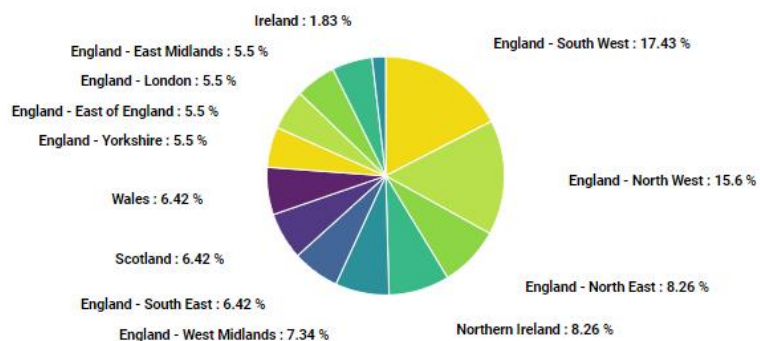


## Volunteer Survey Findings 2022

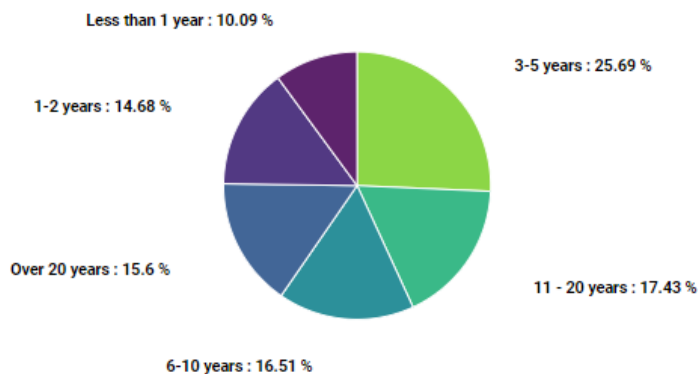
Thanks to everyone who completed the Volunteer Survey that was launched during Volunteers Week in June. We had 108 responses which represents approximately 10% of our active volunteers.

The survey focused on two main areas of volunteering, impact and recognition, and this infographic shares some of the findings and what we're doing as a result.

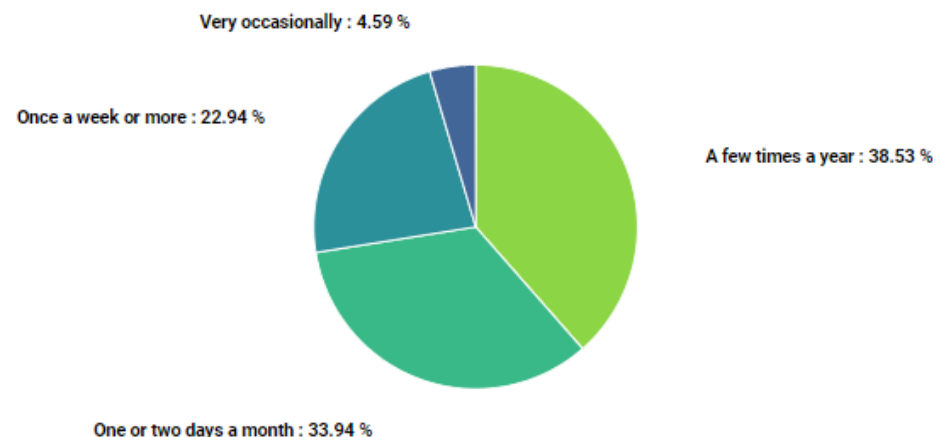
### Where are you based?



### How many years have you been volunteering with the RTPI?



### How often do you volunteer with the RTPI?

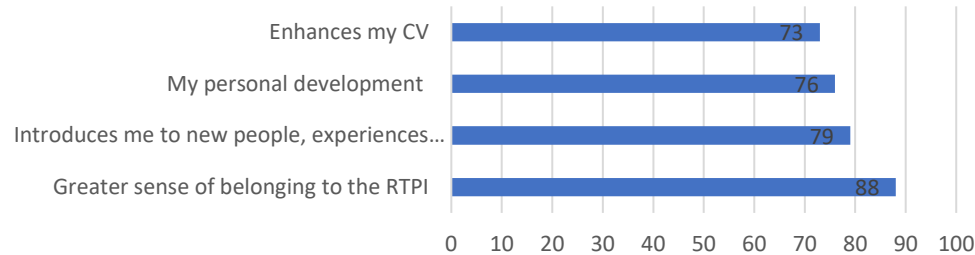


Respondents represented a good cross section of the different areas of involvement. The highest numbers of respondents were from Regional Activities Committees (37 respondents), organising CPD events (35 respondents), Awards Panel / Judging (30 respondents), Speaking at RTPI events (26 responses), PAE (22 respondents), RMB (19 responses) and Young Planners Subcommittee (18 respondents). Positively, there was at least one respondent from every area of engagement offered as an option.

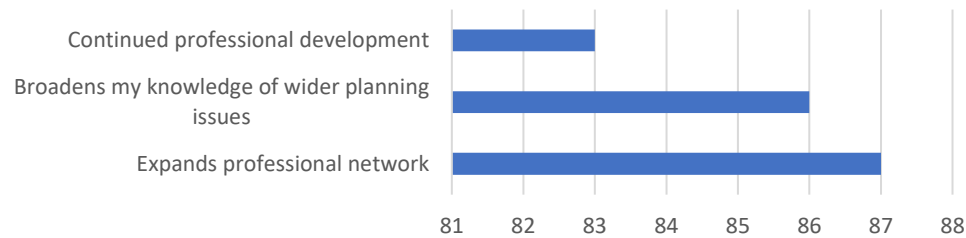
95% of RTPI volunteers would recommend volunteering to others.

## Impact

In what ways does volunteering have a positive impact on you personally? (answers out of 108 respondents)



In what ways does volunteering have a positive impact on you professionally? (answers out of 108 respondents)



69% of respondents said that they feel their contribution helps achieve the objectives of a work area of the RTPI.

62% of respondents feel that their contribution positively impacts the wider planning profession.

55% of respondents felt that their contribution helps deliver the corporate strategy.

Respondents were also given free text space to share **the ways in which volunteering has a positive impact on their organisation**. These can be grouped into a number of types of responses,

- **transferrable skills and knowledge** - “skills and knowledge that I develop through volunteering can also be applied in my workplace”.
- **Raises the profile of their organisation, and the networking opportunities** - “the network I have built through volunteering is very useful” and “company visibility within profession”.
- **the mutual benefits of volunteering and broadening knowledge** - “knowledge sharing both ways” and “keeping up to date, debating issues, feeling motivated and valued as planners”.

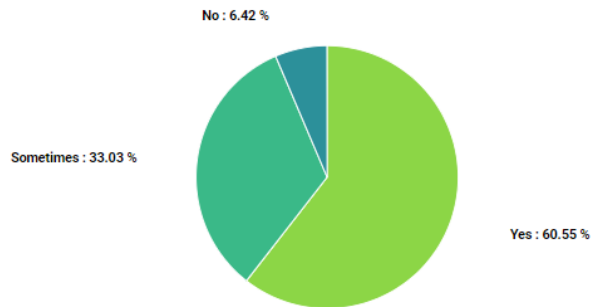
Volunteers were also asked in what **ways does volunteering have a positive impact on communities/outside of planning**? Understandably, most respondents acknowledged that their role does not impact communities as it has an internal focus, such as standing on a committee. Other responses can be grouped into 3 areas.

- **Profile raising** - “expanding planning into wider associated fields and advocating for planning”.
- **Accessibility and public understanding of planning** - “helping communities tackle the wide range of planning issues locally” and “increases the accessibility of planning, brings it closer to the people”.
- **Wider knowledge and understanding amongst planners**, “increased officer knowledge” and “gain skills re: consultation”

33% of respondents felt that their contribution positively impacts the wider community.

## Recognition

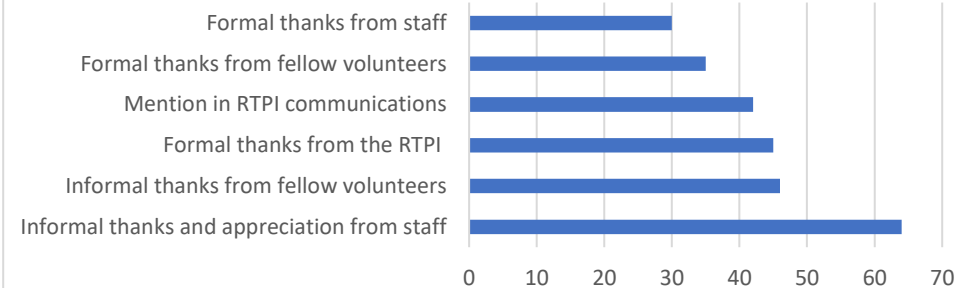
Do you feel like your contribution to the RTPI is valued?



Respondents were then given a free text box and asked, **if no or sometimes, what could we do to change that?**

- **Financial** – “Our group has lost LPA group members as the council don't pay their memberships which means they are not allowed to volunteer... and means the RTPI ends up being full of private sector people and out of balance.
- **Acknowledge time given** – “recognise that our volunteering has to fit around full-time employment. Our volunteering is determined and constrained by our jobs”
- **Recognition by RTPI** – “more formal recognition for volunteers by RTPI executive” and “recognition that the RTPI would not be able to do the work it does without the contribution of volunteers”
- **General** – “I don't expect my contribution to be valued” and “this year the thank you'd have been more obvious than in previous years”.

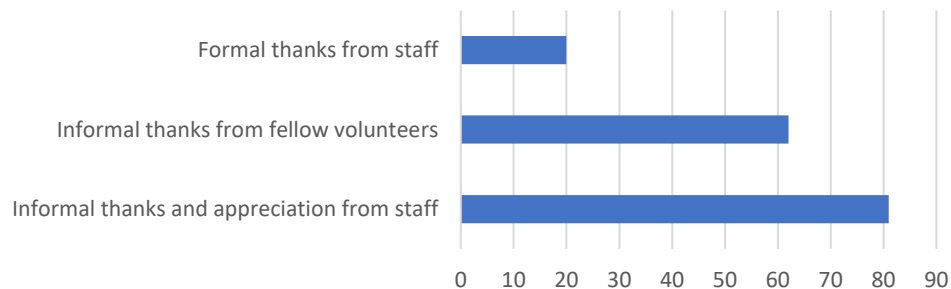
Which of these forms of recognition is most meaningful for your personally?



**What other ways could we recognise individuals or groups of volunteer's contribution?** This free text option generated a wide variety of responses around some key areas.

- **Promotion** - “ensuring that where work, projects, pilots, research, events etc take place that recognition is given to the role of the staff and volunteers and that the RTPI needs both to ensure it provides the best for its members”
- **Thanks** – “volunteer social events in regions, funded centrally” and “just someone at Head Office saying thank you”.
- **Financial benefits** – “reduced cost or free CPD as a perk” and “providing a gift/opportunity in exchange for giving up free time”.
- **Being heard** – “ensure that volunteers are engaged in decisions that impact them, as that can help them to feel valued and part of the team.

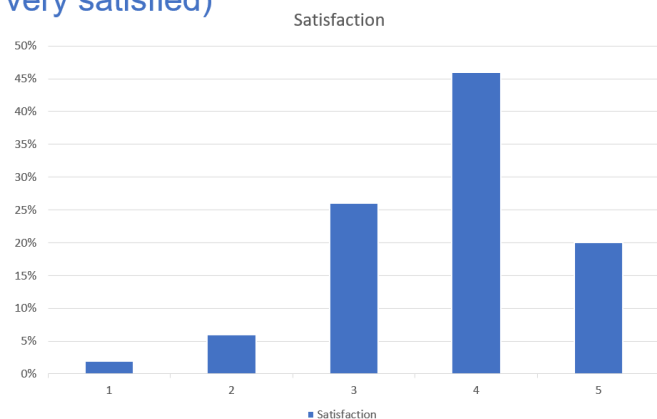
How is your contribution valued by the RTPI?



## Volunteers were also asked, **Do you have any suggestions on how volunteering at the RTPI could be improved?**

- **Support, training and recognition** – “more support, more appreciation” and “help to get to know others when start” and “proper acknowledgement for taking the time out during events and personal time to organise events, for example in the form of emails/letters/being taken out by the RTPI chair”.
- **Communications** – “The RTPI needs to make it as easy as possible for volunteers to make a difference with the time that they commit. Most volunteers are there because they want to make a difference but it is so hard to bring events and projects forward due to restrictions imposed by central.” and “The volunteering groups work in isolation and there doesn’t seem to be much overlap / chances to meet others in other volunteering roles / groups”.
- **Promotion and Opportunities** – “I really want to see much more genuine diversity in those who volunteer and in the profession overall so it reflects the communities that planning serves.” And “Greater promotion of volunteers and promotion of the opportunities which volunteering presents.” Another volunteer said, “Continue to listen to volunteers and members. Tell their stories and amplify their voices in The planner and on website” and “wider promotion of all opportunities not just committees”

## Please rate your overall satisfaction with your experience of volunteering at the RTPI (5 being very satisfied)



## Next steps

**Communication** – It is clear from the results that volunteers want to feel included and part of the team. We are planning to offer an RTPI induction to new volunteers, which will help volunteers understand where their volunteering fits in the wider organisation and how their contribution links to our corporate strategy.

**Promotion** – The information provided in the survey such as some of the statistics and quotes, can be used to promote volunteering and is already being used for the promotion of the elections. Updated [volunteering webpages](#), including information on [roles](#) and opportunities for different career stages are now live.

**Recognition** – It is not just events and awards that have value, the results highlight how important the informal thanks and recognition of feeling valued by the organisation are. The details provided, along with notes from other discussions such as the GA, have shaped a guidance document on thanking volunteers, which we aim to implement in 2023.

**The Volunteer Journey** – This year we have worked to define what the volunteer experience at the RTPI will be like. This helps clarify expectations for volunteers and staff and will ensure a more consistent experience across all volunteering opportunities at the RTPI. It consists of 12 steps across 4 stages which you can see [here](#). Work will continue in 2023 to deliver this, and updates will be provided as work progresses.

**Volunteer Hub** – Over the next 6 months groups of volunteers will be introduced to the new Volunteer Hub. In this first phase, this is an area for accessing information related to your volunteering and sharing and working on documents with fellow volunteers. The proposed Phase 2 in 2023 will focus on communication.

Thanks again to everyone that took the time to complete the survey, I hope you can see that your views are shaping volunteering development at the RTPI.

Zoe MacGregor, Volunteer Project Co-ordinator