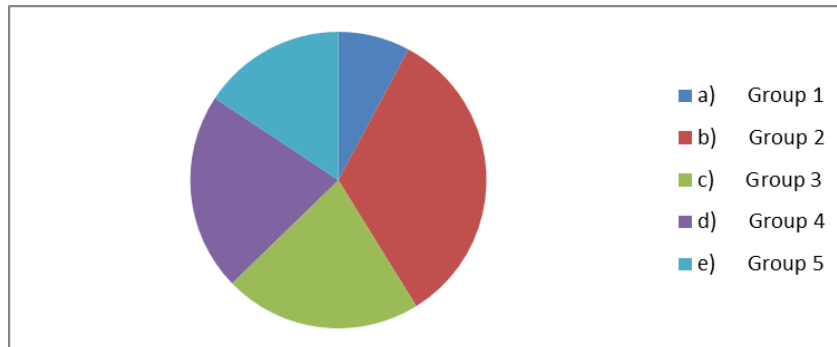


South Molton Strugglers

2021 Survey Results

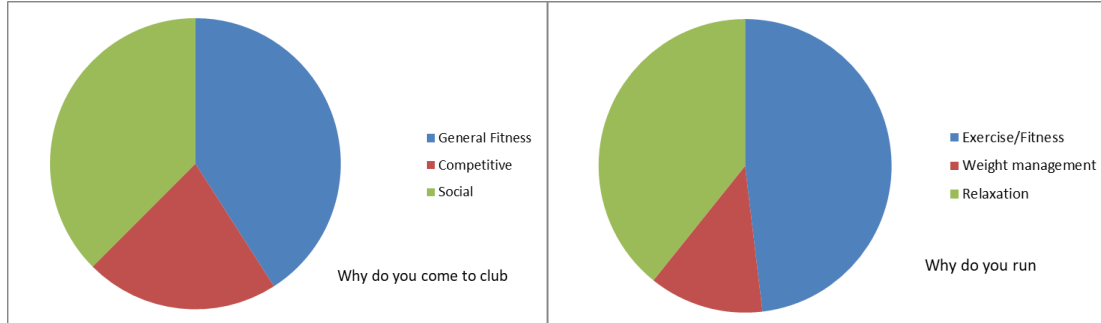


We had 40 responses from a broad selection of participants. Some participate in more than one group eg 4 and 5 so were counted twice here

“I have found the club to most welcoming and friendly. A very committed group of runners.”

“All sessions have been excellent and varied”

“Group 5 numbers seem to have dropped off during 2021 to the point where Group 5 is now usually incorporated into Group 4.”

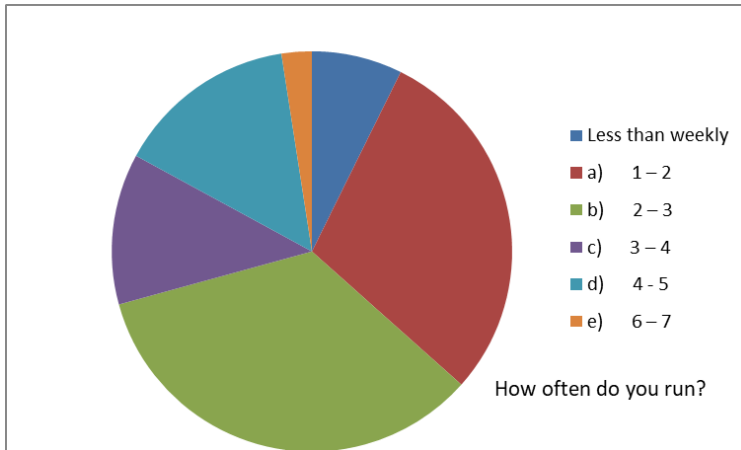


Members come to club for general fitness and social running, relatively few come for competitive reasons – although one member said that is the only reason they come. And we run for fitness and because we find it (curiously) relaxing.

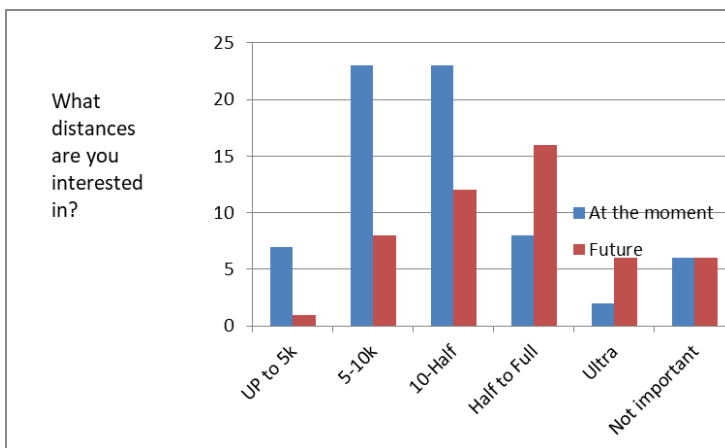
“Personally I don’t like streetlights, I am not always fit for 5 hilly miles and would like an alternative on that night.”

“Just nice to run with others”

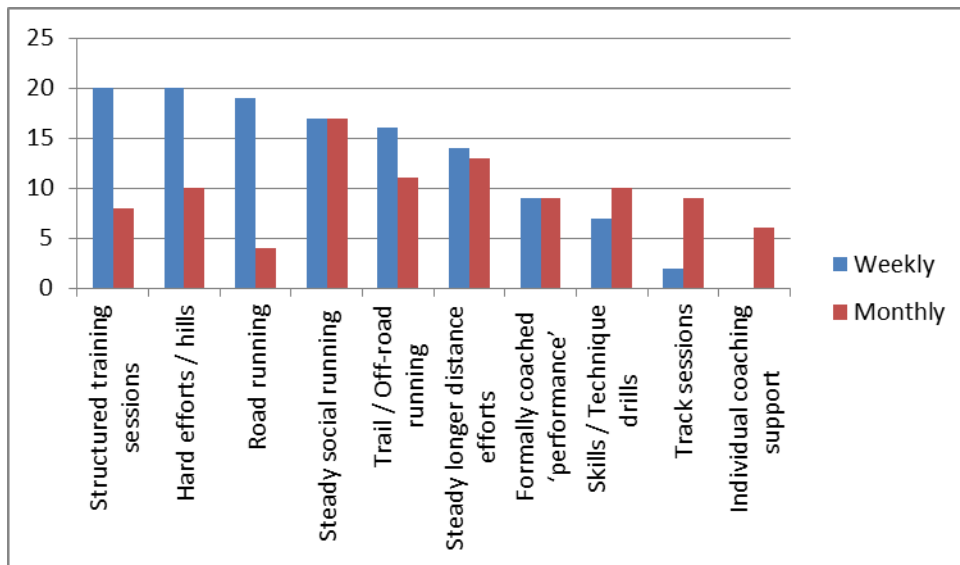
“Enjoy the sessions, good leaders, good variety”



Most of us run 3 times a week or less, so the Club session is significant, and you don't have to feel guilty that you didn't squeeze that last run in, some of the fastest runners only do 3 or less sessions a week. Of course it may depend whether we are training for an event, tapering or recovering.



Perhaps not surprisingly our runners are most interested in 5k to half marathon distances (evenly split) but there is an aspiration to go further in the future.

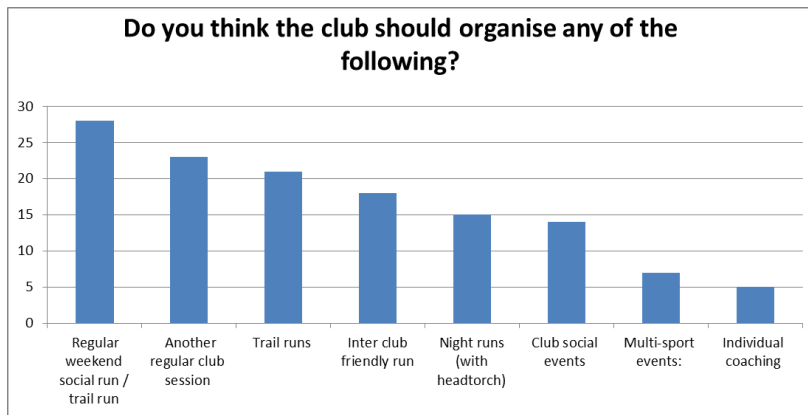


The responses to what do you want from club nights varied a little by group, but there is a desire for weekly structured sessions and efforts with more specialised training on a monthly basis. However road, social running and steady longer distance are all popular. Trail running is slightly lower on the list for club night but was selected as a popular item amongst other things the Club could organise (see below)

“Having a variety of sessions mixed up on different weeks for different abilities, so we get to take part in lots of different aspects of running, is good and keeps it interesting with a social steady run now and again thrown in for nice-ness”

“Would love to have actual trained coaches doing some regular sessions across the groups”

“Important that we remain a club; cater for all abilities, have qualified run leaders, have regular all runner club sessions”



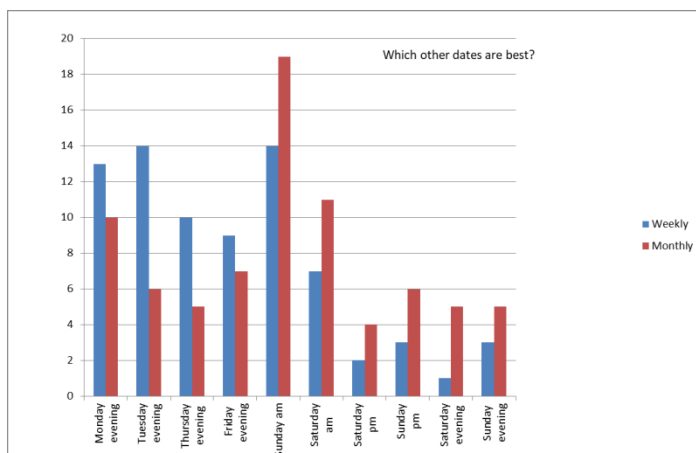
Although members want to run socially the desire for club social events, while not insignificant, is not the biggest priority. Regular weekend events and another regular club session feature strongly. Trail runs may have got an unfair amount of airtime, being in two of the questions, but is clearly a popular interest, and interclub friendlies feature more strongly in the responses from groups 3-5

“More fun events- a few years ago we did a 5m or 10 mile run for those who didn’t go to Branton and then had cake and buffet in the hall afterwards”

“Rather than going to the pub after a club night mid-week, bring along some cake, juice etc and have a get together in the pannier market afterwards”

What is it about cake?

“I prefer trail running and enjoy meeting up out of town on a group run.”



Consistent with the desire for regular weekend runs, Sunday mornings are the most popular particularly on a monthly basis, but Mondays or Tuesdays could prove popular for another club sessions.

All the comments (thank you):

I think all of those ideas are good but do not think that the club should be obliged to provide another club night each week since this would be onerous for leaders, unless there are those leaders who are happy to do it. In this way I think it worked well as it was organized through lockdown with leaders adding what they could.

As for additional activities, special events like socials, coast runs, triathlons, perhaps run yearly, are a lovely idea. Weekend (weekly) runs might also be nice, perhaps as a get-together without the need for an official leader.

I very much enjoyed the summer interclub competition. Great team effort and not too difficult!

The format works however, just one night every week does not allow for any flexibility in getting a structured session if you cannot make a Wednesday. The sessions can be vague with no prior knowledge of what the session might entail. This could be rectified with a bit of a blurb about what each session is going to involve.

Rather than going to the pub after a club night mid-week, bring along some cake, juice etc and have a get together in the pannier market afterwards.

The club needs something to bring everyone back together again such as a club event like a 10km against another club to get all the groups running together again.

More fun events- a few years ago we did a 5m or 10 mile run for those who didn't go to Braunton and then had cake and buffet in the hall afterwards.

Invest time in training new run leaders to deliver good quality sessions across all groups regardless of what pace they think they are.

Club kit – readily available and a variety of sizes –for new members who want to represent the club.

I suspect some of the faster runners have got fed up with me as a leader, so having a couple more faster leaders could lure them back. Hopefully Horse will get back in the next few months but another fast option would be good. I think we've explored all current options though so there is probably no solution at the moment.

I'm concerned about the handicapped events, Streetlights and No Bridges. They don't seem to be very popular, turnout seems to half on Streetlights at the moment. So I think we need to consider other options. Personally I am glad when Streetlights comes around as it gives me a week off leading, but once we have more leaders available again that'll be less of a worry for me. Maybe scrap them altogether or move them to another evening/weekend morning.

I think the Grand Prix is a bit stagnant these days. I think in the 'good old days' people would turn up to the GP events as they knew there'd be a good turn out of members. These days, with a few exceptions, the number of members attending is low, sometimes nobody turns up. Maybe we need to make a bigger thing of the event list to get people enthused about booking up. I imagine half the time people don't know what events are coming up that are on the GP. Maybe try to organise some

post event activities, food/drink etc I do wonder if we should drop the GP point scoring too, I think for most of the club it's of no interest. So it seems a bit pointless ;-)

Having a variety of sessions mixed up on different weeks for different abilities, so we get to take part in lots of different aspects of running, is good and keeps it interesting with a social steady run now and again thrown in for nice-ness! Doing the same thing every week would become dull after a number of months / years

Sometimes it's hard to get out on just a Wednesday

I think, having chatted to a couple of others who have been at club for a while that it might be time to update the streetlights route. There are new housing estates which could be incorporated and avoiding the dark alleyway.

I have enjoyed being a club member this year and would just like to say thank you to the organisers and run leaders for all their hard-work – thank you.

Works well at the moment, despite lack of run leaders. (group 4/5)

Important that we remain a club; cater for all abilities, have qualified run leaders, have regular all runner club sessions

Attend 2 runs a year where we can go as a club – 10k or half marathon

Fridays with Horse back please!

Group 4 runner but Group not always suitable and sometimes have to step up or down which is hard because of numbers.

Can't always find the right group. Group 5 is too fast

Sessions doing efforts, hills etc better than going for a run

Be nice for ad hoc sessions to come up via facebook or website

I think the format should be a mix of weeks on different days

I don't know if the format is working, maybe it worked better in smaller groups on different days.

There is no top group often, mostly group 4

There should be other leaders so Richard doesn't have to take it all the time, well done though Richard

Sometimes the sessions could be longer, depending what we are doing.

Just nice to run with others

Maybe a 10 minute warm up at 6.45

Would love a trail run – Dunkery Beacon

Enjoy the sessions, good leaders, good variety

All sessions have been excellent and varied

I have found the club to most welcoming and friendly. A very committed group of runners.

I have enjoyed all the sessions I have been able to attend.

I would welcome another session during the week or some monthly events.

I really like how the club was kept going through lockdown with different days and places. Maybe this is something that could be done in the summer

Some parameters should be given for each group, distance speed etc

Likie squash and biscuits

Like to hear achievements for all , not just those who have done well

Maybe do short blocks (3-4 weeks) on another day, but not long term.

All is good. You all put in a lot of effort to offer a variety of stuff which everybody appreciates.

I think people will drift in and out of the club. Lockdown has meant that people have run together elsewhere and that's fine but I think everyone still sees Strugglers are their main running group and are proud of it.

Perhaps we could have an open meeting quarterly to raise issues and ideas for the committee to take away and consider.

Personally I don't like streetlights, I am not always fit for 5 hilly miles and would like an alternative on that night.

Not keen on the summer relays – travel, long evening and pressure to compete (but the buffets are good).

Would love to actual trained coaches doing some regular sessions across the groups

More activities involving mixed abilities – otherwise you don't get to speak to some people in the club

Use the Carter Cup more, seems a bit woolly when coaches ask for nominees.

I do not think the club 'should' organise some of the other activities but it would be great if they 'could' occasionally organise some. Club has enabled me to meet other runners & go out with them on non club runs. I can continue to do this with or without club's involvement.

If there could be an occasional offer of an alternative group run on a streetlights evening, I'd be up for that and appreciate a run leader may not be available.

I prefer trail running and enjoy meeting up out of town on a group run.

I think some of the suggestions of doing more with club would be determined by season. I have no problem with running in poor weather but would not relish the prospect of standing around on a drill/techniques session on a wet & cold evening in January but it would be ok on a wet evening in July!

I'd like to add I am very grateful to all involved in keeping SMS going and also to the run leaders who give up their run each week to plan ours.

I think most of those should be things we arrange ourselves and I wouldn't expect that of club or the volunteers. I think it would be nice to have a monthly social run (on club night) where we all run together and have the option to have a drink together after.

I'm happy for Wednesday to remain my run club night.

I think it would be useful to just simply ask regulars that have not been coming to club recently what the reason is. I don't think there is anything wrong with club 😊

I've not been at club recently as I have had an injury and am now struggling to be motivated to get back running when I know I am unfit and will struggle! Also, over lock down I have gotten used to staying in next to the fire on cold nights so it makes it harder to get out to club now!

Group 5 numbers seem to have dropped off during 2021 to the point where Group 5 is now usually incorporated into Group 4.

I often have good intentions to attend club on a Wednesday but usually end up going out earlier (straight after work) for a solo run for the following reasons:

a) Helps to clear my head immediately after a tough day at work (working from home since March 2020), enables me to eat at a usual time and with the family, enables me to be back in time to help with childrens' bedtimes etc. I can guarantee that I get some decent speed work / efforts in which is not always the case when Groups 4&5 are combined. Group 5 attendance has dropped off recently so a number usual of my running friends are unlikely to be there anyway. Allows for some relaxation before bed.

In view of the above, I feel that an earlier start time would suit me personally. For me, a start at 18:00 (or earlier if possible but I suspect unworkable for some) would reduce the 'dead time' between work and club whilst also allowing me to eat at a more usual time and to have a short relaxation before bed.

The bookable sessions also seemed quite popular and gave the coaches a greater degree of flexibility. It might be interesting to see what time these sessions were typically scheduled for?

The Sandyway and Stowford races with Ilfracombe RC always seemed to be popular.

The Grand Prix was also a good way of encouraging members to attend some of the local races.

I really hope the ND Relays recommence in 2022.

Sessions based on timed efforts (rather than distance) can be inclusive for all runners and would probably improve the performance of those in the lower groups, although I'm unsure if there is a demand for this.

The current club format is very good, sometimes a little more verbal pushing (shouting) can assist in achieving goals.

As always family priorities take precedent and committing to more than one club activity will be difficult to attend regularly.

An occasional parent/child event might work.

Please ensure the club remains inclusive for all abilities and limit any potential splintering of groups.

Many thanks for your continued hard work.