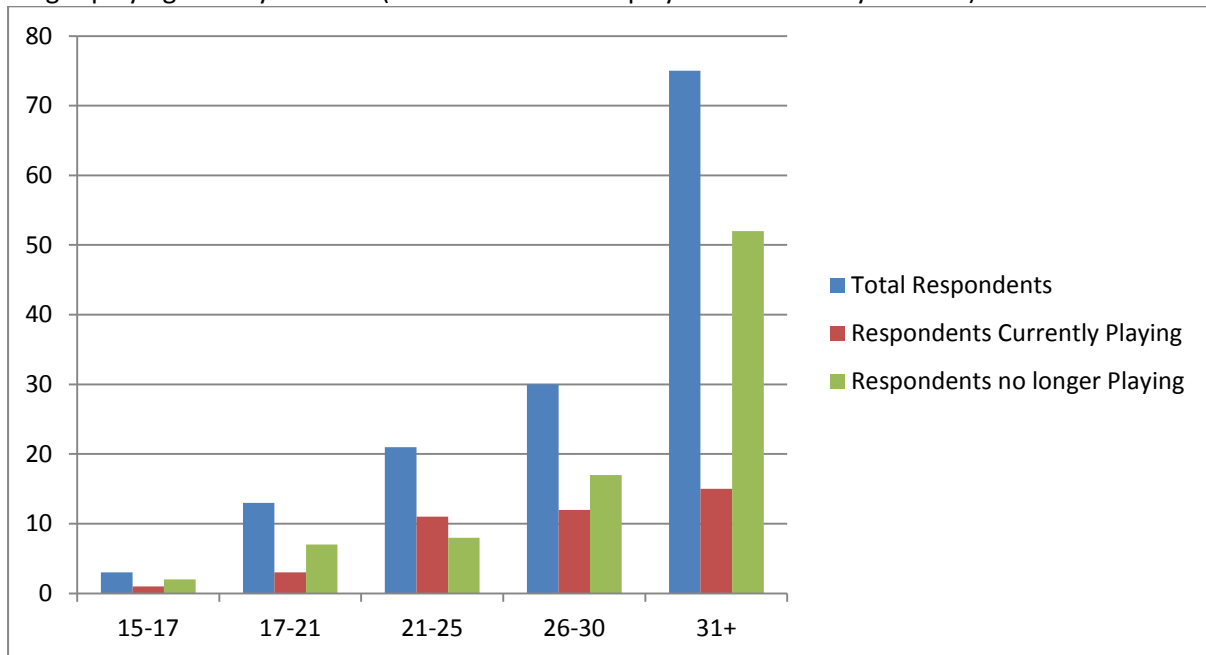


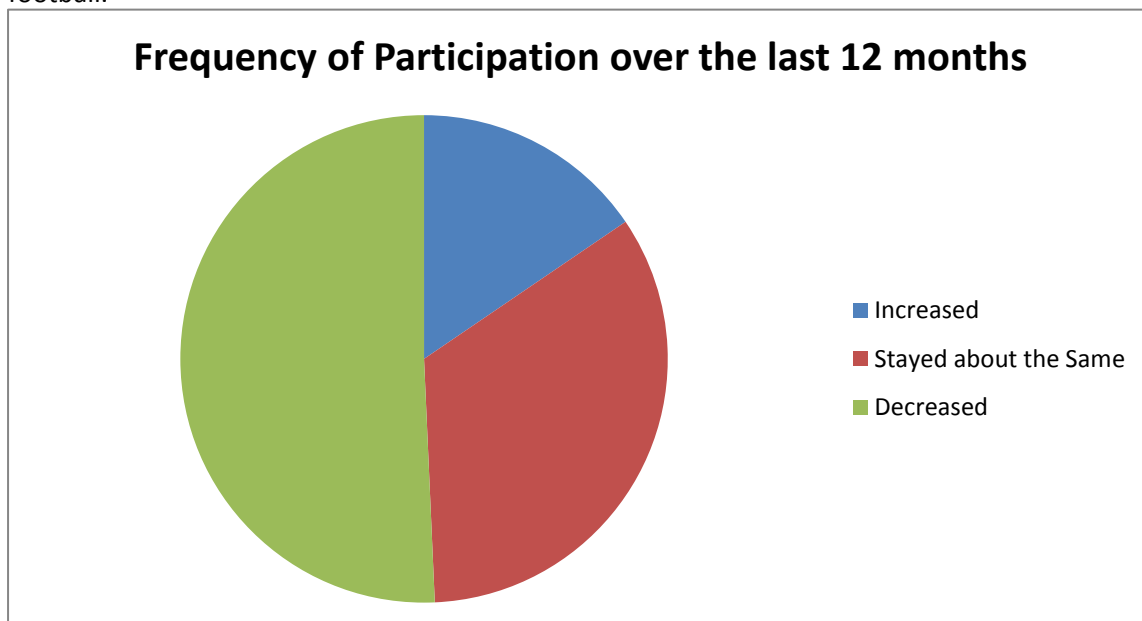
Overview

In total 142 people responded to our Sunday League survey and gave us their opinions, suggestions and feedback on the league. Of these 142 people, 42 were current Sunday League players with 86 no longer playing Sunday Football (the rest have never played adult Sunday football).



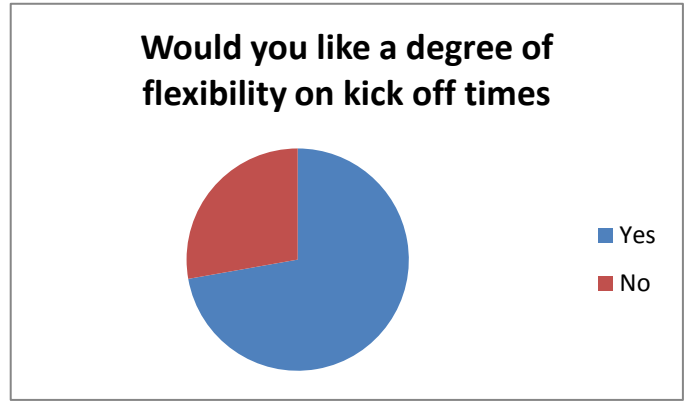
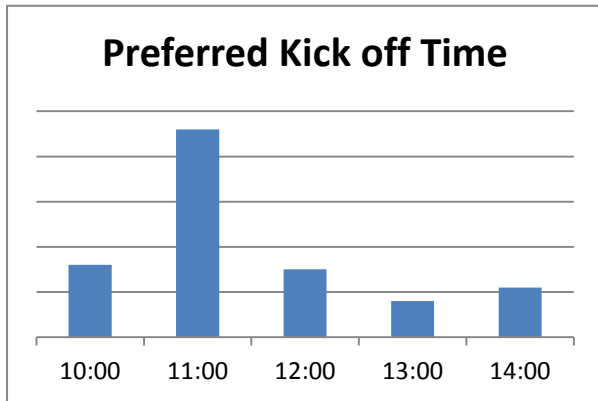
The majority of those no longer playing Sunday Football were age 31 or over. This could suggest an aging demographic of those who are interested in Sunday football and may also explain why they are no longer playing. Of the 42 current players who responded 38 of these were aged 21+, bringing in younger players will clearly be important for the league to continue.

Concerning just over 50% of the respondents said their participation in all football had decreased over the last 12 months. The vast majority of these who now play less football were aged 31+ which would suggest age was a factor however more could still be done to help keep these active in football. Participants in their teens and 20s were mainly playing more or the same amount of football.



Herefordshire FA Sunday League Survey

When it came to suggestions for the Sunday League, 11am kick offs were overwhelmingly favoured. However, whilst **11:00 was clearly the preferred kick off time**, almost 75% of the respondents said they would like a degree of flexibility with their kick off time. One suggestion was made that teams could select the kick off time for their home games. Alternative suggestions included rotating between a couple of staggered kick off times each week (like the Veterans League). This could fit around team schedules week on week providing sufficient notice is given and both teams agree. The majority of players would like subs or weekly **match fees to not exceed £3 a week per player**.

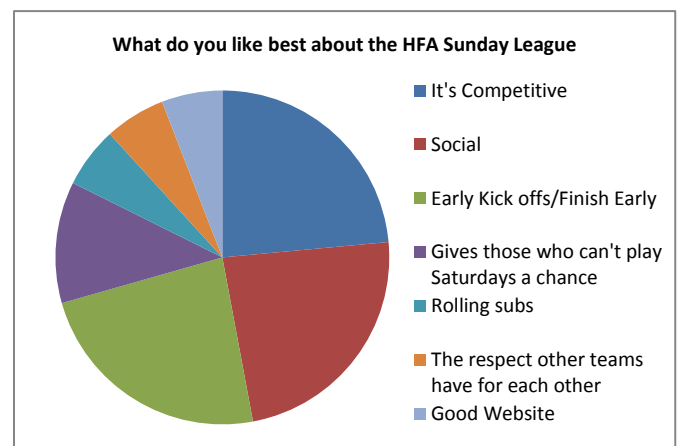
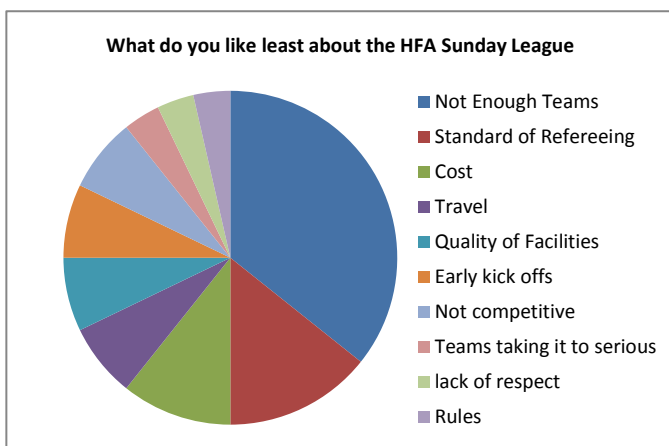


Cost was identified in a number of responses as either a barrier to participation in Sunday League football or an area which could be improved considerably. The main costs of referees and facility hire were mentioned on several occasions as excessive. Subsidies or incentives to help reduce these costs were also suggested as well as alternative arrangements or sponsorships that may help.

Central locations had been thought of as one way to reduce costs but there was not a significant preference for this option. It appealed to some but players and teams from outside Hereford were less enthusiastic about the idea due to the increased travel and then lack of home games. Making use of Halo facilities in all towns may be a potential approach that could work and help with the travel – especially if an agreement could be made on the cost of using their facilities. Teams with their own ground could carry on as usual with central grounds offered to those who need them.

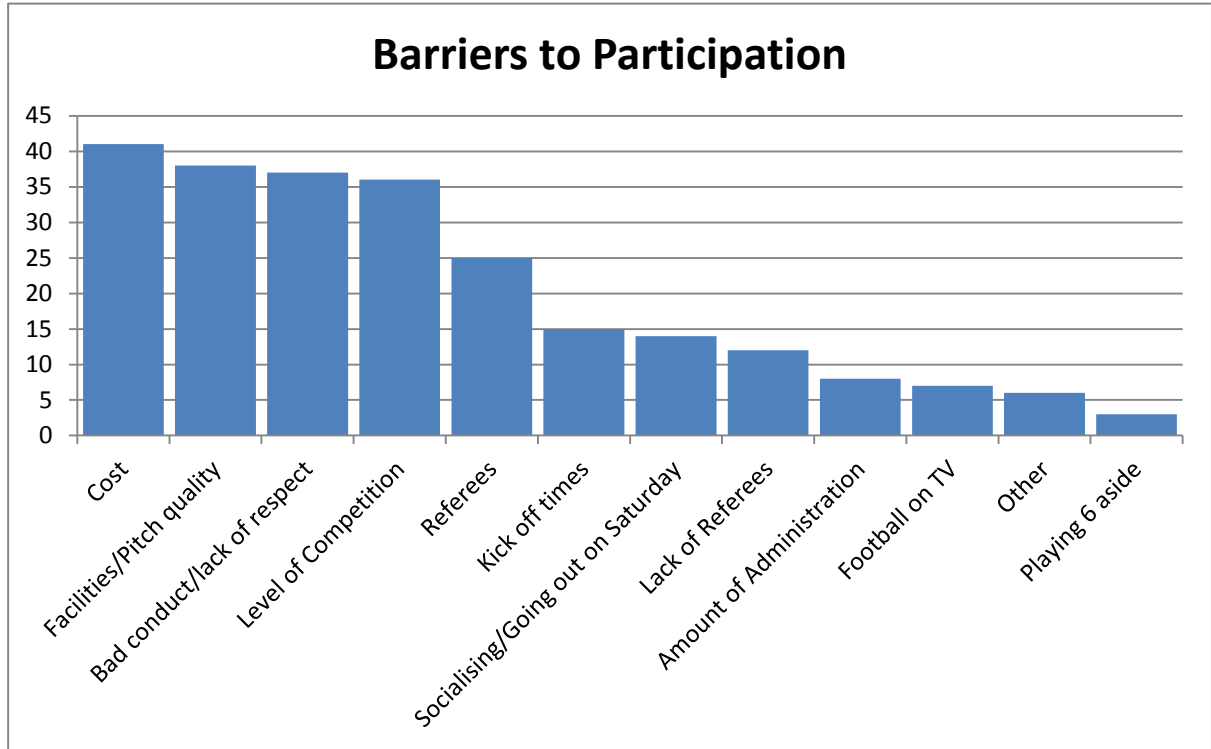
When looking at the typed responses of what current players liked least about the HFA Sunday League, **the main issue was clearly the lack of teams playing**. This was identified on several occasions as a weakness of the league and is something that needs to be addressed urgently. The next biggest were the standard of refereeing and the cost of playing.

Whilst players clearly felt there were not enough teams playing in the Sunday League, they still felt **the league was competitive and social**. These two, along with the Early kick offs/finish were the things that players liked best about the Sunday League.

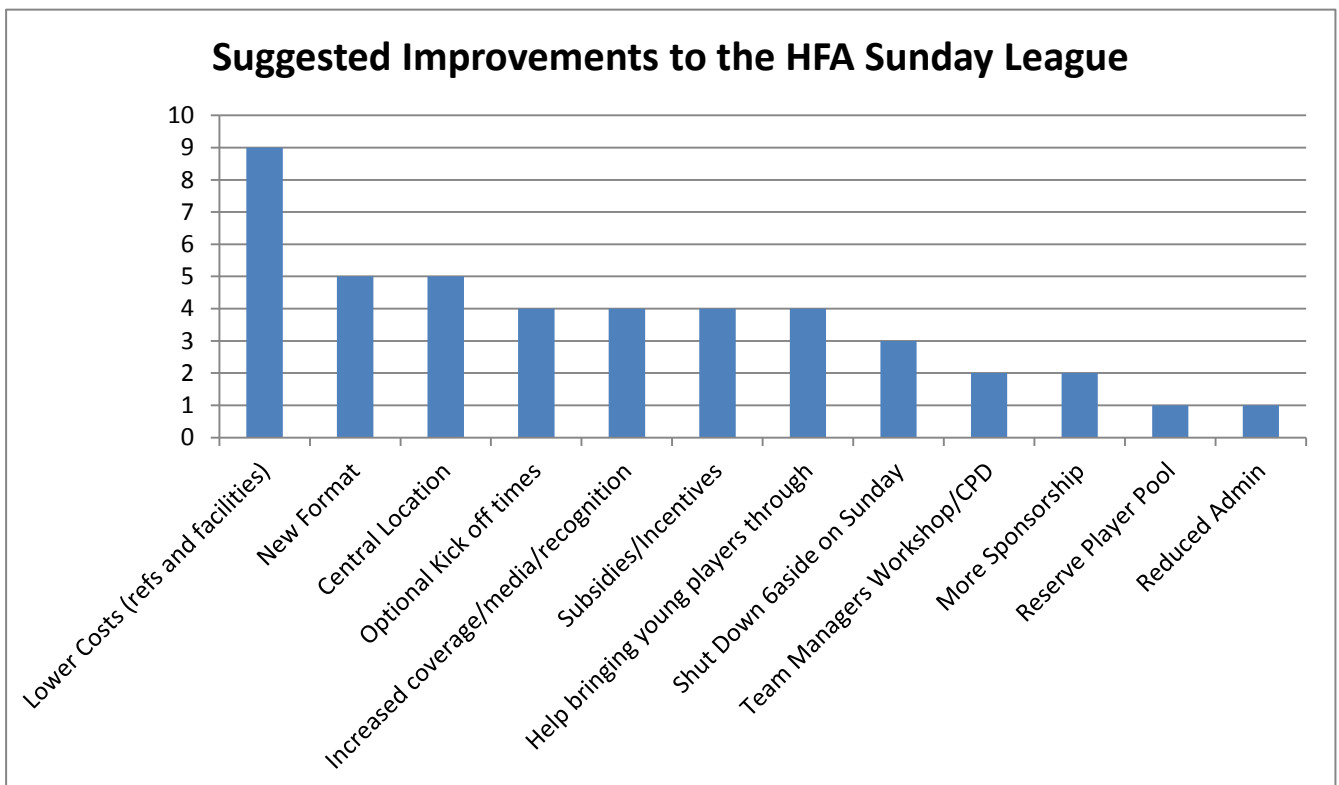


Herefordshire FA Sunday League Survey

In Line with these findings, **the main barriers to participation or factors that have an influence on people's desire to play were: Cost, Facilities/Pitch Quality, Bad Conduct/Lack of Respect and the Level of Competition.** In order to attract players back to the game these were the key areas identified which would need to be improved.



The verbatim suggestions all centred on improving the Cost and level of competition. Increasing or helping with sponsorship and offering incentives and subsidies to competing teams were also mentioned as ways of increasing team numbers. Changing the league format and using central locations need to be looked at as well.



Some highlighted suggestions included:

- *The cost of running a team is far too much and in the end the person running the team will end up covering this. Also you should make players available to play for any team, a selection of players who are not affiliated to a club who other team can call and request a player or players for a match due to lack of players*
- *The league it too stop start. Fixtures are not put up far enough in advance. (Saturday is the same.) The league fixtures are too random. Teams play each other twice sometimes before others have been played. Rearrangements are unavoidable but these could be put to the end of fixture list.*
- *Encourage Saturday teams to play their benches on Sundays and/ or get Colts teams to promote Sunday football to their players so young lads get men's football experience. Get some of the old Herefordshire Sunday football legends in for consultation. Is this a nationwide issue? Why not ask other local FAs about how they're doing it?*
- *Listen to what local people want and maybe form a local football forum/group with representatives from all local leagues or that to discuss ideas etc. Marketing campaigns and communication - increase coverage of the league and get the message out. Taster sessions and classes - maybe run taster or try give people the opportunity to have a taster of being a referee, a coach, running a club etc. before they commit to undertaking courses or setting up a club. Maybe run classes on helping clubs grow, setting club up, admin, social media etc Engagement with partner organisations - former some partnerships or gain sponsorship from local business*
- *Make the team sign up free or give some sort of reward like kit or free games*
- *More coverage of the league in media. Report on games, top goal scorers or man of matches. Recognition to those who run teams. Change the format of the league. Play everyone twice. Then top 4 teams play each other at neutral venues. Final at Edgar Street. Stop league during winter months. Very hard to motivate yourself on a cold Sunday morning.*
- *Not enough teams anymore think the costs of hiring pitches paying referees cost of kits nets flags it takes its toll but we need to see more youth players coming into men's football maybe perhaps bring some under18s side into Sunday league and start some under23s teams*
- *Promote the league to U23 teams as a potential development league, could the Sunday Cup also be expanded by inviting U17 or U18 teams*
- *Maybe afternoon kick-offs would be preferred by the younger guys? The local villages also had teams entered in the competition as well as the Hereford based sides but where are they now? I know personally that as well as playing being part of the back-room folks helping with pitches, kit, admin, etc., etc. is a lot of work and wasn't perhaps always fully appreciated. A lot of these back-room people were older guys who had played football in their time and wanted to support local village teams so they had a presence in the competitions and it wasn't all about the City teams. The local pub was usually the H.Q. for the sides but a lot of these pubs have closed. How about the Hereford County F.A. offering a financial incentive for new start-up clubs and perhaps a cash prize for league/cup winners as well as the usual trophies.*