MEN WITH MACHINES CIC

Annual Survey 2026

Findings, interpretation and priorities for the year ahead

Men with Machines is clearly succeeding as a welcoming social community built around motoring, but continued growth now needs to be matched by more deliberate inclusion, clearer club branding and a broader - but manageable - range of activities.

The short view

The 142 responses provide strong evidence that the CIC is achieving its social purpose: 93% of respondents say membership has given them more opportunities to socialise, while 81% report at least a moderate positive effect on their mental health and outlook. Coffee & Conrods is particularly important, giving many members a weekly point of connection, friendship and something to look forward to. The results do not suggest that the basic formula needs changing; they suggest it needs protecting and developing carefully as the organisation grows.

142	93%	81%	96%
survey responses	more opportunity to socialise	moderate or greater wellbeing impact	aware of the wider purpose

These are self-reported results from a voluntary survey. They demonstrate members' experience and perceived benefit, but should not be presented as proof of direct medical causation.

Where we are now

Men with Machines has become more than a programme of vehicle events. It is functioning as a piece of local social infrastructure: a regular, low-pressure place in which a shared interest makes conversation and connection easier.

Finding	Result
Knew about the mental-health and loneliness purpose	96%
Definitely have more opportunities to socialise	66%
More opportunities, definitely or to some extent	93%
Moderate or greater positive wellbeing impact	81%
High or life-changing impact	27%
Average wellbeing-impact score	3.06 / 5
Regularly attend Coffee & Conrods	58%
Regularly attend weekend meetings	49%
Happy to pay £25 because of the good the club does	63%

Interpreting the impact score

The average score of three should not be seen as disappointing. Several respondents indicated that they were already happy and socially connected, so the club had not substantially 'improved' their mental health. Its value includes maintaining wellbeing and enabling people to help others, not only relieving established isolation.

What members value

- A regular highlight or reference point in the week.
- New friendships later in life and after retirement or bereavement.
- Conversation made easier by a shared interest in vehicles.
- A relaxed atmosphere, companionship and the opportunity to support others.
- Coming home from meetings feeling happier and more connected.

This validates the 'motor club first, social benefit as a natural consequence' model. Members are joining an enjoyable motoring community which quietly produces meaningful wellbeing benefits.

What should change

1. Protect the ordinary social meetings

'Park up, chat and refreshments' was selected by 84% of respondents. That is the heart of the organisation, not a basic activity waiting to be replaced by something more ambitious. Coffee & Conrods should remain dependable, informal and easy to attend. New activities should complement it rather than consume the volunteer capacity needed to keep it running.

2. Make inclusion more deliberate

Most feedback was highly positive, but a small number of comments deserve disproportionate attention. They described meetings becoming cliquey, expensive cars making somebody with limited means feel more isolated, difficulty entering conversations, inadequate support for a disabled member, difficulty hearing, and transport barriers.

These are early warnings of what can happen when an informal group grows. Practical responses could include:

- One or two clearly identifiable volunteer welcomers at larger meetings.
- A newcomer meeting point or hosted table during the first hour.
- Introductions based on shared interests, rather than leaving newcomers to break into groups.
- More emphasis on vehicle stories, ingenuity and ownership experiences rather than value.
- A private way to request accessibility or transport help, supported by a short venue review.

3. Add purposeful outings selectively

Activity members would like	Interest
Technical, engineering and restoration visits	59%
Drive-outs to a local car or bike show	49%
Drive-outs to a pub, museum, gallery or attraction	49%
One-day tour, photo quest or navigation rally	32%
Two-day tour with an overnight stop	11%

This points towards a modest programme of accessible day activities, especially technical visits and social drive-outs. Competitive motoring should be a pilot rather than a priority: 41% said no, 33% maybe, and 26% expressed definite interest, including those interested only in road-car events.

4. Improve access beyond weekday mornings

Trial one later-starting weekend gathering each month, a reliable monthly evening meeting during the lighter months, and occasional 'meet us there' arrangements at existing events. This would broaden access without greatly increasing the organising burden.

Identity, membership and priorities

5. Clarify the family of brands

Brand most associated with	Responses
Hellfire Motor Vehicle Club	65%
Coffee & Conrods	18%
Haddenham Classics	14%
Men with Machines	3%

Keep the successful local identities, but use one consistent explanation on membership material, bookings and emails:

> **Hellfire Motor Vehicle Club, Coffee & Conrods and Haddenham Classics are all part of Men with Machines CIC.**

6. Strengthen the membership proposition without excluding people

Keep an accessible free option and the £25 membership, while adding a voluntary £40 or £50 supporter level. At least 11% explicitly indicated that they might pay more for benefits or simply to support the cause, while 18% have only considered or can only afford free membership.

Explain clearly what £25 enables - venues, insurance, systems, activities and keeping participation accessible. Modest supporter benefits could include a supplier discount scheme or member skills directory. Simplifying guest booking so a member can add one guest in the same transaction would also remove a stated barrier.

Recommended priorities for the next year

- Preserve Coffee & Conrods and the regular weekend gatherings.
- Introduce a simple newcomer and inclusion system.
- Pilot a small number of technical visits and destination drive-outs.
- Clarify how the club brands sit beneath Men with Machines CIC.
- Simplify guest booking and introduce an optional supporter membership.

For next year's survey

Retain the core questions for year-on-year comparison. Add length of membership, frequency of attendance, barriers to participation and whether respondents have formed friendships through the club. This will distinguish occasional observers from regularly engaged members and create stronger evidence of change over time.

Source: Event Feedback.csv, 142 responses collected in September 2026. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Multi-select activity percentages do not sum to 100%.