



North London SRP: what you told us

In March 2020, during the coronavirus isolation regime, we kept in contact with our members and asked them to tell us about their lives as recorder players and musicians.

Who took part in the survey?

North London SRP has 40 paid-up members – a mix of full, associate and household. A further 52 people have agreed to be included on our mailing list; most of these been visitors in the past – sometimes the distant past.

We sent the survey to all 92 people on our mailing list to find out more about their recorder-playing history. We received 62 responses – over 67% of the total. A very satisfactory result. 33 members completed the survey, which is 83% of our membership, as well as 29 other people from our mailing list. 79% of the replies came from women, with 21% from men. This is broadly reflective of the membership which splits into 75% women to 25% men.

All the figures in this report are based on those who responded.

The problem with surveys

Surveys can be hard to interpret without a follow-up survey. In this short report we are just presenting the raw data for interest. We can discuss issues for the branch at the AGM in November.

Recorder-playing personal histories

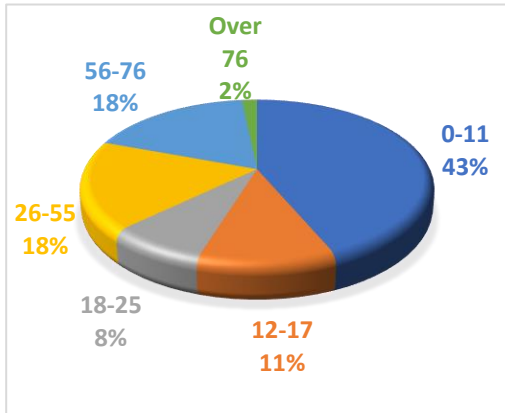
27 people started playing the recorder before the age of 11, with five of them learning outside school and 22 having lessons at primary school.

For 18 people it was the instrument they chose when they started playing music and 10 people took up the recorder after they retired.

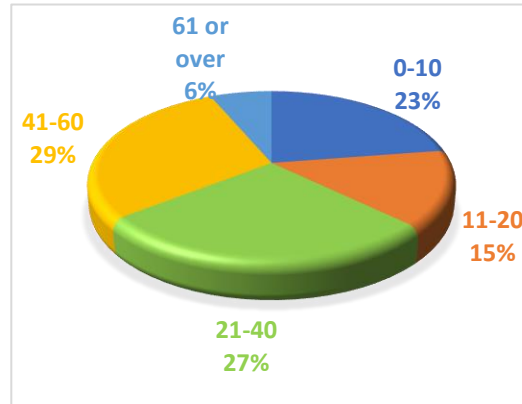
Those who made an early start certainly seem to have benefitted from it because 39 people have now been playing for over 20 years, with four of them clocking up more than 61 years.



Age when first learnt recorder



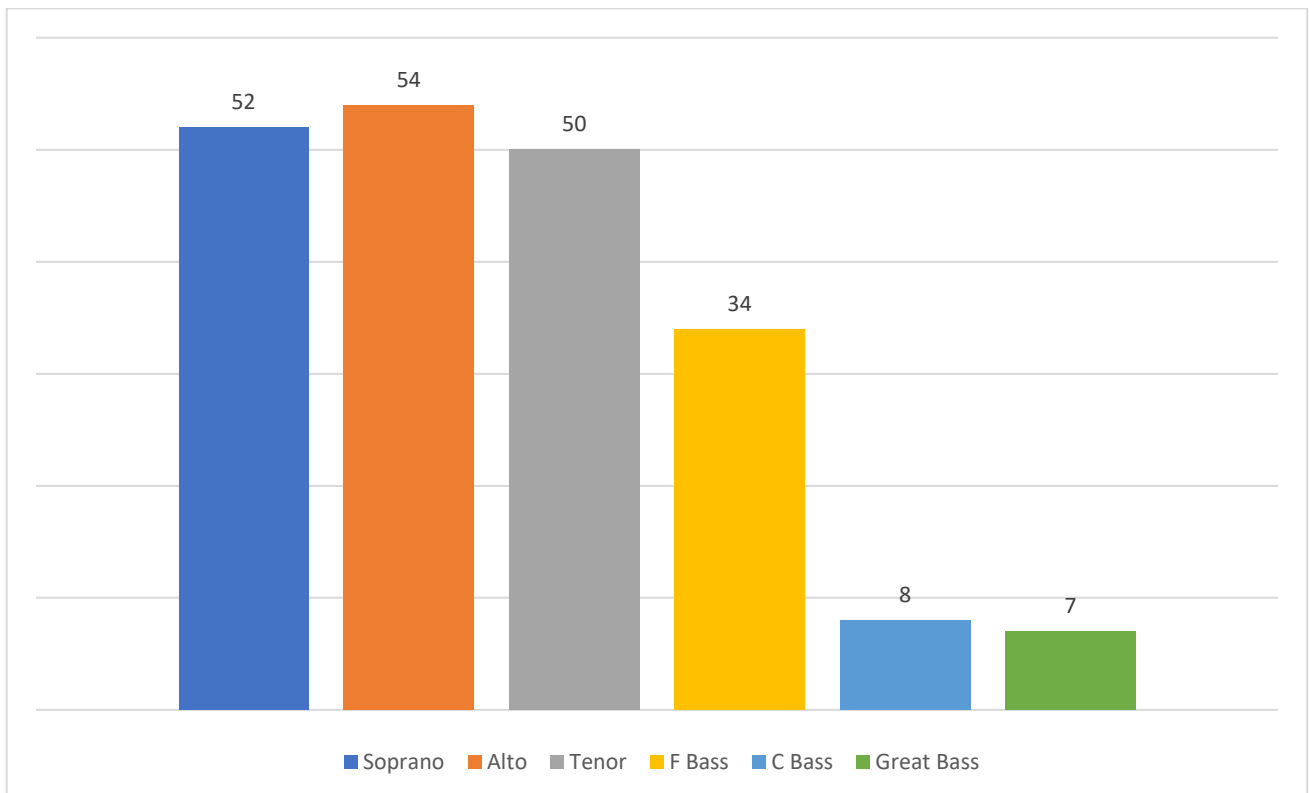
Years playing the recorder



Choosing a recorder

At SRP sessions, some people always choose the same instrument while others move around.

Almost everyone plays soprano, alto and tenor; alto is the most popular. Over half of respondents play the F bass. This doesn't always show at our playing sessions – maybe people don't like to carry all their instruments at once? Eight people play the C bass and seven play the great bass. They also don't all bring their great basses to our sessions – again, we assume owing to transportation. Of course, the regular players know that we have our chairman to cover those deepest tones.



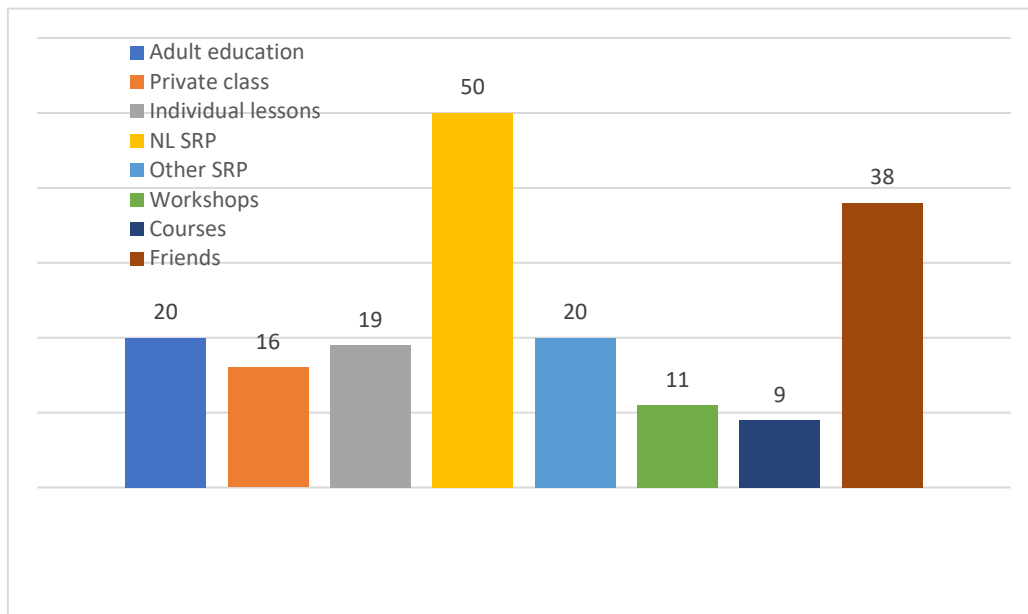


Playing a recorder

Most respondents seem to play regularly and in a variety of settings. Playing with friends was the most popular answer after North London SRP. Other SRP sessions and adult education settings were also popular. 19 people have individual lessons to improve their playing.

One person takes part in all eight activities, four people just one, and 26 people manage to fit in between two and six.

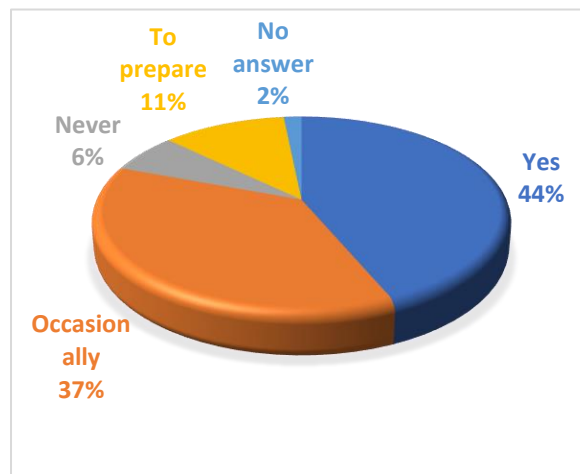
Where people play recorder



Practising the recorder

An impressive 27 respondents said that they practise regularly; a further 23 respondents practise occasionally. Only 4 people admitted that they never practise at all.

Practising the recorder





Whizz kids

It was always obvious that we have some accomplished musicians among our regular players – especially if you are lucky enough to sit next to one of them! We have 11 people with music qualifications from school level up to advanced degrees and diplomas.

18 respondents have passed grade exams on the recorder; 15 of those at Grade 5 and higher. Six people have passed Grade 8.

As well as the recorder, members told us what other instruments they play. Below is the complete list which goes way beyond the obvious. We had to look a few of these up!

Instrument	Numbers	Instrument	Numbers	Instrument	Numbers
Cello	1	Guitar	4	Shawm	1
Clarinet	6	Harp	1	Singing	3
Cornamuse	1	Lute	1	Uilleann pipes	1
Crumhorn	2	Oboe	1	Ukulele	1
Curtal	1	Organ	1	Violin	1
Drum kit	1	Piano / keyboard	18	Viols	1
Flute	3	Piccolo	1	Whistle	2
Frame drum	1	Saxophone	4		

Feedback on North London Branch

We received positive feedback from 12 respondents. Another eight people had comments on various aspects of the arrangements. The committee will look at all of these and, where appropriate, will put them on the agenda of the AGM so that everyone can tell us what they think.

Recorder playing is obviously an important part of our members' lives. Over 300 years ago, William Congreve wrote 'Musick has Charms to sooth a savage Breast'. We must all hope that it also has powers to sooth a savage virus.

Judith Abbs (Secretary)

Katie Stone (Treasurer)

4 April 2020