 2024). As individuals, this represents 37% of the 205 members insured to shoot as of January 2025 (again, a slight increase in participation from the previous year). However, a number of respondents were representing someone else alongside themselves in the survey, and including these members gives a response count of 94 – almost half the 205 members represented.

62% of respondents were continuing members, who had filled out the survey the previous year. The remaining 38% did not respond last year. Of those who had not completed the survey, the majority (17 out of 28) joined within the last year and so would not have been eligible to do so in 2024.



What is promising is that none of the respondents said they felt no changes had been made as a result of the previous survey. Out of those who answered the question, 76% (35 of 46) thought that there had been changes as a result. The remaining 24% (11 of 46) thought that there had “maybe” been changes. It is again worth noting that 17 of the 30 that did not respond were new members joining in 2024 and thus would have been unable to comment on possible changes.



What made you join the club and what is it that makes you remain a member of Valley Bowmen?

72 people responded to this question, and every response was unique.

Reasons for joining included wanting to try the sport, pick up a new hobby, as a joint pastime with other family members, for fitness gains, as a replacement for a previous club, or as a break from work. Reasons for joining this specific club included the juniors section, the location, and 24/7 access to the range.

Reasons for remaining a member included support from more senior archers, selection of social events, the committee, and the other members. The people involved in the club were heavily mentioned in responses – it is clear that there is a sense of community at the club that many members value.

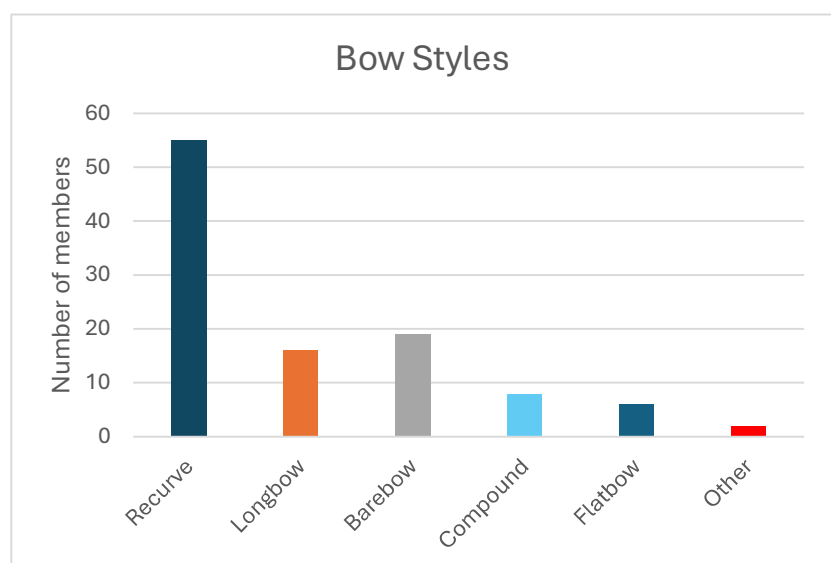
Bowstyle

As expected, the majority of members answering this survey reported shooting recurve (58% of members, including 39 members shooting solely recurve).

It is important to note that many members reported shooting more than one style – 22 of the 76 respondents (29%). Common combinations included recurve and longbow, and recurve and recurve barebow, although some members reported up to four bow styles.

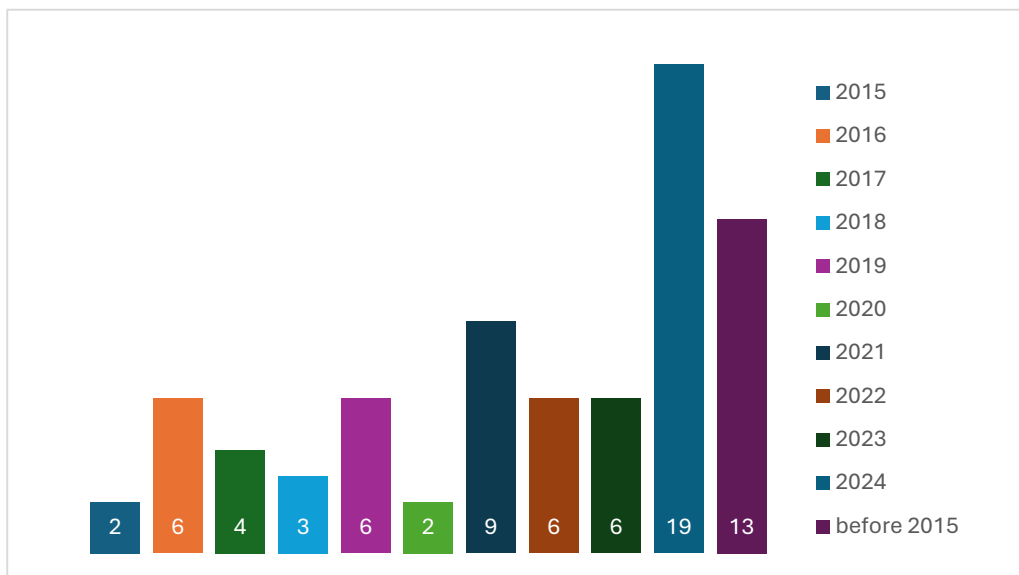
A small number of respondents mentioned shooting less common bow styles such as flatbow.

Recurve	55
Longbow	16
Barebow	19
Compound	8
Flatbow	6
Other	2



Year of joining

There was a good spread of years demonstrated in answers, although more people answering 2024 (19) and before 2015 (13) than any of the other years. These two categories alone accounted for more than 40% of the responses.



Shooting frequency

The majority of respondents reported shooting at least once per week (65%), with over a third shooting two or more times a week. 85% shoot at least once per month. Of those who did not shoot regularly, reasons included work commitments, lack of time, weather, availability of the range on a Saturday due to beginner courses, and being unclear on opening times. Reasons given for not having shot within the last six months included work and family commitments, health issues, and inclination.

Shooting Frequency	%
Two or more times a week	35%
Once a week	30%
Once or twice a month	20%
Less than once a month	8%
I've not shot in the last 6 months	7%

Primary motivations to shoot

There were 16 different combinations of answers to this question, the joint most common combinations of reasons being:

“I'm a casual shooter, I just enjoy shooting”, “I'm a casual shooter, I just enjoy shooting; As a social activity”, and “As a social activity; I shoot as a personal challenge to improve my score”.

Looking at the individual motivations, we can see that the primary motivation is as a personal challenge to improve score. Shooting as a social activity and just because it is enjoyable are also top motivations. Interestingly, competing is not a primary motivator for many people.

Motivation	Count
I shoot as a personal challenge to improve my score	38
As a social activity	30
I'm a casual shooter, I just enjoy shooting	30
I want to compete (at club level)	9
I want to compete (at county/national level)	4
As recuperation	1

Participation in club events:

Respondents were most likely to have participated in club sessions and fun shoots, with external competitions being the least likely to have been attended.

	Yes	Might	No
Club sessions	50%	21%	29%
Club competitions	35%	23%	43%
Fun shoots	49%	33%	18%
External competitions	20%	31%	49%
Social events	40%	32%	29%

Commonly mentioned factors for not participating in club events included lack of time due to work and/or family commitments, lack of interest in attending (particularly competitions), and wanting to improve before taking part in shoots. Other answers included sometimes being too busy, that other members can be “clicky”, and that many events are held on Sundays.

Are there any events you think the club could organise (either sporting or social)?

Suggestions included:

- More interclub shoots
- Female only shoots
- Club knockout competition
- Shorter club competitions which do not take up a whole day
- Options to try different bowstyles or types of shooting (longbow, clout, field archery etc).
- Attendance at local county fairs, for example Honley Show
- Offering tasters for emergency service workers
- Information and skills sessions, such as equipment fixing, arrow making
- Social trip to a national competition – for inspiration
- More quiz nights
- More games nights

What are the top 3 things you like about the club?

The majority of comments mentioned the friendliness and/or support of other members, with some members were even mentioned by name for their positive contributions. The facilities and access to them were also mentioned by many members, with location of the club also being mentioned a number of times.

Is there anything you don't like about the club?

The standout issue in this comment was around car parking (20 comments). This is being addressed so will hopefully not be so much of an issue in the next survey! There were a couple of comments mentioning not feeling part of the community. This was more concerning, and potentially harder to address, especially the comments around cliques and unwelcoming members at shoots and socials. Suggestions which may be more immediately solvable include adding coat hooks, reminding new and existing members of etiquette, looking into whether the locking up process could be simpler, and whether scores always need to be countersigned.

Suggestions

A number of comments mentioned the club should keep doing what it's doing, or that there was nothing else the respondents would like to suggest.

In terms of suggestions, thoughts around things the club should be doing more of included:

- Instigating a club league to encourage members to shoot more rounds.
- Providing regular one-to-one coaching sessions, for an hour per week. The respondent mentioned that this may already exist but they are not aware of it.
- Providing more formal/organized coaching.
- Provide a private Facebook group for members. This would allow more communication between members and would help strengthen the sense of community.
- Organise more social events.
- Management of heating during the winter, to avoid paying more than necessary.
- Establishing further connections with the local community, for example through fundraising efforts.
- Better communication from the committee to other members.
- Acknowledgement of different bowstyles and providing coaching specifically for barebow archers.
- Better mentoring/transition of recently qualified beginners.
- Reminder of etiquette and safety rules/expectations, perhaps in the form of a large poster.
- Checking and refilling outdoor target stock at least weekly.
- Educating archers to shoot at a reasonable speed.
- Introduce time slots for Compound archers (due to time taken collecting arrows from longer distances slowing down archers shooting at shorter distances).

Suggestions for things the club should be doing less of included:

- Taster sessions. This is due to it being difficult to find volunteers to cover all sessions, and also due to it being nicer to learn outdoors.

There was also a suggestion of ‘club shoots for Bowmen’, for which it wasn’t clear whether the respondent thought the club should be doing more or fewer. Hopefully they mean fewer as we have removed the “Bowman Series” shoots from the calendar having trialled them for just one year.

Archery GB membership fee

The majority of respondents (50 people, 66%) thought that they did get value for money from their Archery GB membership fee.

The majority of respondents said they would still renew their Archery GB membership if the club held private insurance. Interestingly, 8% of those who felt Archery GB membership was not good value would still renew, with 46% opting for maybe. This indicates that there is more than ‘cost’ value to the membership for a number of people.

Equally interesting is that 18% of those who felt that they in fact did receive good value from Archery GB membership would not renew if the club held private insurance. The survey did not go into reasons for this. It is possible that these people believe that the club insurance would cover their needs sufficiently without needing Archery GB membership, and/or that the additional cost of purchasing Archery GB membership privately would be a deterrent.

Not good value			Good value		
Renew Yes	2	8%	Renew Yes	23	46%
Renew Maybe	12	46%	Renew Maybe	18	36%
Renew No	12	46%	Renew No	9	18%
Total	26		Total	50	

Coaching

43% of respondents mentioned that they had attended coaching sessions in 2024. Amongst those who had not attended coaching, the most common reasons were that they did not want any (31%), or that it was not a convenient time (23%). There were also a number of unique responses, which included health issues, no suitable coaching (for longbow/traditional archery), and just wanting to enjoy shooting.

The majority of members knew that coaching was offered free of charge (86%), and 54% (37 individuals) indicated that they would want to attend should a coaching session from a County/National coach be arranged.

Would you attend coaching?	%
Yes	54%
No	46%

Volunteering

For those who do not regularly help out, the two main factors were time and lack of experience and/or confidence. There were a number of people who mentioned that although they did not feel experienced or confident enough to help yet, they would consider doing so in the future.

Other reasons included it being difficult to travel to the range, difficult to leave family members for that period of time, and not having the patience.

There were a couple of comments about it being difficult to arrange time to help due to work shifts and most events being held at weekends.

General comments

There were several comments about how well the club is doing and offering thanks to the committee and volunteers. Other comments included:

- The signing-in book could be replaced by an electronic solution.
- Tackle projects mentioned in the minutes (such as the car park drainage and cutting back shrubbery) and do this in stages if necessary.
- Acquire 2 new outdoor targets and regularly re-stock new target faces for outdoors.
- Look into onsite storage.
- Encourage more people to volunteer by reiterating that vast experience is not necessary.
- Introduce challenges and progress recording for accountability.
- Enquire about the professions and skills of members so these could be utilised on club projects.
- Organise beginner courses in advance, with coaches assigned on rotation. Provide either lunch or travel expenses for volunteers as a thank you for giving up weekends.
- More sessions with the county coach.