REPORT FOR ARCHERY GB

Archery GB Neurodiversity Training

Neurodiversity inclusion within the archery community

Findings from 226 neurodivergent archers and 53 coaches



THE LIVERPOOL CENTRE FOR OLYMPIC RESEARCH ON INCLUSION

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

archery GB

Access Sport

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Executive Summary

This report assesses the inclusivity of archery for neurodivergent participants by examining current practices within the sport. Drawing on perspectives from both Archery GB archers and coaches, the report identifies achievements alongside areas requiring further development, thereby offering UK sport providers actionable insights that will benefit both practice and policy. Additionally, this study establishes a baseline for measuring the impact of Archery GB's workshops with Access Sport held in the first half of 2025. These workshops aimed at developing coaches' and volunteers' skills for working with neurodivergent archers.

Between 29th January, 2025 and 1st April, 2025 two surveys were launched targeting specifically Archery GB coaches and neurodivergent archers. A total of 226 surveys were completed by archers and 53 by coaches. It is worth noting that respondents of the archers survey had to identify as neurodivergent to be able to participate in the survey. Each survey also contained a number of qualitative questions (open-ended), which resulted in the collection of considerable qualitative data, which was analysed thematically.

From the results of this study not only archery emerges as a neurodivergent-friendly sport but also as a practice that positively impacts the social wellbeing of archers. Furthermore, while archery is perceived as inclusive by most archers, results identified some challenges in the actual practice. Increasing awareness on neurodivergences emerges as the necessary step to transform both attitudes and actual practices within the archery community.

The report concludes with a set of recommendations in the direction of transforming attitudes towards neurodivergence; fostering inclusive archery environments that support neurodivergence; enhancing awareness of archery as a neurodivergent-friendly sport and enabling effective coaching of neurodivergent archers by co-creating solutions WITH neurodivergent archers and coaches.

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · AT A GLANCE

Archery works for neurodivergent archers. Coaching needs to catch up.

What 226 neurodivergent archers and 53 coaches told us about belonging, focus and the training coaches need. Survey ran 29 January to 1 April 2025.



WHO TOOK PART

226 **archers** who identify as neurodivergent

53 **coaches** sharing their experience and training

WHAT ARCHERS TOLD US

79% say archery **benefits their** social life

92% say archery **helps their focus** and concentration

WHAT COACHES TOLD US

90% say neurodivergent archers **perform at the same level** as other archers

58.5% have **no specialised training** in coaching neurodivergent archers

94% say neurodiversity training is **important**

79% want to **learn more** about neurodiversity in archery

→ **The appetite is there: most coaches want the training that most have not yet had.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report. Online surveys of neurodivergent archers (n=226) and coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. Percentages are of respondents to each question.

Archery GB

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT

1. Introduction

Why neurodiversity inclusion in archery matters



Engaging in sport has been proven to improve wellbeing and overall quality of life (Côté-Leclerc et al., 2017; Edwards et al., 2024), benefitting social development, social cohesion and social participation (Lange et al., 2025). Yet, research shows that disabled people often face limited sporting opportunities shaped by the social environment rather than personal preference (Brittain, et al., 2020). This is perhaps as a result of sport usually taking place in distinctly ableist spaces, emphasising bodily performance and conformity to normative standards (Peuravaara, 2015).

More broadly, disabled people frequently encounter systemic barriers that impede their participation in sporting activities. These barriers encompass inadequate awareness among non-disabled stakeholders regarding inclusive practices and appropriate accommodation strategies for team integration. Additional barriers include a lack of opportunities and programmes for training and competition, physically inaccessible sporting facilities and infrastructure, and limited dissemination of information regarding available resources and support services (DePauw and Gavron, 2005; Kiuppis, 2018).

Neurodiversity affects approximately 20% of the UK population and encompasses natural variations in brain functioning, including differences in attention, learning,

social processing, and emotional regulation. It recognises that neurological diversity is a fundamental human characteristic rather than an anomaly. Neurodivergent individuals include those with autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, Tourette's syndrome, dyspraxia, dyslexia, and dyscalculia, while neurotypical individuals do not present these conditions.

Currently, there is insufficient research regarding the experiences of neurodivergent archers in sport as well as the likelihood of them encountering challenges, barriers, lack of knowledge and/or negative attitudes regarding neurodiversity. Moreover, much less is known about the preparedness and awareness of coaches of neurodiversity. This limited knowledge is set against the backdrop of present and foreseeable systemic challenges within grassroot sports in the UK. Empirical evidence indicates that neurodivergent children demonstrate lower rates of sports participation compared to their neurotypical peers, despite research suggesting they may derive greater benefits from athletic engagement across multiple domains, including physical health outcomes, social integration, and psychological well-being (Sheaffer et al., 2025; Youth Sport Trust, 2024).It is, however, promising that research also indicates that neurodivergent individuals have a greater desire to engage in sport and exercise than neurotypical individuals (Edwards et al., 2024). Eliminating barriers and constraints to access to sport is imperative.

Inclusion in sport is defined as the establishment of environments where all individuals, regardless of their background, ability, or identity, can meaningfully participate in sporting activities (Oblak et al., 2023). In the UK, inclusion in sport has predominantly been pursued through mainstreaming, whereby responsibility is placed upon national sport organisations. The expectation is that existing structures will ensure sport is inclusive with access for all. Unfortunately, mainstreaming is often described as rhetorical rather than transformative, with limited evidence of substantive changes in practice (Thomas & Guett, 2014). Moreover, scholars argue that mainstreaming is underpinned by ableist beliefs that privilege mainstream institutions as inherently superior to other settings (Campbell, 2011). This privileging of non-disabled sport and bodies not only devalues participation for disabled people but also risks reinforcing segregation, isolation, and policies that restrict their full inclusion in society (Kearney et. al., 2019). The reality is that sport clubs frequently reinforce ableist norms by requiring PWDs to meet similar performance levels as the non-disabled, often excused by the competitive nature of sport, which limits genuine inclusion and perpetuates exclusionary practices (Christiaens & Brittain, 2023).

Participation alone represents an inadequate measure of inclusion, as physical presence does not ensure that individuals experience genuine inclusion within sporting contexts (Kiuppis, 2018). Research shows that disabled people encounter limited sporting opportunities as a result of the social environment as opposed to personal preference (Brittain et al., 2020). Furthermore, accessibility initiatives are frequently limited to the elimination of physical infrastructure barriers, while comprehensive inclusion necessitates addressing communicative accessibility, awareness, and critically, the quality of experience (Nind & Seale, 2009; Parnell et al., 2017).

In the first half of 2025, Archery GB ran a number of neurodiversity training workshops for staff, clubs and volunteers in collaboration with Access Sport. The aim of these workshops was to improve the inclusivity of archery by equipping coaches and volunteers with practical skills and knowledge to engage neurodivergent individuals more effectively in the sport.

This project aims to assess the inclusion of neurodivergent archers within the archery community, drawing on perspectives of archery coaches and neurodivergent archers. Consequently, this report also supports the core philosophy of Archery GB to ensure that the organisation represents all of society, and that every person is respected, valued and encouraged, and is able to give their best as a result.

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT

2. Approach

How the study was conducted



As the national governing body for archery across the United Kingdom, Archery GB serves as the umbrella organisation that unites the sport's four regional associations: the English Archery Association, Archery Northern Ireland, Scottish Archery, and the Welsh Archery Association.

Our research started by collaborating with Archery GB, which involved gathering survey data from two separate surveys targeting archery coaches attending the neurodiversity workshops and archery archers identifying as neurodivergent. The survey questions were based on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales as well as the social model of disability and we worked over the course of months designing the surveys in collaboration with Archery GB (October, 2024 – January, 2025). The survey delivered online using the survey tool JISC Online Surveys.

The coaches' survey consisted of 22 questions whilst the archers survey consisted of 26 questions. Both surveys contained a number of closed-ended questions, open-ended questions and Likert scales. Indeed, the open-ended questions revealed several especially rich responses. Questions 1-9 of both surveys asked basic demographic questions as well as experiences of or with neurodiversity, after which both surveys differed somewhat. Both surveys contained a question at this stage

exploring the respondent's own neurodivergent identity. However, to ensure that the archers responding were neurodivergent, the archers' survey contained screening logic, meaning if the respondent answered "no" to being neurodivergent the survey would end immediately. In light of official diagnosis often taking years, we did not require a diagnosis. Question 4 of the archer's survey did, however, ask whether the respondent had an official diagnosis or self-identified.

For the archer's survey, Questions 10 to 12 asked about the length of archery experience and overall satisfaction with the sport. Question 13, an open-ended question, asked what strengths neurodivergent people bring to the sport. Questions 14 to 19 asked about the respondent's experience of the archery community as a neurodivergent individual, exploring their sense of feeling included and valued. Questions 20 to 25 asked more specifically about the respondents experience of approaches to coaching within archery.

For the coach's survey, questions 10 to 13 asked about their knowledge and experience of neurodiversity. Question 14 asked about the respondent's experience of coaching neurodivergent archers and their contribution to the archery community. Questions 15 to 20 asked more specifically about the coach's neurodiversity training, including past exposure, their desire to attend future training workshops and how the archery community can best support neurodivergent archers.

The online surveys were tested by the research team and members of Archery GB and Access Sport. Once approved, an invitation to participate in the survey, including a link to it, was emailed to members via the Archery GB team on 29th January 2025. On the 30th January, 2025 it was promoted in the Sport & Recreation Alliance newsletter. It was further promoted on the 31st January, 2025 in the Archery GB Members newsletter. Further reminders were conducted by Archery GB's comms team via social media periodically until the survey closed at 5pm on 1st April, 2025.

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · WHO RESPONDED

226 archers. 53 coaches.
The people behind the findings.

Neurodivergent archers from first-year beginners to over a decade on the line, plus coaches, many of them neurodivergent too.



1 · ARCHERS' NEURODIVERGENT CONDITIONS

Autism n=145	64%
ADHD n=114	50%
Dyslexia n=56	25%
Dyspraxia n=31	13.7%
Sensory processing differences · n=27	11.9%

Archers could report more than one condition, so totals add up to more than 100%.

AUTISM AND ADHD

48 autism alone — 21.2% of archers

33 ADHD alone — 14.6% of archers

33 autism and ADHD together, no other condition — 14.6% of archers

2 · DIAGNOSIS AND COACHES

HOW ARCHERS IDENTIFY

68.6%	31.4%
Formally diagnosed 155 archers	**Self-identified** 71 archers

COACHES

39.6%

of coaches **identify as neurodivergent** themselves

3 · ARCHERS' EXPERIENCE IN THE SPORT

19.0%	61.1%	19.9%
Under 1 year new to archery	**1 to 10 years**	**Over 10 years** long-standing archers

→ **Every stage of the archery journey is represented, from beginners to long-standing archers, alongside coaches with lived experience.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Section 2 (Approach and demographics). Online surveys of neurodivergent archers (n=226) and coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. The 1 to 10 years figure (61.1%) is the sum of the 1 to 2, 3 to 5 and 5 to 10 year groups. Autism and ADHD counts are from the report's combination breakdown: 33 archers selected autism and ADHD with no other condition.

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2.1. Demographics – neurodivergent archers

A total of 226 archers took part in the survey; 24 responses (10.6%) were completed on behalf of another person, such as a child. Autism (64%, n=145) and ADHD (50%, n=114) were the most commonly reported conditions, followed by dyslexia (25%, n=56), dyspraxia (13.7%, n=31) and sensory processing differences (11.9%, n=27). Many archers reported more than one condition: 48 (21.2%) reported autism alone, 33 (14.6%) ADHD alone and 33 (14.6%) autism and ADHD with no other condition (see the Who responded infographic and Figure 2 below; the full breakdown is in Figure 1, Appendix 4).

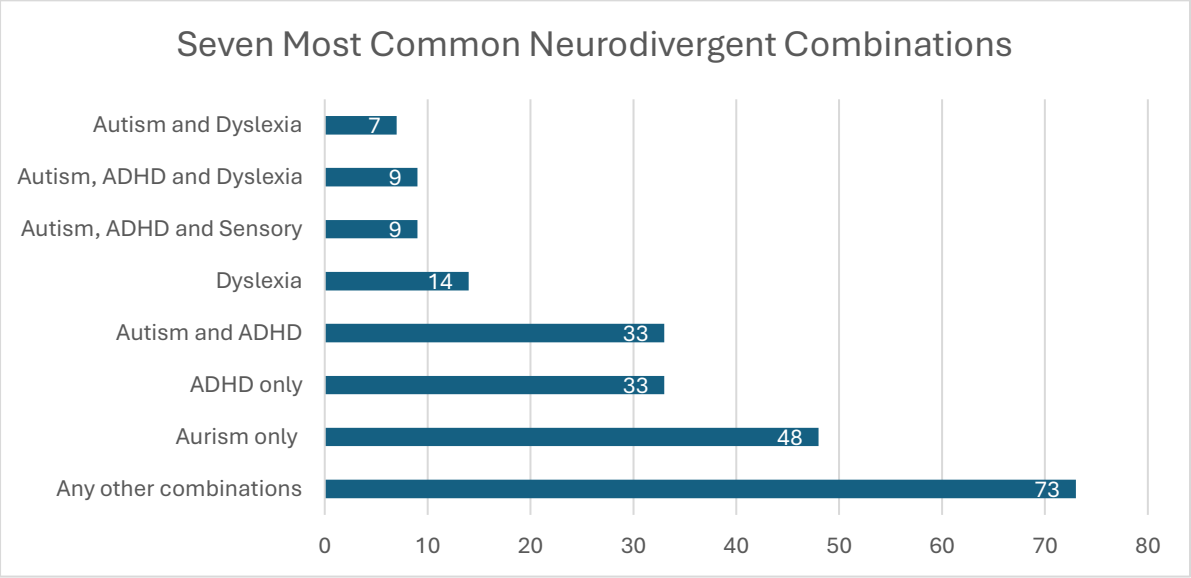


Figure 2 Top 7 Neurodivergent Combinations

When examining the diagnoses versus self-identifications, it was found that most respondents had a formal diagnosis (68.6%. n=155), while a significant proportion relied on self-diagnosis (31.4%, n=71). Interestingly, those self-identifying reported mainly having Autism (80.3%, n=57) and ADHD (54.9%, n=39). Considering their high prevalence in the self-identifying group could indicate diagnostic accessibility issues, awareness gaps, or personal choice. In contrast, conditions like Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Sensory Processing Differences, and Other Neurodivergent Conditions were less prevalent in the self-identifying group. The lower self-identification rates for these conditions could imply that formal diagnosis is more accessible, expected, or standardised compared with Autism and ADHD, where more people appear to be navigating without formal recognition. Dyscalculia and Tourette Syndrome had nearly equal representation in both groups, though both were rare overall.

In terms of gender identity, 51.8% identified as female (n = 117), 37.6% as male (n = 85), 8.8% as non-binary (n = 20), and less than 1% each preferred not to say (n = 2) or self-described (n = 2). Participants' ages were distributed across a wide range: 20.4% were aged 18–24 (n = 46), 17.7% aged 25–34 (n = 40), 22.6% aged 35–44 (n = 51), 17.7% aged 45–54 (n = 40), 8.0% aged 55–64 (n = 18), 4.0% aged 65–74 (n = 9), and 0.4% aged 75 or older (n = 1). Additionally, 8.0% (n = 18) were under 18, as reported by a parent or carer, and 1.3% (n = 3) preferred not to disclose their age.

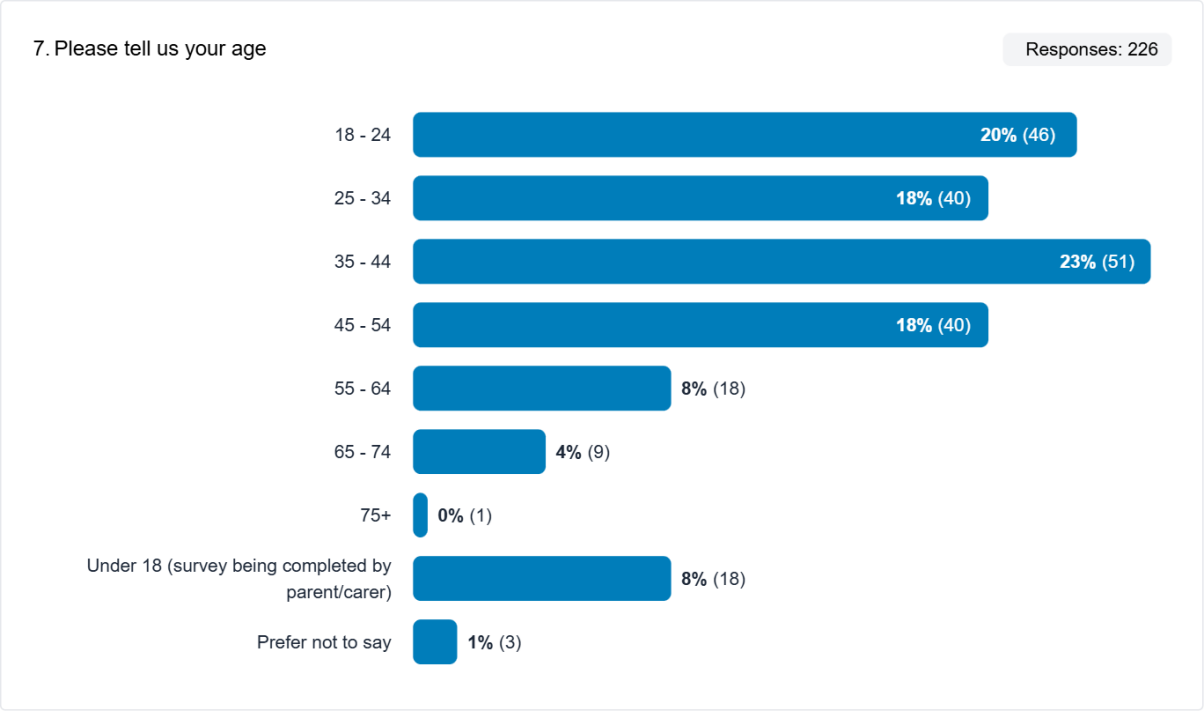


Figure 4. Age of respondents

2.2. Demographics – coaches

Of the 53 respondents, 21 (39.6%) identified as neurodivergent, while 32 (60.4%) did not. Among those who identified as neurodivergent, only 9 participants (17.0% of the total sample) reported having a formal diagnosis, and 12 participants (22.6%) self-identified without a formal diagnosis. When asked about their current experience of neurodivergence, 28% of respondents had neurodivergent children/dependants, whilst 72% responded they regularly work with neurodivergent individuals, thus indicating broad familiarity with neurodivergence.

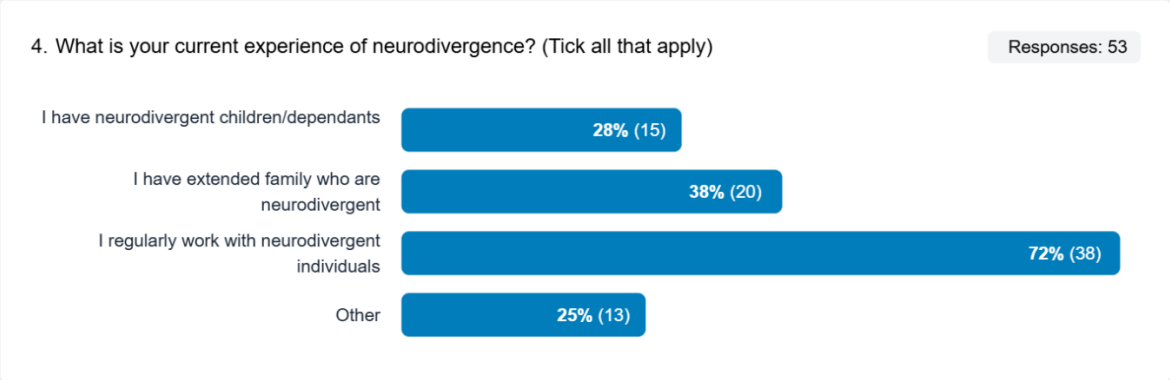


Figure 5. Coaches' experience of neurodivergence

Participants (N = 53) varied in age, gender, and coaching experience. The most represented age groups were 55–64 years (28.3%) and 65–74 years (18.9%), followed by 25–34 years (17.0%) and 45–54 years (17.0%). The sample included two participants (3.8%) under 18 and two (3.8%) aged 18–24. In terms of gender, 49.1% identified as male (n = 26), 47.2% as female (n = 25), and 3.8% as non-binary (n = 2).

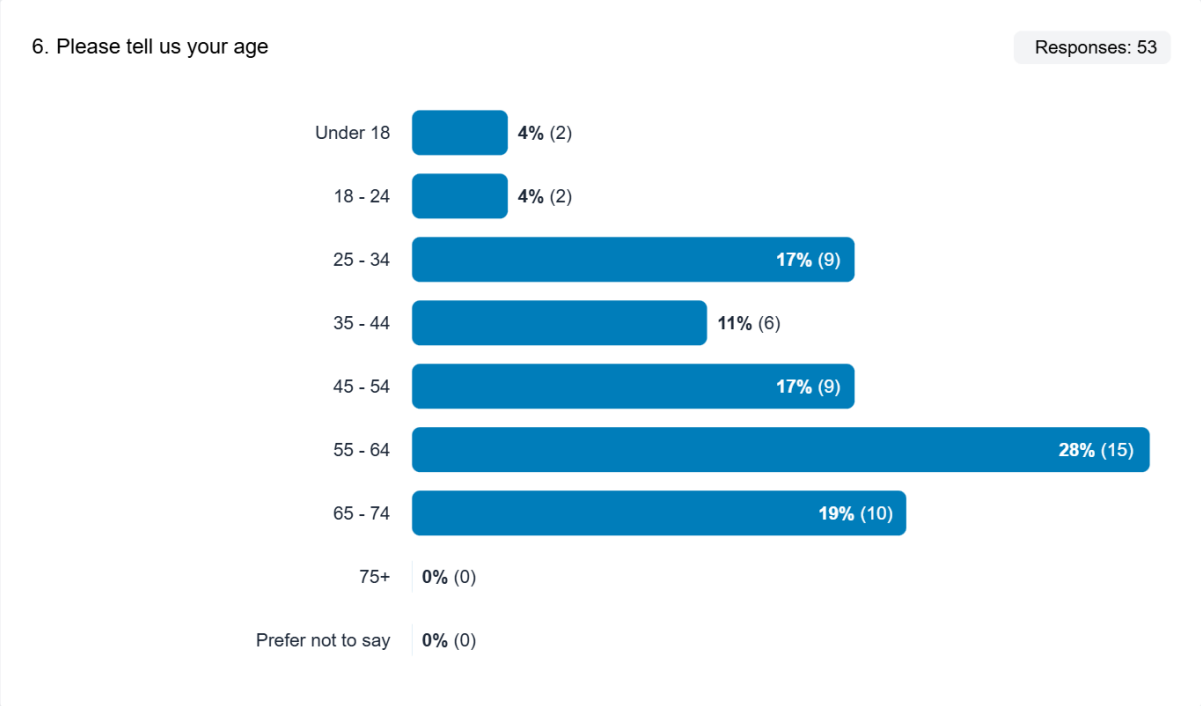


Figure 6. Age of coaches

Coaching experience ranged from less than 1 year to over 10 years. The largest group had more than 10 years of experience (37.7%, n = 20), followed by 1–3 years (22.6%, n = 12), 7–10 years (17.0%, n = 9), 4–6 years (13.2%, n = 7), and less than 1 year (9.4%, n = 5).

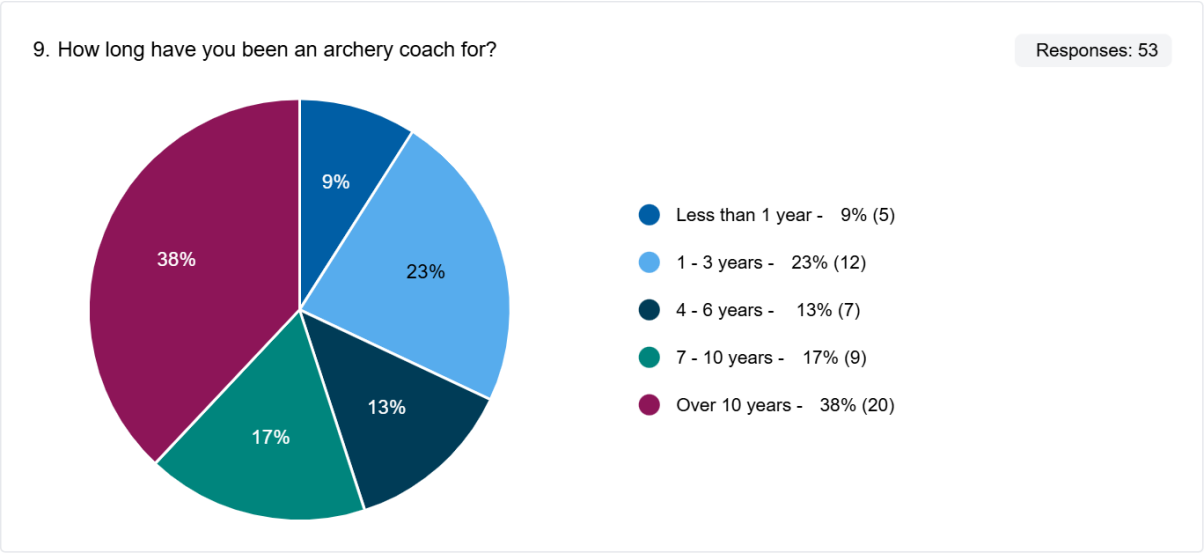


Figure 7. How long have you coached archery?

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT

3. FINDINGS – NEURODIVERGENT ARCHERS

What 226 neurodivergent archers told us



3.1. Community & Belonging

Despite some social anxiety challenges, the data indicates a strong appreciation for the archery community. 79% of respondents felt their social life had been positively affected by being involved in the archery community, thus representing a strong majority. Likewise, a majority of respondents also felt valued within the archery community. Further, 70% of respondents felt connected to others in the archery community, thereby indicating an inclusive community with regards to neurodivergent people. See Figure 8, below, for more information. Notably, participants with ADHD reported stronger social connections than others (see Appendix 1: ADHD Overview). They also felt more connected to others in the community and were more likely to feel that their neurodivergence helped them connect with others. Collectively, these findings suggest that archers with ADHD may experience particularly positive social outcomes through their participation, viewing the community as a space where their neurodivergent traits can enhance connection and belonging. In contrast, autistic participants reported greater difficulty with social interactions and felt less strongly that their neurodivergence supported social connection (see Appendix 2: Autism Overview). Similarly, participants with dyspraxia also indicated lower social connection (see Appendix 3: Dyspraxia

Overview) and were more likely to feel that their neurodivergence made social engagement more challenging. These results indicate that, while still generally positive, autistic archers and those with dyspraxia experience comparatively greater social difficulty within the archery community than peers with other disabilities.

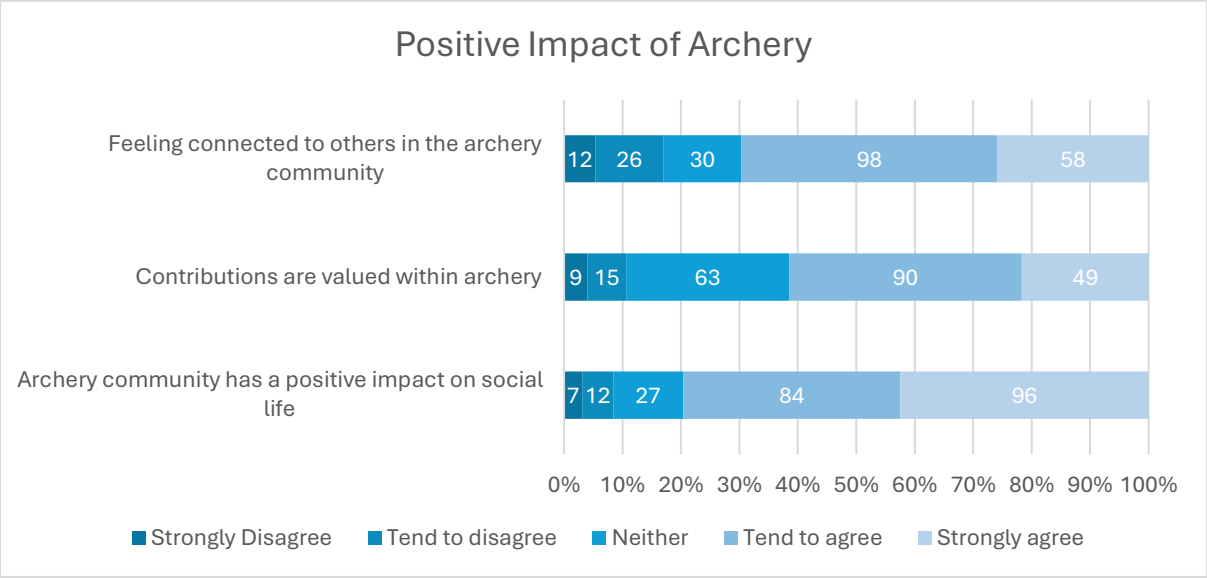


Figure 8 Positive Impact of Archery

The feeling of acceptance came further to light in the open-ended question, where respondents were asked "why do you like archery?". The data seemed to indicate that the archery clubs were seen as accepting spaces where neurodivergent individuals felt less judged and more included than in many other sports or social settings. Indeed, several respondents mentioned making friends for the first time through archery.

Similarly, one respondent commented on the inclusive nature of archery, involving people of all abilities and backgrounds:

> *"You can share a shooting line with an 8 year old, 80 year old, para-archer, Olympian and beginner, and everyone is working on their own shot, round or bow type, no-one gets excluded".*

Another respondent appeared to point out how the archery community provided a sense of belonging for the first time:

> *"The archery community have made me feel normal for the first time… [the club] made me feel welcomed and as times gone on loved".*

One respondent put it simply:

> *"It's a place where my disabilities don't define me".*

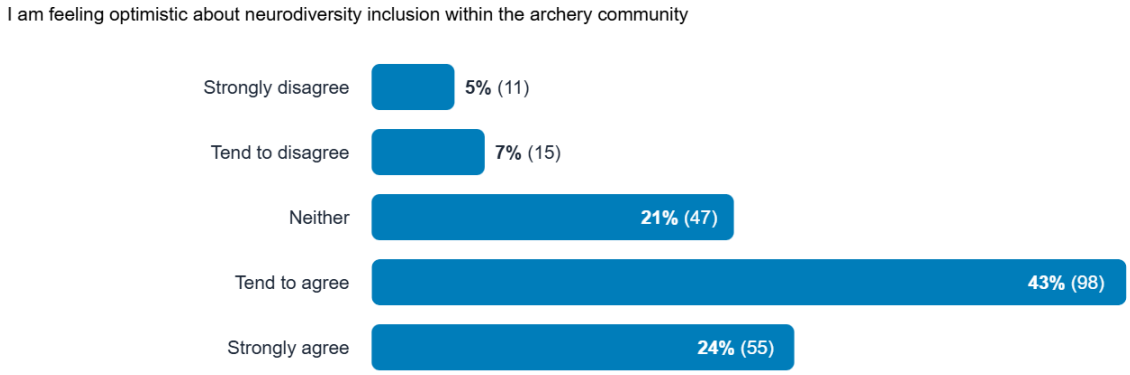


Figure 9. Feeling optimistic about neurodiversity inclusion in archery

Further, 68% of respondents felt optimistic about neurodiversity inclusion within the archery community, which would indicate that archery is already an inclusive sport, valuing inclusivity. Indeed, from the data, it would appear that respondents feel included and a sense of belonging within the archery community, opening up opportunities to not only engage in sport, but also to engage in social interaction, meet people and make friends. Research indicates that participation in sport fosters community inclusivity while providing opportunities for socialisation and the development of meaningful relationships (Howells et al., 2019). Inclusion in sport is defined as the establishment of environments where all individuals, regardless of their background, ability, or identity, can meaningfully participate in sporting activities (Oblak et al., 2023). As such, the data highlights the role of sport as a facilitator of social inclusion for disabled people, reducing social stigma (Sheaffer et al., 2025).

3.2. Improved Wellbeing

Sport is well-known for its positive impacts on quality of life and overall wellbeing (Côté-Leclerc et al., 2017; Edwards et al., 2024). Indeed, research on engaging in sport suggests it leads to improvements in sleep patterns, cognitive functioning, motor skills and physical health (Edwards et al., 2024). To that extent, the data appeared to indicate a number of benefits for neurodivergent people engaging in archery, particularly around improved overall wellbeing and self-efficacy. Archery provides an escape from every-day life and its challenges according to the data. The quantitative data further supports this finding, with most archers reporting that they feel happy, relaxed and cheerful during archery (see the Wellbeing and benefits infographic; full responses are in Figure 10, Appendix 4). This implies that archery is serving as a stress-relief or mood-regulation function for neurodivergent archers, positively impacting their wellbeing. Further, there appears to be a strong affective (emotional) dimension to participation beyond just skill development. However, differences were observed between impairment groups, with participants with dyspraxia reporting significantly

lower, though still positive, levels of happiness during their last archery session compared to those with other disabilities. They also reported slightly lower levels of cheerfulness and relaxation (see Appendix 3: Dyspraxia Overview). These findings suggest that not all neurodivergent groups experience the same degree of wellbeing benefits from archery participation.

Most respondents agreed that archery helps with focus and concentration, with 42% agreeing and 50% strongly agreeing. These results are reflected in the rich descriptions provided by many participants who described archery as a form of mindfulness — it quietens brain noise, allows a singular focus, and reduces anxiety. Often, the qualitative data would include terms such as: "calms the mind", "quietens brain noise", "meditative", "single-point focus", "mental escape". One respondent specifically commented:

> *"I find it really fun and my brain noise goes quiet when I'm focusing on taking the shot".*

Interestingly, for autistic individuals and those with ADHD, the structured, repetitive action appeared to help manage sensory overload as well as providing mental order. Indeed, neurodivergent participants highly valued the repetitive, procedural nature of archery. These benefits also contributed to a preference of archery over other team sports. Many stressed that unlike chaotic team sports, archery offers predictability and a clear framework to operate within. For similar reasons, repetitive sports with low social demands are, more generally, considered ideal for many neurodivergent individuals (Lawson et al., 2019). The data seemed to indicate the step-by-step processes, clear rules, and repeatability provide comfort, familiarity, and reduce cognitive load. One respondent, for example, commented on how archery provided a safe space away from the need to mask:

> *"You get a break from masking when you' re on the line. I find the need to focus on the shot sequence means I don' t get a chance to be overly concerned with my social interactions".*

Masking is common among neurodivergent individuals, and takes place in public settings in an effort to hide certain behaviours, such as stimming (Garrod & Hansen, 2023). This behaviour can have a detrimental impact on quality of life and overall wellbeing, linked to stress, anxiety, exhaustion and depression (Hoare et al., 2023). The "mask" remains in place until the neurodivergent individual is back in a comfortable environment [i.e. home].

Other wellbeing components highlighted confidence in their own ability, an interest in learning new skills and satisfaction with current skills and development. This would indicate that neurodivergent archers are happy, have a sense of self-worth and self-efficacy. Most archers felt good about their skills and development, were keen to

learn new skills or techniques and felt confident in their own abilities (see Figure 11 below and the Wellbeing and benefits infographic). Archers with ADHD showed a particularly strong enthusiasm for developing new skills (see Appendix 1: ADHD Overview), suggesting that they may find the learning aspect of archery especially engaging. In contrast, those with dyspraxia expressed lower confidence in their abilities and felt less positive about their progress (see Appendix 3: Dyspraxia Overview), indicating that physical coordination challenges may affect perceptions of skill growth. These findings suggest that providing more frequent feedback and incorporating confidence-building activities could enhance the experience of archers with dyspraxia.

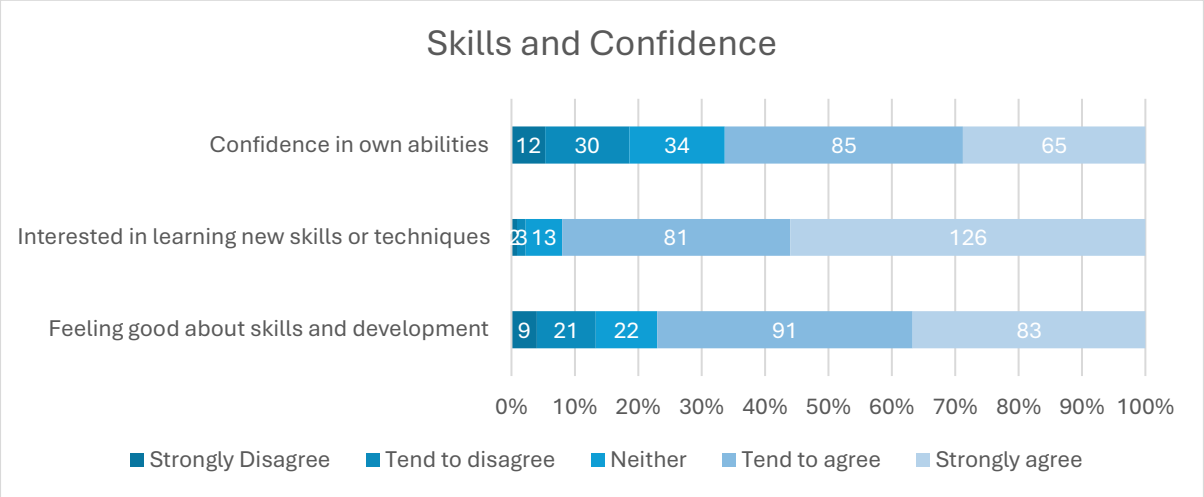


Figure 11. Skills and Confidence

Some respondents described the release archery provides from every-day stresses:

> *"I have a very stressful and intellectually demanding job. The complete concentration required by archery is an excellent way to cut loose from that. I t helps me to recharge".*

Another respondent highlighted the physical impact archery has had on them, including improving their posture and dyspraxia:

> *"I have also found the sport has improved my posture and has greatly improved my dyspraxia significantly".*

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · WELLBEING AND BENEFITS

Calm on the line.
Focused on the shot.

How neurodivergent archers feel about archery, and what it does for their focus, skills and confidence.



FOCUS AND CONCENTRATION

92% OF ARCHERS

say archery helps their focus and concentration

> *"…my brain noise goes quiet when I'm focusing on taking the shot."*
>
> Neurodivergent archer, survey response

HOW ARCHERS FEEL

72%	77%	80%+
Happy	**Relaxed**	**Cheerful**
at their last session	during archery	while taking part

GROWTH AND CONFIDENCE

92%	77%	66%
Keen to learn	**Good about**	**Confident**
new skills	their skills and development	in their ability

→ **Archery gives neurodivergent archers calm, focus and a sense of progress, and most want to keep learning.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Section 3.2 (Improved wellbeing) and Section 3.3.1 (Focus). Online survey of neurodivergent archers (n=226), 29 January to 1 April 2025. Percentages are of respondents to each question. 80%+ is the report's "over 80%".

Archery GB

3.3. Compatibility with Neurodivergent Individuals

Archery appears to be a popular sport among neurodivergent individuals. Whilst the data does not tell us the extent to which neurodiversity is prevalent within archery, the sport does appear to lend itself toward certain behavioural traits of neurodivergent individuals. When asked about why they like archery, a number of respondents commented on the sport's ability to highlight and enhance their own strengths, whilst seemingly putting less emphasis on aspects neurodivergent individuals might struggle with, which is similar to existing research (see McMurtry et al., 2025). For example, the individual focus of archery was highlighted as a key feature. Unlike traditional team sports, archery has more emphasis on individual performance and, although still a social sport, it is less reliant on the performance of a group of people. This appears to be a key benefit for neurodivergent archers, as they are able to socialise and make friends, but only rely on themselves in the sport itself. One respondent specifically mentioned the desire to improve their own game, but without the pressure of being in direct competition with others:

> *"I like the atmosphere in my club of all trying to improve our own achievements without competing directly with one another and the encouragement given by all".*

Research indicates that neurodivergent individuals are more likely to participate in individual sports due to reduced social interaction demands (Sheaffer et al., 2025). However, this preference does not suggest that neurodivergent individuals wish to avoid social interaction entirely; rather, they may benefit from more controlled or structured social environments. The individuality of the sport was further commented on by a number of neurodivergent archers:

> *"The sport is entirely about me and what I bring to the line each time. I can ask others in the club for coaching tips (and I coach others in turn when asked), but my performance is all my own".*

This distinction was reflected within the present data. Archers with ADHD, for instance, demonstrated a notably stronger desire for social connection, scoring higher on measures such as feeling connected within the archery community, inclusion in social events, and perceiving their neurodivergence as supportive of social connection (see Appendix 1: ADHD Overview). Conversely, autistic participants reported lower interest in socialising and greater difficulty with social interactions, with many indicating that their neurodivergence made it harder to form social connections (see Appendix 2: Autism Overview). Similarly, archers with dyspraxia reported significantly greater challenges in this area, suggesting that their condition also hinders social engagement within the community (See Appendix 3: Dyspraxia Overview). This illustrates that while

the individual nature of archery may be broadly appealing across neurodivergent groups, experiences of social connection within the sport can vary by condition.

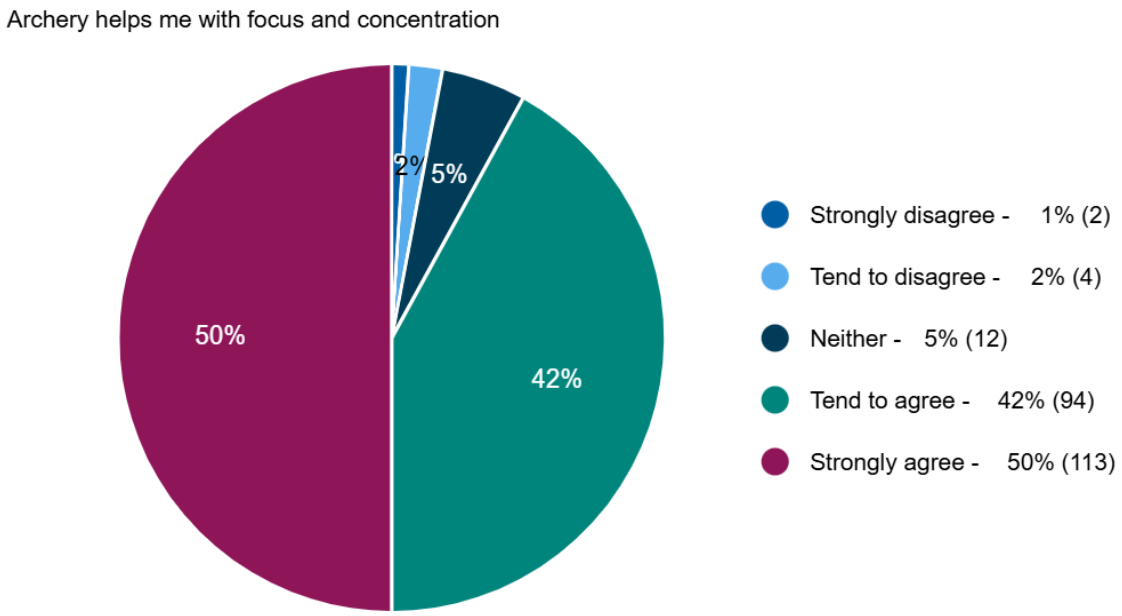
In addition to differences in social connection, the qualitative data seemed to indicate that autonomy and independence were particularly important aspects of archery that neurodivergent archers appreciated. This seemed to remove stresses and other negative elements associated with every-day social environments. Further, comments appeared to align with existing research which argues that some neurodivergent individuals find competition overwhelming and anxiety-inducing and thus prefer to focus on the individual element of the sport (Edwards et al., 2024). One respondent, for example, commented:

> *"It's a solo sport, I can socialise if I want to but it isn't necessary, which removes a lot of the stress I'd feel in other places".*

Indeed, the sport appears to allow archers to progress and develop at their own pace with little reason to mask and allowing them to be themselves:

> *"It's a good involvement sport where I can be free to be myself while also having fun and accomplishing things at my own pace. I can make friends at my own pace, but still get along with the other archers".*

3.3.1. Enhanced focus and concentration



When asked about why they like archery, a number of respondents mentioned enhanced focus and concentration specifically. Indeed, 92% of respondents found that archery helped them with focus and concentration, aspects that can be challenging for neurodivergent people. This is similar to previous research, which indicates that neurodivergent individuals are drawn to hobbies requiring intense focus (Hoare et al., 2023). Interestingly, when not asked specifically about the importance of focus and concentration, it was still a point respondents continued to return to during open-ended questions, including questions such as:

> *"Have you encountered any specific coaching approaches that worked well for neurodivergent archers?"*
>
> *"Are there specific events or environments within archery that you find particularly comfortable?"*

Answers to the open-ended questions, revealed how the nature of archery suited neurodivergent people by enabling them to focus, concentrate and getting lost in the sport. Respondents emphasised how archery enables them to focus and concentrate, blocking out any other distractions:

> *"It helps me switch off my brain like nothing else can, I have to focus on me, the bow, the arrow, weather conditions where applicable. There is no space for anything else".*

> *"It is fun. It only needs concentration in short bursts whereas other sports have a need for more concentration".*

Whilst every neurodivergent individual are different from each other and experience being neurodivergent differently, the vast majority enjoy the opportunity to focus on a singular task, whilst forgetting about everything else.

3.4. Barriers to Inclusion of Neurodivergent Archers

While the data indicated that neurodivergent archers generally felt included and welcomed, respondents nevertheless provided several suggestions for improving coaching when given the opportunity. Feedback on this theme primarily derives from questions addressing three areas: the support coaches require to better assist neurodivergent archers, the effectiveness of specific coaching approaches, and the adequacy of neurodiversity training provided to coaches. The responses highlighted sub-themes around awareness of neurodiversity, coaching approaches, listening & communication.

3.4.1. Awareness of Neurodiversity

The data suggest that awareness of neurodiversity within the archery community is inconsistent. While 68% of participants expressed optimism about neurodiversity inclusion and some perceived the community as knowledgeable, a substantial proportion either felt that neurodivergent needs were not fully recognised (35%) or were indifferent on this issue (36%). This pattern was particularly pronounced among archers with dyspraxia, who reported a mean score of 2.52, significantly lower than participants with other disabilities (mean = 2.94) (see Appendix 3: Dyspraxia Overview). These findings indicate that, although some archers perceive a degree of awareness, many neurodivergent participants feel that the community's understanding of neurodiversity and its implications remains limited.

While a majority of participants (around 67%) felt that their coaches and fellow archers demonstrated understanding and acceptance of neurodivergent individuals, the data also highlighted areas for improvement. In particular, understanding the unique needs and differences of neurodivergent archers was identified as something that could be strengthened, with participants with dyspraxia particularly feeling less understood by fellow archers and their coaches (see Appendix 3: Dyspraxia Overview). The qualitative responses further support this, highlighting that understanding the unique needs and differences of neurodivergent archers is a key area for improvement among coaches, who were seen as needing to treat each neurodivergent archer as unique individuals.

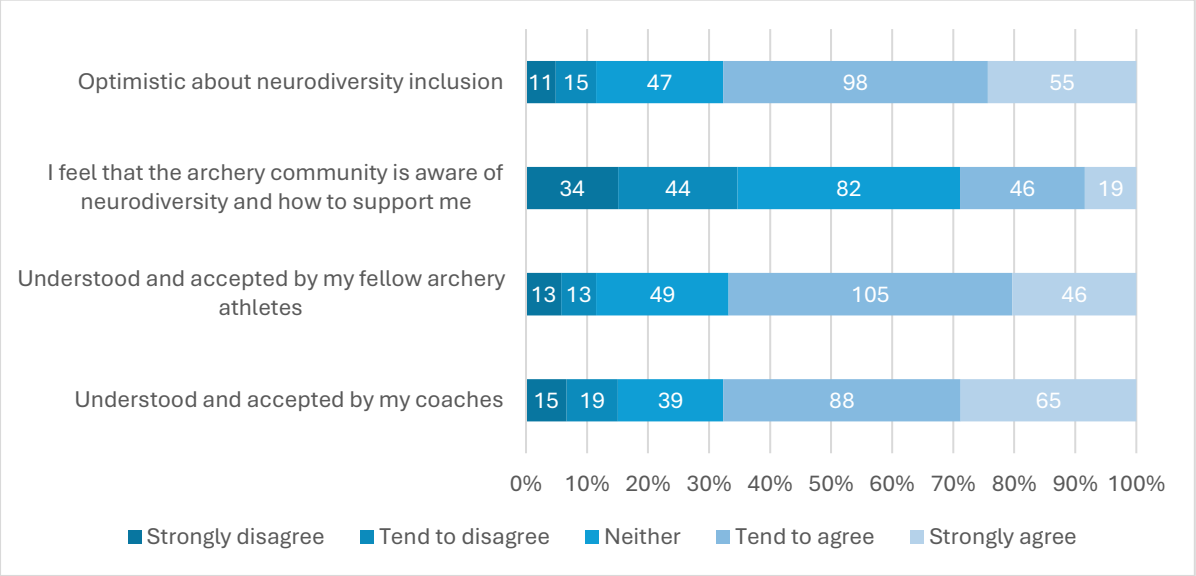


Figure 12 Awareness of Neurodiversity

Research further indicates that awareness of neurodiversity is a key constraint to access for neurodivergent individuals (Edwards et al., 2024):

> *"Not all neurodivergents are the same, some contradict each other. Don't assume that I understand how things work or how competition work just because I did it once weeks ago".*

> *"I think just an awareness that we exist, to the extent that isn't already there. Honestly, I think a few of the coaches are fellow auties! Although I haven' t asked".*

Indeed, the data seemed to indicate that coaches lacked understanding of neurodiversity and its complexities:

> *"No point telling a dyspraxic person to use certain muscles in a specific way. Doesn't matter how many times I'm told not to move my arm or shoulders - my body doesn't do as it's told".*

Neurodiversity awareness training is recognised as essential to improving awareness of neurodiversity and to enable the construction of supportive structures for neurodivergent people (Edwards et al., 2024; Garrod & Hansen, 2023). To that extent, a need for neurodiversity-specific training was identified by a number of respondents, who seemingly felt that coaches were ill-equipped to support and develop neurodivergent archers. One respondent, for example, commented:

> *"Mandatory courses to help guide archers, especially those of an older generation, to understand that being neurodivergent is not an illness, but a different way of experiencing life".*

The data further seemed to indicate that neurodiversity awareness needed to be improved through training, for archery to be inclusive.

> *"To educate judges and coaches on certain accommodations that may be required for competition and coaching".*

> *"Coaches that have more awareness of neurodiversity and needs. Passport providing information about my needs".*

This corresponds with current research around the social model of disability and on inclusion in sport. For example, attitudinal constraints are considered the root of all access barriers (Hansen & Fyall, 2021). Limited awareness of disability among non-disabled individuals represents a critical constraint, as it prevents effective inclusion and can lead to the isolation or exclusion of disabled people from sports participation (Edwards et al., 2024; Kiuppis, 2018). Indeed, Edwards et al. (2024) found that better understanding of neurodiversity led to increased participation in sports, including participating in competitions.

3.4.2. Coaching Approaches: strengths and weaknesses

Interestingly, a majority of respondents (60%) implied that they had yet to experience coaching approaches that were suitable for neurodivergent archers (see Figure 13, Appendix 4). This is potentially a critically important finding that creates tension with the earlier optimism data. It reveals a significant gap between positive attitudes and actual practice. It does seem to indicate minimal formal training available on neurodiversity-informed coaching.

Respondents were then asked to comment on coaching approaches which worked well, a question that elicited two distinct themes around patience and demonstrative teaching. Patience, particularly, appeared to be a much-appreciated skill among the respondents. One respondent for example commented:

> *"Just general patience goes a long way. From zoning out to moments of terrible audio processing; if a coach stays patient and keeps checking in with the archer, you are already pretty good".*

Likewise, the respondents commented that demonstrative teaching worked best as many neurodivergent people learn better by seeing, visually, how to do something. This was a recurring theme throughout the comments, with the data indicating that neurodivergent archers often preferred less explaining and more active demonstration:

> *"Actively demonstrating while explaining as the visual aspect alongside verbal I find extremely helpful".*

Interestingly, the data seemed to indicate that some respondents felt that coaches tended to provide too much instruction and information at once, which some found overwhelming. Some also felt the information could easily be misunderstood.

> *"Splurge of verbal instruction is no good for me and many ADHDers".*

> *"Less talk more demonstration please. Mind wanders if too much talking and I can' t retain the detail to put into practice. If I see the correct approach demonstrated I can recall and apply it".*

3.4.3. Listening & Communicating

The extent to which respondents felt coaching approaches were not suitable to neurodivergent archers was further highlighted within this subtheme, where listening and communication from the coaches appeared to be a concern. Within the social model of disability, informational constraints refer to aspects of communication and accessing information (Randle & Dolnicar, 2019). As such, these can act as barriers to access as well for neurodivergent individuals. When asked how coaching practices could be improved, a recurring theme within the data was around the need for improved communication and listening skills from the coaches.

> *Talk with the archer, not at them. Not everything is black and white (outside of safety) […] individual or smaller groups allow for coaches to actually get to know the archer, pains, problems, bad habits and work on them together as a team.*

> *"Listening to the needs of the student and asking how they best understand things".*

Indeed, the data appeared to indicate a need for improved listening skills of coaches, taking into account the different preferences of each archer. As such, it seemed the respondents were in preference of a more individualistic approach to coaching archery.

> *"To have a better understanding of the way to talk to, behave around and learning different ways to communicate than just talking (e.g. communication cards/device)".*

> *"Lots of instructions given all at once, while trying to digest them more instructions are shouted at you".*

Some respondents also commented on the need for coaches to be more aware that some neurodivergent people avoid asking for help, even though they may actually want it:

> *"Some neurodivergent people don't like asking for help for different reasons, so if a coach sees them looking troubled, or glancing towards you mid-shoot, go up and ask if things are okay".*

> *"Maybe arrange a quiet chat away from the club either on the phone or in person before everyone else turns up to discuss individuals needs as we are all so different and it's not a one model suits all fix. Most ND people know what works for them but don' t always want to 'announce it' with every else listening in".*

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · GOOD COACHING

Less talk, more showing. Coach the archer in front of you.

What neurodivergent archers said helps them learn, and what gets in the way.



THE STARTING POINT

60% of archers **have not yet encountered coaching approaches that worked well** for them. This is what they said would help.

WHAT HELPS, AND WHAT GETS IN THE WAY

What helps

Be patient
Allow time for questions, repetition and moments of zoning out.

Show, don't just tell
Demonstrate the action while explaining. Many archers learn best by seeing it.

Check in
Some archers won't ask for help. If someone looks troubled, go over and ask.

Listen and ask
Talk with the archer, not at them, and ask how they understand things best.

Offer a quiet word
A short private chat before the session lets archers explain what works for them.

What gets in the way

Too much talk at once
A 'splurge' of verbal instruction is hard to take in, let alone retain.

Piling on instructions
New points arrive while archers are still digesting the last ones.

Assuming it stuck
Doing something once weeks ago does not mean an archer knows how it works.

One approach for all
Neurodivergent archers differ, so what works for one may not suit another.

Words only
Some archers need visual aids or communication cards, not just spoken explanation.

> *Coaching must fit the archer, not the other way around.*
>
> Coach, survey response

→ **Archers value patience, demonstration and individual approaches over more verbal instruction.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Section 3.4.2 (Coaching approaches; Listening and communicating) and Section 4.5. Open-ended survey responses from neurodivergent archers (n=226) and coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. Points are summarised from archers' comments.

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3.5. Neurodiversity-friendly spaces within archery

This theme was particularly derived from the questions around specific events or environments that archers find uncomfortable as well as how to make archery more inclusive. The qualitative data revealed a number themes the need for creating neurodiversity-friendly spaces and environments within archery, in particular Quiet Times & Spaces, Overcrowdedness and Competition.

Neurodivergent individuals with hypersensitivities to sensory information, such as loud noises, may struggle in noisy environments as a result (Sheaffer et al., 2025). As such, this may negatively influence their ability to focus and concentrate, which are otherwise benefits of archery previously identified within this report. The social model of disability posits that disability is socially constructed rather than inherent to the individual (Kiuppis, 2018). Applying this framework, environmental factors such as excessive noise levels create disabling barriers for neurodivergent individuals and impede their participation in archery. The data indicates that many neurodivergent archers find noisy environments challenging for archery participation. Loud music and ambient noise from other participants distracted respondents and created barriers to concentration during archery. As a result, a number of respondents called for quiet sessions at the range:

> *"Stop clubs playing music during shooting, make sure clubs actually listen to those of us who want to shoot in indoor rounds, punish clubs that fail to comply with guidance, or ignore requests for a more inclusive and quieter shooting environment for neurodivergent archers like myself".*

> *"In some of the larger/busier clubs they could arrange specific quieter/smaller sessions for neurodivergent archers".*

> *"Having a quiet time - our range is accessible all the time but coaches available certain days/times are generally busy times when I can be distracted easily".*

Similarly, respondents identified overcrowding on the range as a concern, noting that current conditions limit personal space. For example, one respondent specifically requested:

> *"More space, less people shooting on each boss".*

This was a sentiment shared by many of the respondents, with others commenting:

> *"More space on the shooting line and in the equipment area. I worry about falling over bows because I'm clumsy".*

> *"Sometimes space on the shooting line is pretty tight. Having the option to get a lane with a little more room would be nice".*

> *"Crowded halls can be difficult to shoot and focus in".*

The data further indicates that respondents require improved communication of competition details, including more comprehensive pre-competition information and greater clarity regarding competition specifications.

> *"Competition details on the AGB website and on club websites are always written with the assumption that you know what the round is - this is difficult as a new archer".*

As a result, respondents indicated that pre-competition guidance was insufficient, preventing adequate preparation. Uncertainty regarding the competition venue and environment was identified as a significant source of anxiety.

> *"More guidance in advance on how competitions work - unfamiliar surroundings, not sure how it works and where your meant to be an where increases anxiety - event specific who will be running competitions in advance- so you know faces and names in advance".*

> *"Information about location for competition clear, i.e. lighting type, normal noise levels/echo etc.".*

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · FRIENDLY SPACES

Quieter, roomier, clearer.
Spaces that protect the focus.

The three barriers archers raised most about clubs and competitions, and the fixes they suggested.



THE ENVIRONMENT, NOT THE ARCHER, CREATES THE BARRIER

Noise

Loud ranges and music during shooting break the concentration that makes archery work for many neurodivergent archers.

→

WHAT ARCHERS SUGGESTED

- Quiet times or quiet sessions at the range
- No music playing during shooting
- Coaching available at quieter times, not only the busiest

Overcrowding

Tight shooting lines and busy halls make it hard to focus, and some archers worry about tripping over bows.

→

WHAT ARCHERS SUGGESTED

- Fewer archers shooting on each boss
- The option of a lane with more room
- Smaller sessions for neurodivergent archers at larger clubs

Unclear competition information

Unfamiliar venues and event details written for experienced archers raise anxiety before a competition.

→

WHAT ARCHERS SUGGESTED

- Explain how competitions and rounds work
- Share venue details in advance: lighting, noise levels and echo
- Say who will run the event, so faces and names are familiar

> *I would like to start a 'quiet time' session for those that find a full club intimidating…*
>
> Coach, survey response

→ **Quieter, roomier sessions and clearer information protect the focus that archery gives neurodivergent archers.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Section 3.5 (Neurodiversity-friendly spaces within archery) and Section 4.5. Open-ended survey responses from neurodivergent archers (n=226) and coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. Suggestions are summarised from archers' comments.

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NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT

4. FINDINGS – COACHES

What 53 coaches told us



A total of 53 archery coaches took part; their profile is set out in Section 2.2. As among archers, many of the neurodivergent coaches self-identified without a formal diagnosis, suggesting that limited diagnostic access, lack of awareness and personal choice may contribute to lower rates of formal diagnosis among neurodivergent individuals.

4.1. Compatibility with Neurodivergent Individuals

The 53 respondents identified archery as particularly well-suited for neurodivergent individuals. Notably, the majority of coaches expressed confidence in the abilities of neurodivergent archers, with 66.0% strongly agreeing and 24.5% agreeing that neurodivergent archers can perform as well as their neurotypical peers, with only a small minority disagreeing (7.5%) or remaining neutral (1.9%). Similarly, 67.9% of respondents strongly agreed and 26.4% agreed that the inclusion of neurodivergent archers enriches the archery community, while only a small minority expressed neutrality (3.8%) or disagreement (1.9%), indicating an overwhelmingly positive perception of neurodivergent participation and potential in the sport (see Figure 14).

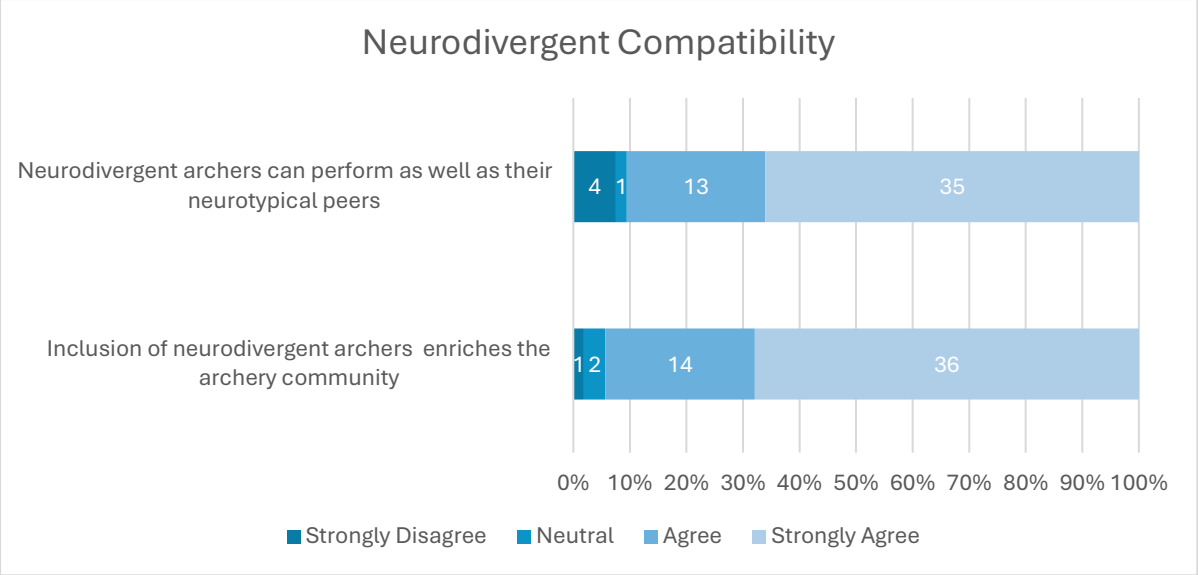


Figure 14 Neurodivergent Compatibility

The sport offers a structured environment with clear rules and consistent routines, while avoiding the unpredictable social dynamics and rapidly changing scenarios characteristic of team sports. When asked what opportunities the coaches saw for improving the inclusion of neurodivergent archers in archery, one respondent commented:

> *"Archery is a sport that is very good for neurodivergent individuals. Archery could be sold as the optimal sport for them".*

Other respondents specifically highlighted the repetitive nature of archery and the focus it requires, noting how these characteristics may benefit neurodivergent individuals:

> *"The repetitive movements and routine are calming and provide quick wins".*

> *"Archery club being used as an intervention has benefitted many of our children with SEND".*

4.2. Disclosure

Neurodivergence is considered a hidden disability—one that is not immediately apparent to observers except through disclosure by the individual or another source, or under unusual circumstances (Edwards et al., 2024; Matthews & Harrington, 2000).

Disclosure is a personal, sensitive, and complex issue and neurodivergent individuals often face a significant dilemma when deciding whether to disclose neurodivergence (Garrod & Hansen, 2023). Disclosure can provide access to valuable support from coaches. However, neurodivergent archers may fear that disclosure will lead to automatic rejection due to stigma, inadequate neurodivergence awareness among the coaches, or outright discrimination. However, non-disclosure presents significant challenges for archery coaches in providing appropriate support to neurodivergent archers:

> *"The biggest challenge i have faced, is parents/guardians not disclosing juniors neurodivergent".*

Others noted that non-disclosure prevented them from providing the level of support individuals expected:

> *"It's a challenge when they don't want anyone to know. Then when there's an issue it's the first thing they tell you".*

> *"[The biggest challenge is] not knowing they were neurodivergent. Navigating the complexities on my own with no direction".*

4.3. Cultural Constraints

Cultural constraints are closely linked to ableist attitudinal barriers, which fall under the social model of disability (Hansen & Fyall, 2021). Ableism denotes the systemic prejudice and discrimination experienced by individuals on the basis of disability (Christiaens & Brittain, 2023). These systemic limitations are often viewed as the root causes of broader systemic challenges, with the understanding that addressing them effectively can facilitate the removal of other related constraints (Duignan et al., 2023). The data seemed to suggest that some coaches perceive ableist attitudes as being entrenched within the sport of archery and recognise a need for support in addressing this issue:

> *"The biggest challenge is not the archers — it's the intolerance of neurotypical archers".*

> *"My club is run by bullies and dinosaurs who don't want to change. Any help would be great!".*

Similarly, some respondents emphasised the need for a better understanding of neurodivergent archers within the archery community, with the aim of reducing negative attitudes and fostering greater inclusivity. This, the data seemed to suggest, needs to come from the very top of the governing body and the clubs:

> *"Starts at the top and our governing body needs to not just say they are doing they need to practice what it preaches. Many coaches and athletes are very talented but need to be understood".*

> *"A better understanding within clubs to be more open, focusing on inclusion and enjoyment of the individual, learning at their pace. Not putting performance and improvement as the most important".*

Such cultural constraints may have far-reaching consequences, negatively impacting retention, skill development and wellbeing of neurodivergent archers. It further echoes the call of the neurodivergent archers for neurodiversity awareness training for archery coaches.

4.4. Neurodiversity Awareness Training

Providing neurodiversity awareness training for coaches is widely regarded as vital to supporting inclusive sporting environments (Hoare et al., 2023). Yet, research indicates that many mainstream coach education programmes ignore disability (Christiaens et al., 2023). To that extent, a significant training gap was identified among the respondents. Of the 53 respondents, only 4 (7.5%) reported having received extensive training on coaching neurodivergent archers and 18 (34%) some training. The remaining 31 (58.5%) had received no training, and all but one of them would like to receive it (see the Training gap infographic; full responses are in Figure 15, Appendix 4).

While 11 respondents had attended the neurodiversity workshop organised by AGB and Access Sport (see Figure 15, Appendix 4), attendance did not necessarily correspond with perceived reception of extensive training. Only 2 of the 4 coaches who reported to have received extensive training had attended the workshop, whereas 8 attendees indicated that they received some training, and 1 attendee stated they had received no training on coaching neurodivergent archers. This pattern suggests that the workshop, though valuable, may be perceived as limited in depth or scope in relation to the challenges faced when coaching neurodiverse archers.

This gap matters because almost every coach (96.2%) has worked with neurodivergent archers, underscoring the importance of embedding neurodiversity awareness and inclusive strategies into mainstream coaching curricula. Promisingly, 79% of coaches want to learn more about neurodiversity in archery.

Notably, the two respondents who were not interested in learning more had already received either extensive or some training. Those who answered "maybe" included 3 respondents with some, 5 with no training but expressed interest, as well as one respondent who had previously indicated no training and no interest. Among the 11 who had attended the AGB and Access Sport workshop, 10 expressed a clear desire to learn more, while 1 respondent was unsure. This suggests that rather than workshop attendance or training leading to disinterest, prior exposure may foster continued curiosity and commitment to inclusive practice. The high percentage of coaches interested in receiving training on coaching neurodivergent archers and/or interested in learning more about neurodiversity in archery suggests coaches are aware they may not have adequate understanding or skills to effectively support neurodivergent clients. This self-awareness and willingness to enhance inclusivity is encouraging for the archery community.

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · THE TRAINING GAP

Almost every coach has been there. Most haven't been trained for it.

Nearly all coaches have coached neurodivergent archers. Preparation is thin, but coaches are clear that they want training and are ready for it.



FROM EXPOSURE TO APPETITE: WHAT 53 COACHES TOLD US

1 EXPOSURE

96.2% have coached neurodivergent archers

51 of 53 coaches

2 PREPARATION

79% **have not attended** the Archery GB / Access Sport neurodiversity workshop

42 of 53 coaches

58.5% report **no specialised training** in coaching neurodivergent archers



None 58.5% Some 34% Extensive 7.5%

3 THE POSITIVE TURN: APPETITE



say neurodiversity training is **important**



want to **learn more** about neurodiversity in archery

→ **Coaches already meet neurodivergent archers. Training is the missing step, and most coaches are ready for it.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Section 4.4 (Neurodiversity awareness training). Online survey of coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. Percentages are of all 53 coaches. Training levels: 4 extensive, 18 some and 31 none; 30 of the 31 would like training.

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Despite the low uptake of formal training, coaches reported high levels of confidence in coaching neurodivergent archers and adopting person-centred coaching approaches (see the Confidence gap infographic; full responses are in Figure 16A, Appendix 4). Interestingly, coaches who identified as neurodivergent reported significantly higher confidence in both their ability to coach neurodivergent archers and in applying a person-centred approach than those who did not (see Figure 16B). These findings suggest that personal experiences of neurodivergence may enhance coaches' confidence, and sensitivity to individual needs, highlighting the potential value of neurodiverse representation within coaching communities, not only for promoting inclusivity but also for modelling adaptive and personalised coaching practices.

However, this high level of confidence in coaching neurodivergent individuals contrasts sharply with the experiences of neurodivergent archers themselves with 60% reporting that they have not encountered any coaching approaches that worked well for them. This discrepancy, alongside contemporary research indicating that many coaches lack sufficient knowledge and skills to effectively support neurodivergent archers (Christiaens & Brittain, 2023), raises concerns about possible overestimation of competence. While we previously highlighted a high willingness amongst coaches to learn more about neurodiversity, their current high levels of self-reported confidence may act as a barrier to further engagement in training or reflective learning on the topic.

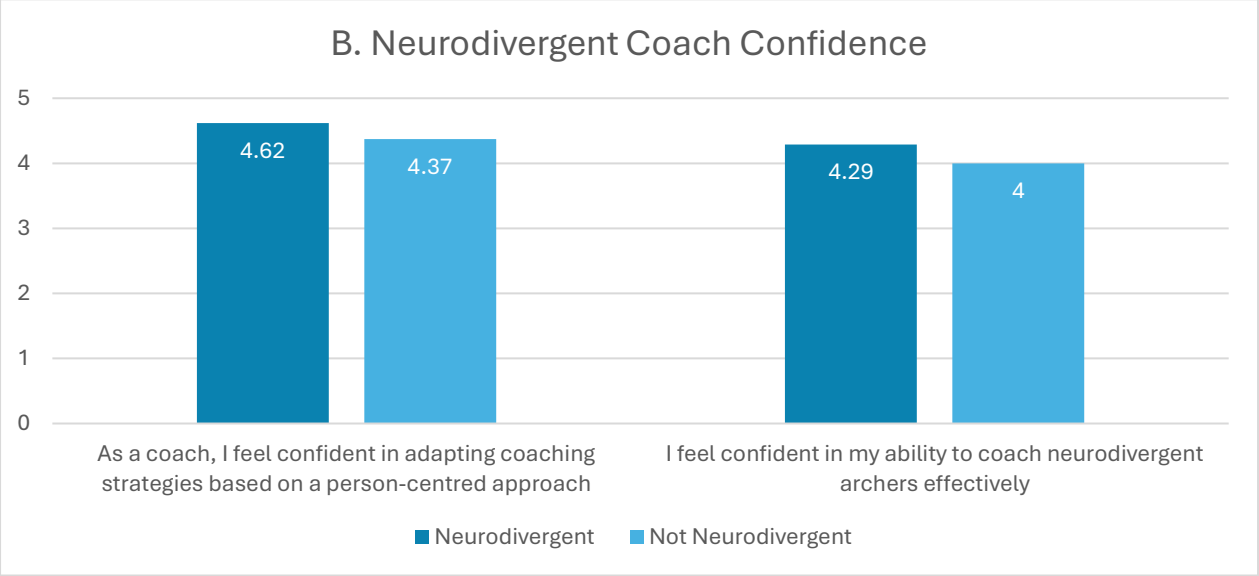


Figure 16B. Neurodivergent Coach Confidence

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · THE CONFIDENCE GAP

Coaches feel confident.
Most archers haven't felt it yet.

Almost every coach feels ready to coach neurodivergent archers, but most archers have not yet experienced coaching approaches that work well for them.



TWO VIEWS OF THE SAME COACHING

Coaches say
53 coaches surveyed

88.7%

are **confident coaching neurodivergent archers**

47 of 53 coaches

94.3%

are **confident adapting to a person-centred approach**

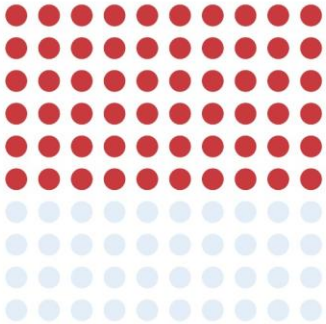
50 of 53 coaches

vs

Archers say
226 neurodivergent archers surveyed

60%

have not encountered coaching approaches that worked well for them



60 in every 100 archers

THE GAP SIDE BY SIDE



→ **Confidence is high, but it is not yet turning into coaching that works for most archers. Training and listening to archers can close the gap.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Section 4.4 (Coach confidence) and Section 3.4.2 (Coaching approaches). Online surveys of neurodivergent archers (n=226) and coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. Percentages are of respondents to each question. The two figures come from different groups answering different questions, so they show a contrast rather than a like-for-like difference.

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The qualitative data further revealed the recognition for training on neurodiversity, acknowledging that neurodivergent individuals are diverse and experience it differently:

> *"Coaches need to understand that when you have met one neurodivergent archer, you have met ONE neurodivergent archer! All too often we speak of neurodivergent people as if they are all the same, which is completely wrong. All need to be treated completely differently, as their needs are extremely diverse".*

Respondents identified a need for increased neurodiversity education, prioritising easily accessible resources. The data indicates that this training should be integrated into all coaching curricula rather than delivered as standalone sessions:

> *"Rather than a section on ND I'd rather see it embedded into all the sessions as a simple part of the process of learning how to teach people... all people, Archery".*

A need was identified for AGB to produce more resources to support coaches in developing an awareness and understanding of neurodivergent archers. The data seemed to indicate that coaches were keen to learn how to support neurodivergent archers. Yet, some respondents were concerned:

> *"AGB need to produce more resources for coaches - visual aids, coaching plans, social stores for neurodivergent people - which would also be useful for coaching children and people with learning disabilities. Too much is up to individual coaches to adapt for themselves so coaching is not consistent across clubs".*

Workshops were particularly recommended as a way to educate coaches on neurodiversity:

> *"Face to face workshops with experienced coaches and professionals that often work with neurodivergent individuals. Easily accessible resources, the current online tools are almost impossible to find. I'm sure the recourses are there, but very difficult to actually access and find".*

Accordingly, 94% of respondents indicated that neurodiversity training for coaches is important, demonstrating strong demand for professional development in this area (see Figure 17, Appendix 4). This indicates that an overwhelming majority of coaches are keen to be trained in neurodiversity awareness. Coaches are essentially admitting a knowledge gap – they are confident in archers' abilities but less confident in their own preparedness.

4.5. Coaching: Best Practices and Future Opportunities

Nearly all coaches (96%) had coached neurodivergent archers (see Figure 18, Appendix 4), highlighting their prevalence within the archery community. As a result, adopting inclusive coaching approaches is essential to supporting the participation and inclusion of neurodivergent archers. The data seemed to indicate a desire among the respondents to create a more inclusive environment, built around the needs of neurodivergent archers. Some specifically commented:

> *"I would like to start a "quiet time" session for those that find a full club intimidating and over whelming and having a "quiet hour" I would also like to start a meet up outside of the club for those too intimidating coming on their own".*

> *"To give more assistance during competitions, extra time or to allow a coach/mentor on the shooting with them if requested".*

Recognising that neurodivergence presents differently in each individual is essential, as every person's experience is distinct (Garrod & Hansen, 2023). The diversity of neurodivergent archers was recognised by several coaches, who emphasised that approaches effective for one archer may differ significantly for another, thus recommending individual approaches to coaching:

> *"Coaching must fit the archer, not the other way around."*

Finally, respondents also highlighted that developing inclusive spaces for neurodivergent archers can enhance the sport's overall inclusivity and public perception. One respondent observed:

> *"By improving our inclusivity of neurodiverse archers we can allow others to see that Archery is a welcoming sport to everyone".*

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT

5. Conclusions

What the findings mean and what to do next



Final Remarks and key findings

This report set out to evaluate how inclusive archery is for neurodivergent participants, drawing on the perspectives of both archers and coaches. It identifies achievements as well as areas for development that are relevant to Archery GB and to UK sport providers more widely.

The study also aimed at assessing inclusivity ahead of the workshops offered by Archery GB in the first half of 2025 in collaboration with Access Sport. The workshops were designed to strengthen inclusive practices in archery by developing coaches' and volunteers' capacity to work effectively with neurodivergent archers. Ultimately, the results of this report offer a set of benchmark indicators that can be used to assess the effectiveness of the training provided.

Archery emerges as a neurodivergent-friendly sport that can potentially inspire individuals with disabilities and contribute to a more diverse and inclusive sporting environment. The study highlighted three dimensions of the sport that identify archery as compatible with neurodivergence: the positive impact on social life, together with the sense of belonging and community; the beneficial effect on wellbeing; the sporting practices and techniques.

Archery clubs were seen as welcoming places where neurodivergent archers felt accepted, made friends and, for some, found an identity beyond their disability. Archers associate the sport with calm, focus and a sense of progress, and value its autonomy: they can develop at their own pace and improve their own technique without the pressure of competing against others. Coaches agree that neurodivergent archers perform as well as their peers and enrich the archery community, and most archers are optimistic about neurodiversity inclusion in the sport.

Despite these positive results, however, the data reveal that there is room for improvement towards the direction of strengthening inclusivity. The majority of archers suggested that they had yet to experience coaching approaches that were suitable for neurodivergent archers. This reveals some tensions between the positivity and optimism expressed towards the sport and actual practice. The report identified three areas that open opportunities for future development and policy interventions that would make archery an even more accessible and inclusive sport: neurodivergence awareness, coaching approaches, and environmental barriers.

These three areas are: awareness, where archers called for a better understanding that every neurodivergent archer is different and for a cultural shift away from attitudes that can translate into ableism; coaching, where archers value patience, demonstration, listening and individual approaches over more verbal instruction; and the environment, where noise, overcrowding and unclear competition information are the main barriers.

Underpinning all three is a training gap. Nearly all coaches work with neurodivergent archers, yet over half have had no specialised training, although most want to learn more and see neurodiversity training as important.

NEURODIVERSITY TRAINING REPORT · RECOMMENDATIONS

From findings to action. Five recommendations.

What the archery community can do next, based on what 226 neurodivergent archers and 53 coaches told us.



FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Transform attitudes on neurodivergence

Raise awareness of neurodivergence, an often invisible and undisclosed disability, to challenge negative attitudes and build belonging.

THE EVIDENCE

58%

of archers called for more awareness among coaches

2 Foster inclusive archery environments

Support neurodivergent archers in safe, inclusive environments where they can express themselves and their sporting abilities.

THE EVIDENCE

90%

of coaches say neurodivergent archers perform as well as others

3 Promote archery as neurodivergent-friendly

Celebrate the sport's inclusivity and give neurodivergent voices a place in media and communications to encourage wider participation.

THE EVIDENCE

92%

of archers say archery helps their focus and concentration

4 Enable effective coaching

Give coaches readily available resources and weave neurodiversity through all coach education, rather than treating it as a one-off topic.

THE EVIDENCE

58.5%

of coaches have no specialised training; 94% say it is important

5 Co-create solutions with archers and coaches

Design changes with neurodivergent archers and coaches, and share what works through national and international networks.

THE EVIDENCE

39.6%

of coaches identify as neurodivergent themselves

→ **The foundations are there: archers value the sport and coaches want to learn. The next step is acting together.**

Source: Archery GB Neurodiversity Training Report, Conclusions (Recommendations), with evidence from Sections 3 and 4. Online surveys of neurodivergent archers (n=226) and coaches (n=53), 29 January to 1 April 2025. 58% of archers is 131 of 226; 58.5% of coaches is 31 of 53.

Archery GB

Recommendations

Transform attitudes on neurodivergence

To achieve real inclusivity the archery community needs to enhance awareness towards neurodivergence, an often invisible and non-disclosed disability. This will in turn transform negative attitudes and bias towards neurodivergence and translate into more inclusive and welcoming environments that foster sense of community and belonging among archers.

Foster inclusive archery environments that support neurodivergence

Neurodivergent individuals are as capable as their neurotypical counterparts in the practice of archery. It is therefore paramount that these archers are supported in a safe and inclusive environment that allows them to express themselves and their sporting abilities as well as values their contribution to the sporting community.

Enhance awareness of archery as a neurodivergent-friendly sport

Archery contributes positively to neurodivergent archers' quality of life and can be celebrated for its inclusivity and diversity. The sport can potentially inspire a wider audience and provide opportunities for neurodivergent individuals who desire to experience the joy of sport. It is therefore important to ensure adequate representation of neurodivergent voices in media communication so that preconceived assumptions and perceived barriers are challenged and wider participation is encouraged.

Enable effective coaching of neurodivergent archers

Coaches must be equipped with adequate training that effectively engages neurodivergent archers. Coaches called for enhanced neurodiversity education, emphasizing the need for readily available resources. Findings suggest this training should be woven throughout coaching programs rather than treated as an isolated topic.

Co-create solutions WITH neurodivergent archers and coaches

To create truly inclusive environments it is fundamental that solutions are co-created with neurodivergent archers and open to individualised approaches that challenge generalised approaches towards neurodivergence. Working alongside other national and international networks is encouraged to exchange effective approaches and create ripple effects of positive change throughout sport and society at large.

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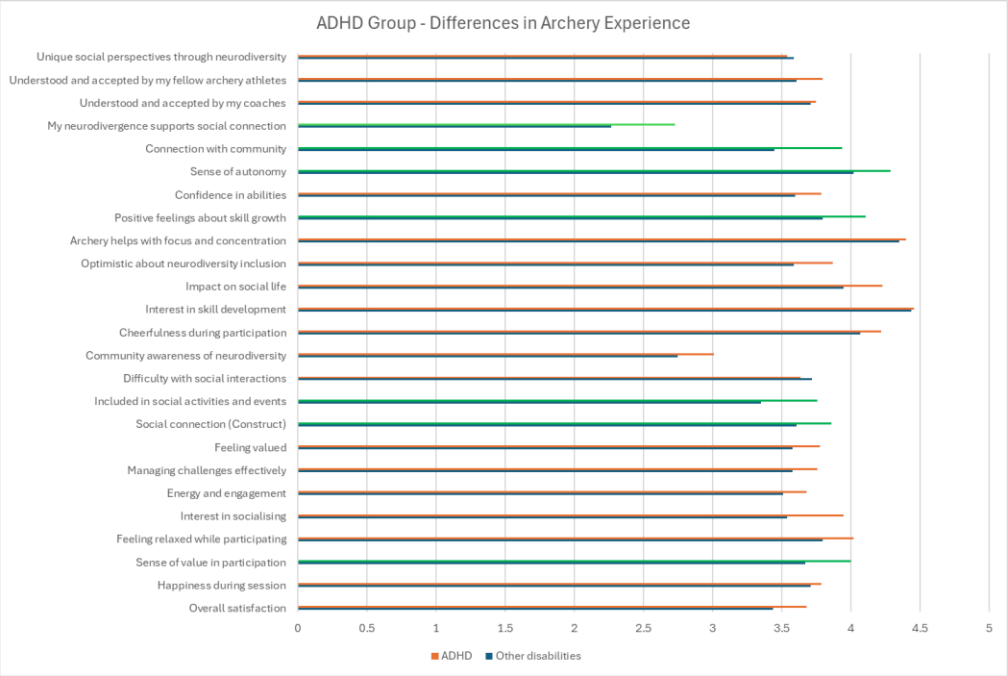
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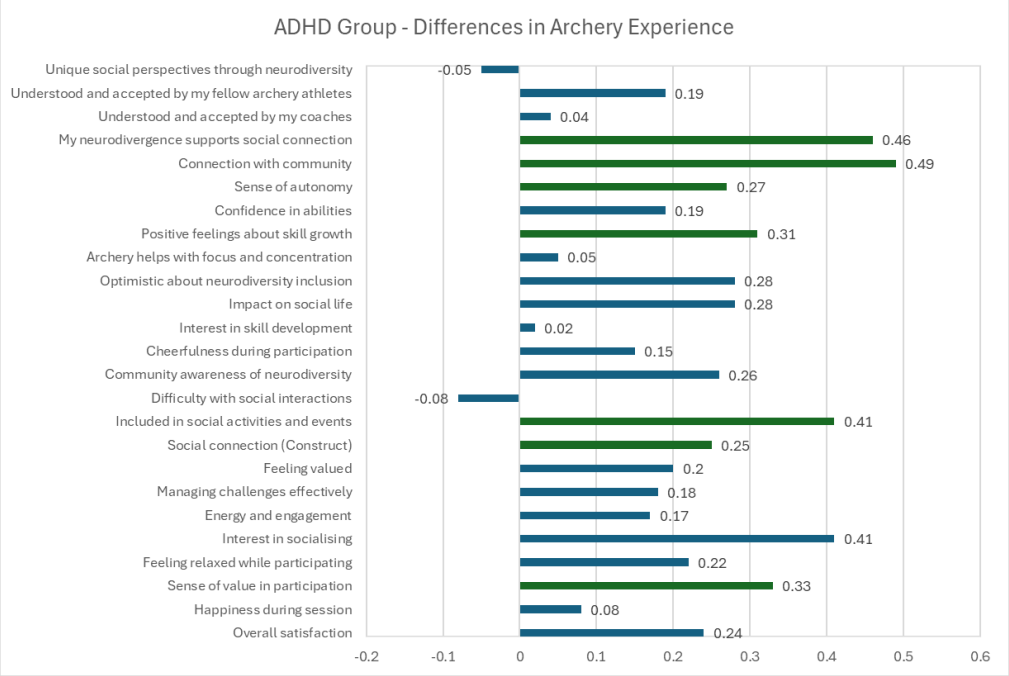
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Appendices

Appendix 1: ADHD Overview

ADHD (N=113; any combination)



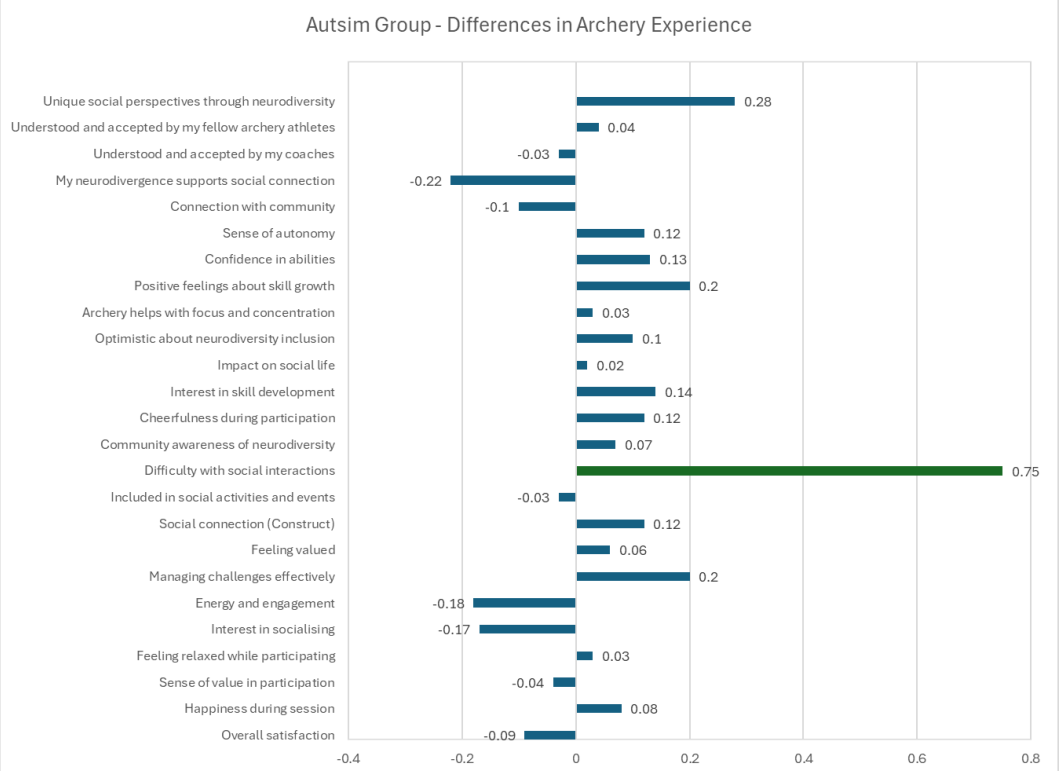


* Green highlights statistically significant findings

Appendix 2: Autism Overview

Autism (N=143; any combination)

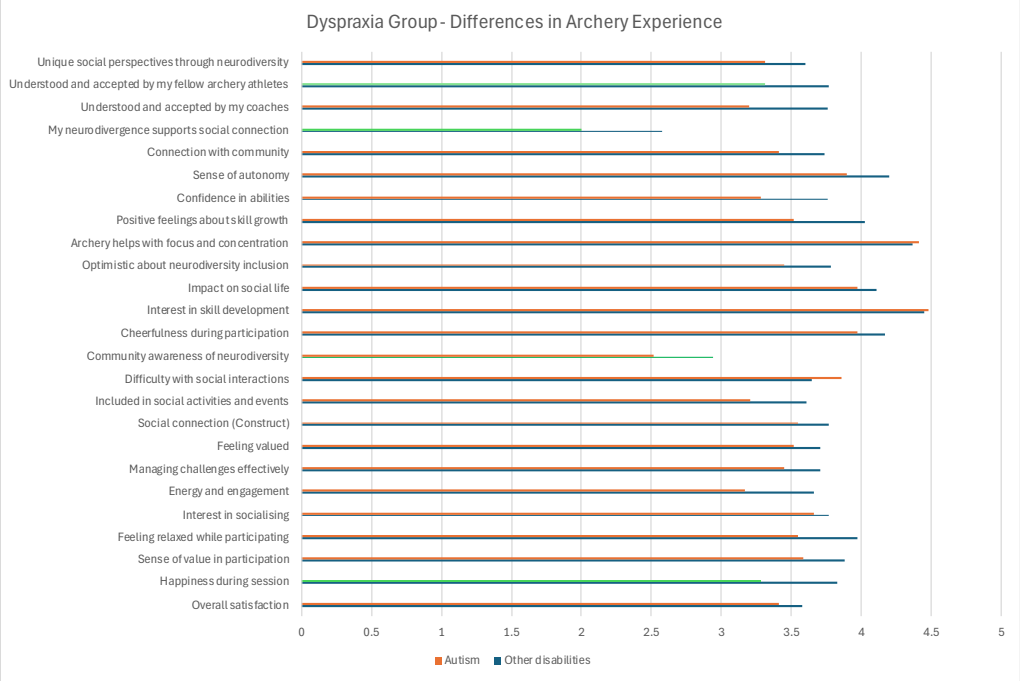


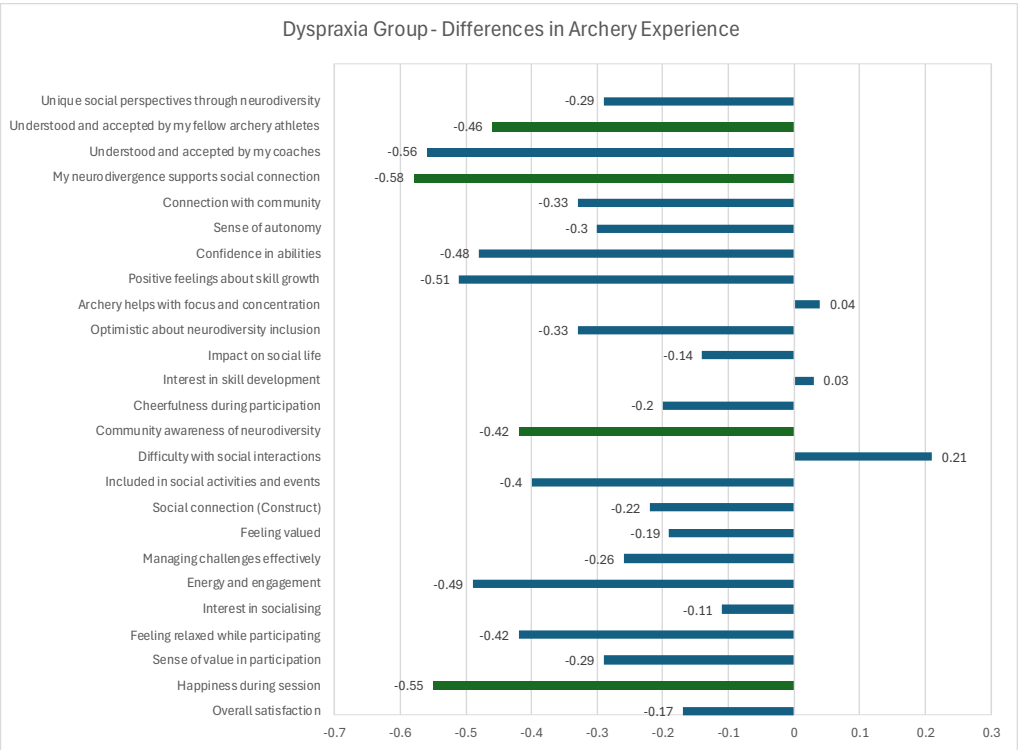


* Green highlights statistically significant findings.

Appendix 3: Dyspraxia Overview

Dyspraxia (n=30; any combination)





* Green highlights statistically significant findings.

Appendix 4: Survey charts

These charts show the full survey responses behind the infographics and the figures discussed in the report. They are kept here as the baseline for evaluating the Archery GB and Access Sport workshops.

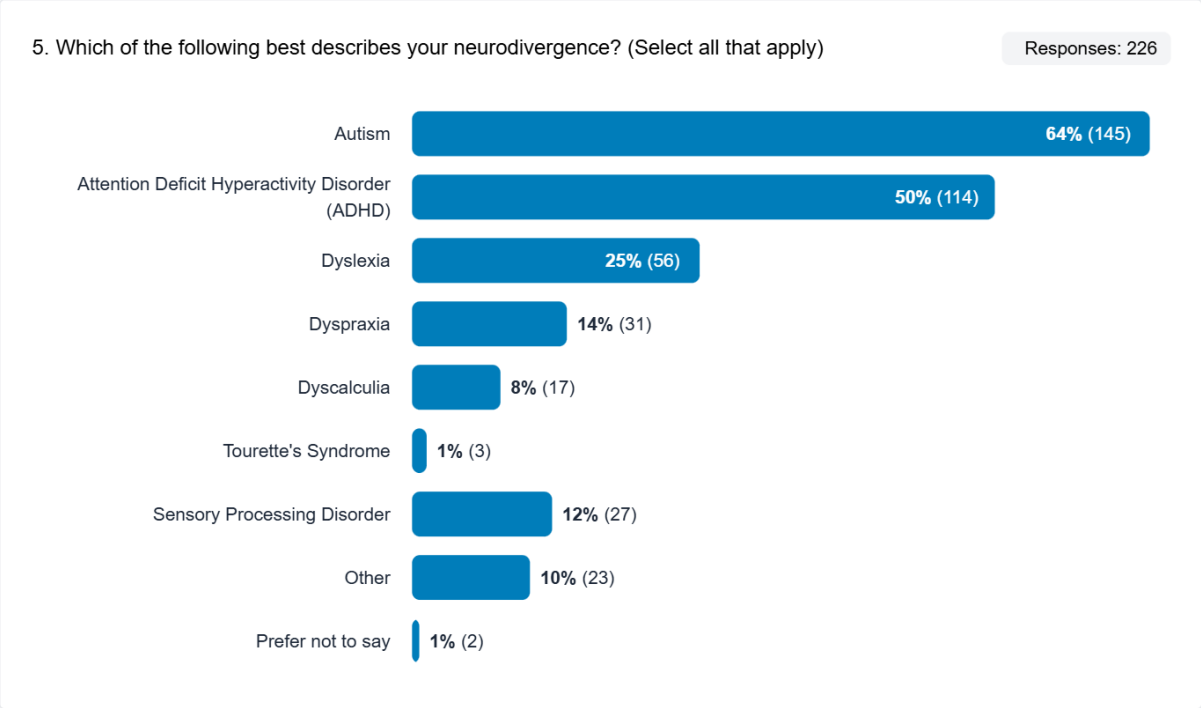


Figure 1: Archer's Neurodivergence

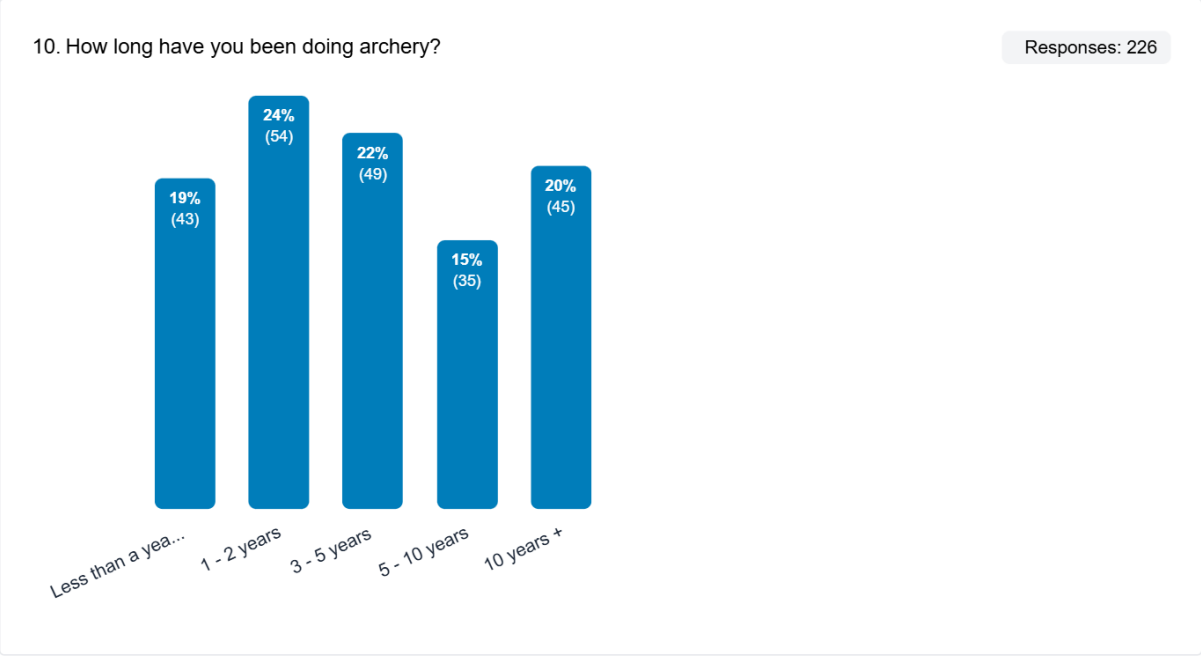


Figure 3. How long have you been doing archery?

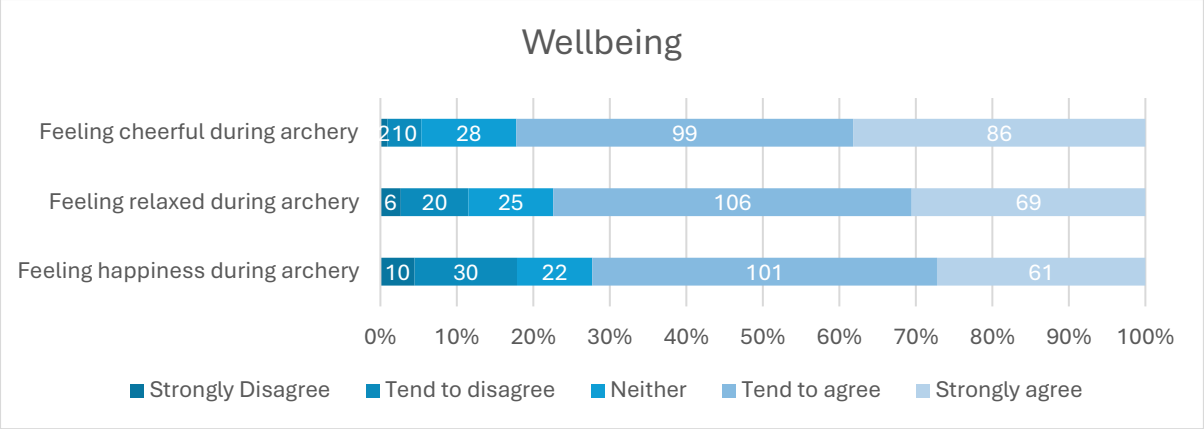


Figure 10 Wellbeing

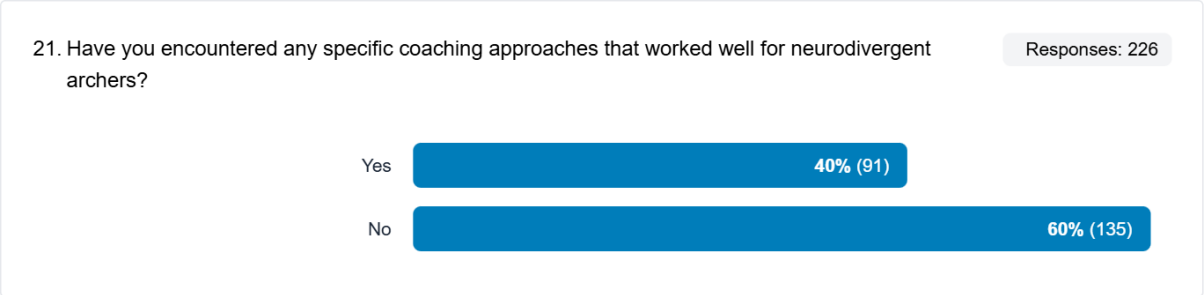


Figure 13. Have you encountered coaching approaches that worked well?

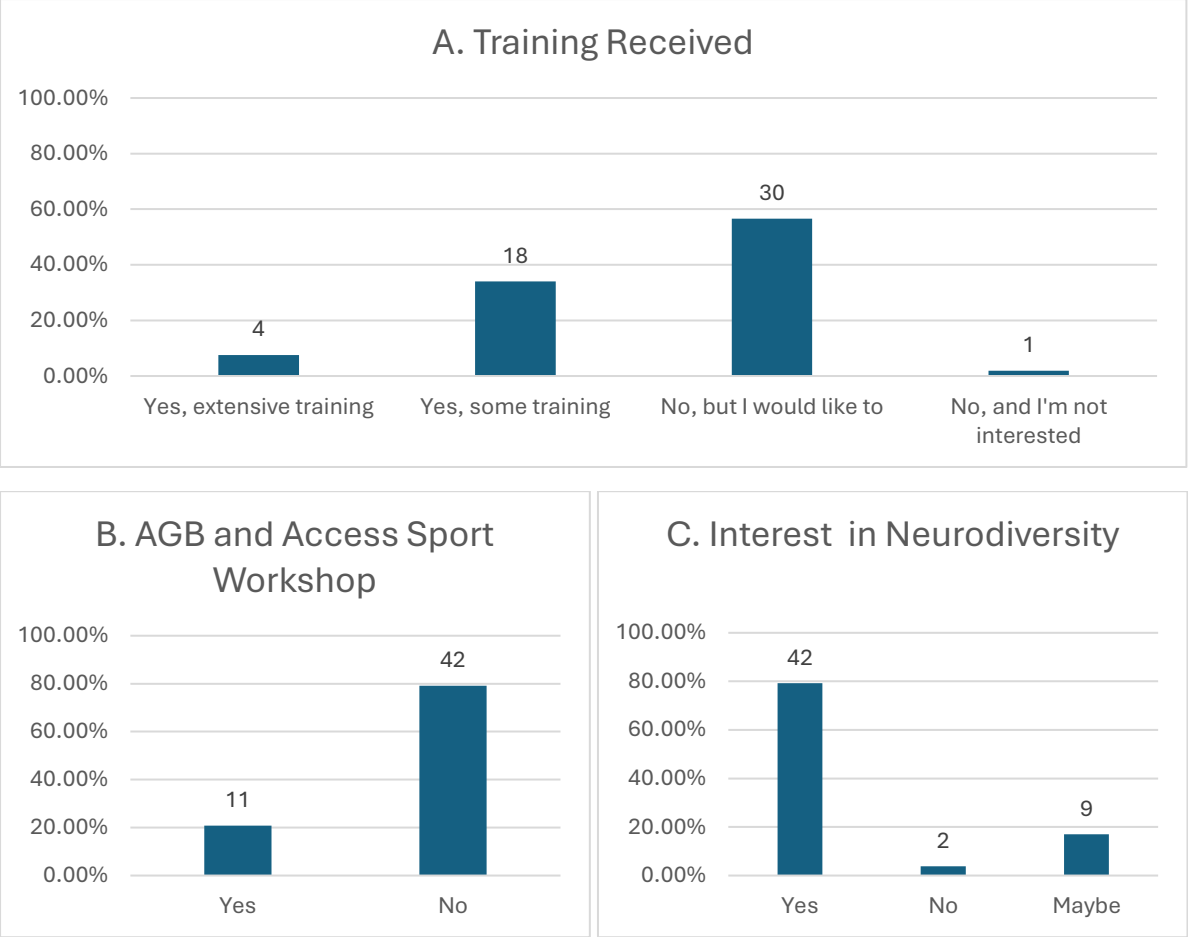


Figure 15 Coaches' Experience and Interest in Neurodiversity Training

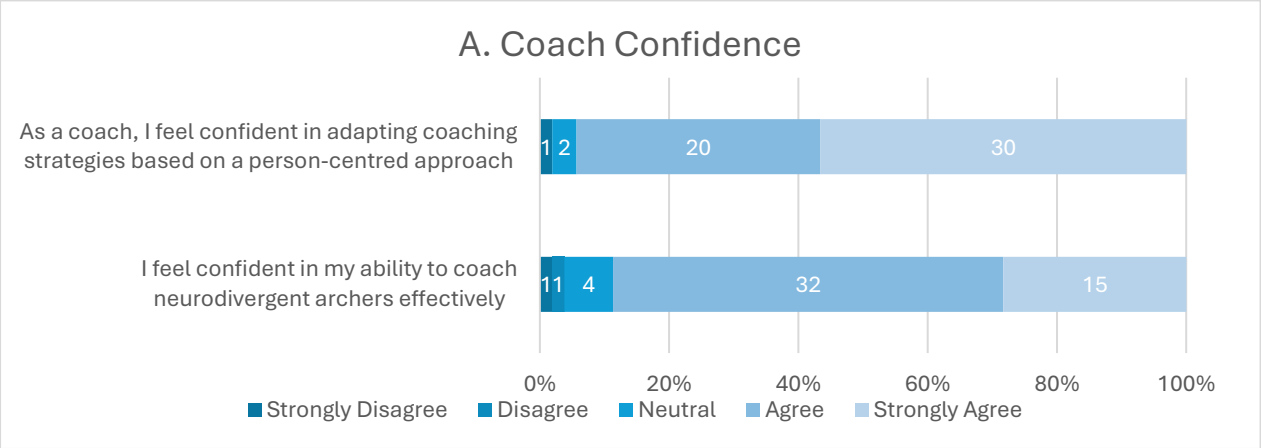


Figure 16A. Coach Confidence

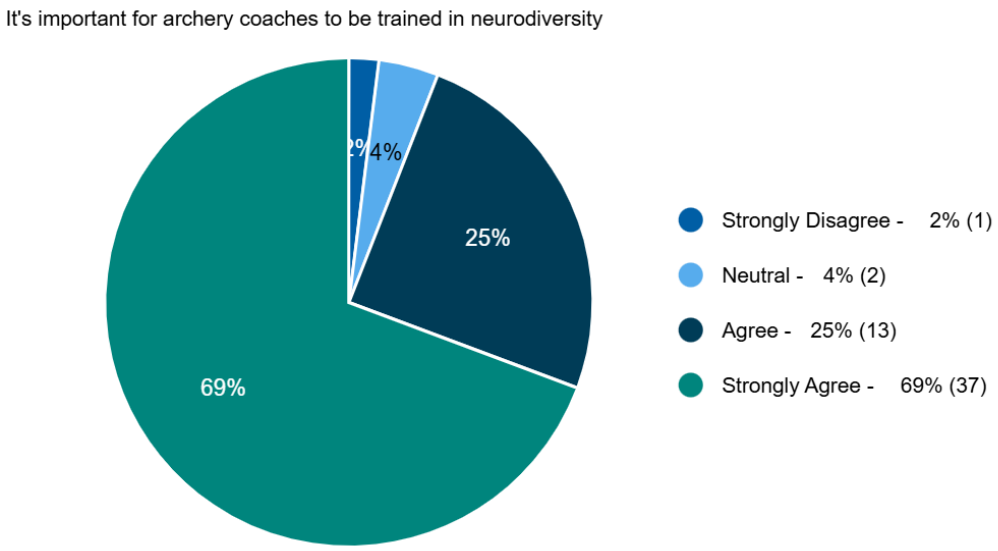


Figure 17. It's important for archery coaches to be trained in neurodiversity

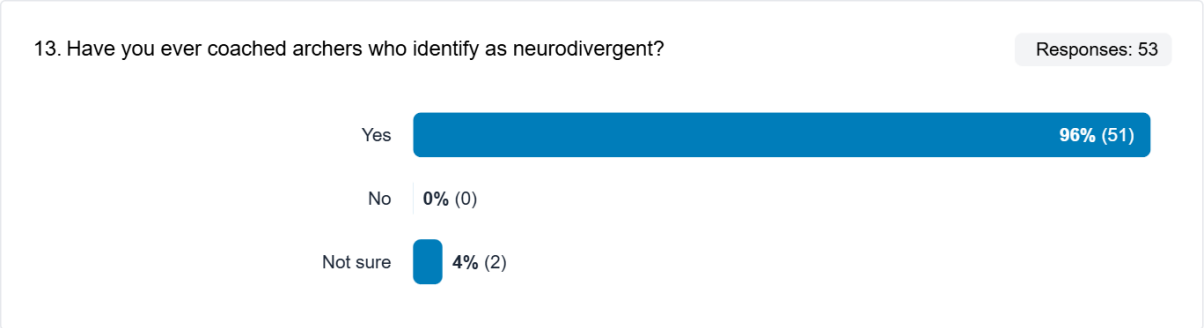


Figure 18. Have you ever coached archers who identify as neurodivergent?