



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

RTPI Membership Survey 2013 – Summary results

*Martine Koch
Head of Membership, RTPI*

*Dr Michael Harris
Deputy Head of Policy & Research, RTPI*

**RTPI Research Report no.3
March 2014**

RTPI MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2013 – SUMMARY RESULTS

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report summarises the key findings from the RTPI Membership Survey. It covers the following issues:

- Objectives of the survey
- Methodology and response rate
- Membership demographics
- Employment and salary levels
- Reasons for joining and maintaining membership of the RTPI
- RTPI services and activities – awareness, usage and quality
- RTPI communications, website and social media
- Future RTPI services and priorities
- Members' views of planning
- Further research.

The RTPI would like to thank all of those members who took the time to complete the survey and provide us with their views of the Institute.

Objectives of the survey

The reason for conducting the survey was to improve the RTPI's services through better data on the Institute's members and their views of its services and activities. Until now, the RTPI has lacked key data on its members, for example salary levels, employer type, location and so on. This has limited the Institute's ability to represent its members, develop services and inform membership growth.

In 2013, the RTPI's Board of Trustees agreed to establish a new programme of research into the profession, starting with surveying the RTPI's membership.

Methodology and response rate

An email survey invitation was sent to all members with valid email addresses, with three reminder emails. A hardcopy postal invitation was sent to UK and Irish RTPI members without email addresses. An open survey link was also promoted on the RTPI website.

During a four week period, 5,718 members completed the survey – a response rate of 25.3% (assuming a membership size of 22,607). This has provided a robust sample size for analysis.

All of the figures used in this report relate to survey respondents rather than the whole of the membership.

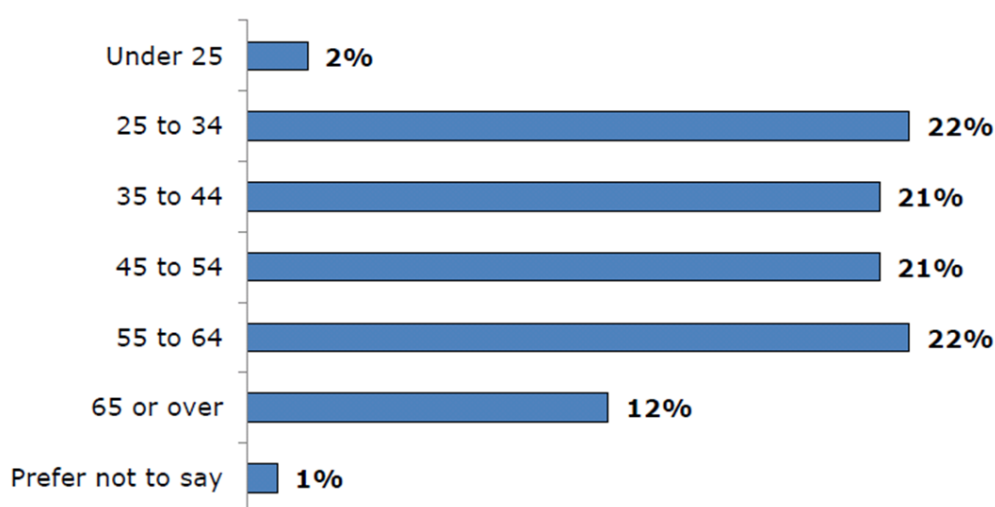
The survey was anonymous, meaning that the RTPI is not able to identify individual members from their survey responses.

Membership demographics

Some key facts about the RTPI's membership, drawn from the Membership Survey, are:

- The Institute's membership is two-thirds male, one-third female;
- The membership comprises a wide range of age groups, with just under half aged under 45 (see Figure 1);
- Just over three-quarters of members are in England (77%), 10% in Scotland, 5% in Wales, 2% in Northern Ireland and 1% in Ireland;
- In England, the highest number of members live/work in the South East (20%), the lowest in the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the North East (8%, 8% and 6% respectively).

Figure 1 – RTPI membership by age



Further key facts about the RTPI's membership based on the survey include:

- 5% of members live/work outside the UK or Ireland;
- The highest number are in Hong Kong (which accounts for 18% of the RTPI's membership outside the UK or Ireland), followed by Australia;
- The majority of members are of White ethnic background;
- 2% of members indicate that they have a disability;
- The majority of members (67%) are not members of any other organisations.

The RTPI also has a long-standing membership with significant experience. Just over half have been members for 16 years or more (51%) (see Figure 2). The largest single proportion have more than 30 years' experience in planning (27%), followed by 18% who had between 6 and 10 years' experience (see Figure 3).

Figure 2 – Length of RTPI membership

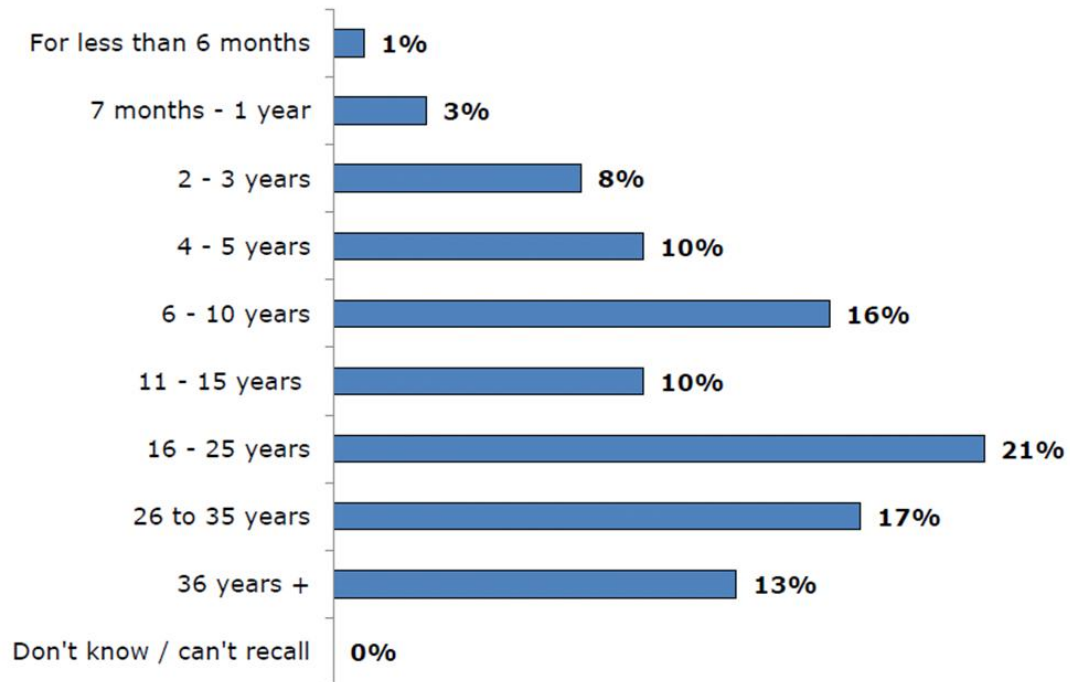
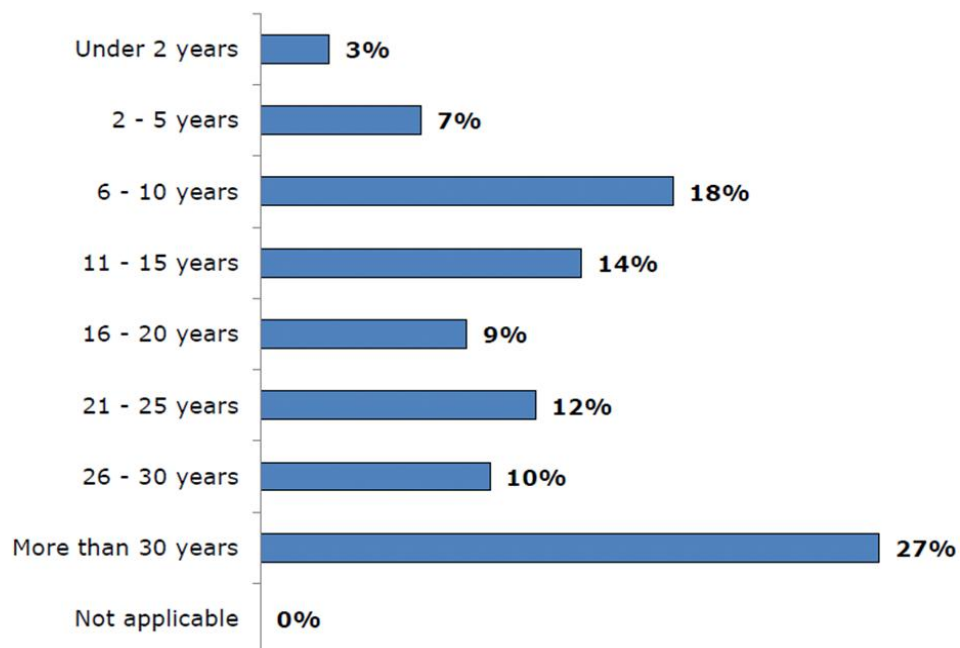


Figure 3 – Years of experience in planning



Based on survey responses, in terms of type of membership classes the majority are Chartered (73%), followed by Retired members (10%) and Licentiate members (10%).

Employment and salary levels

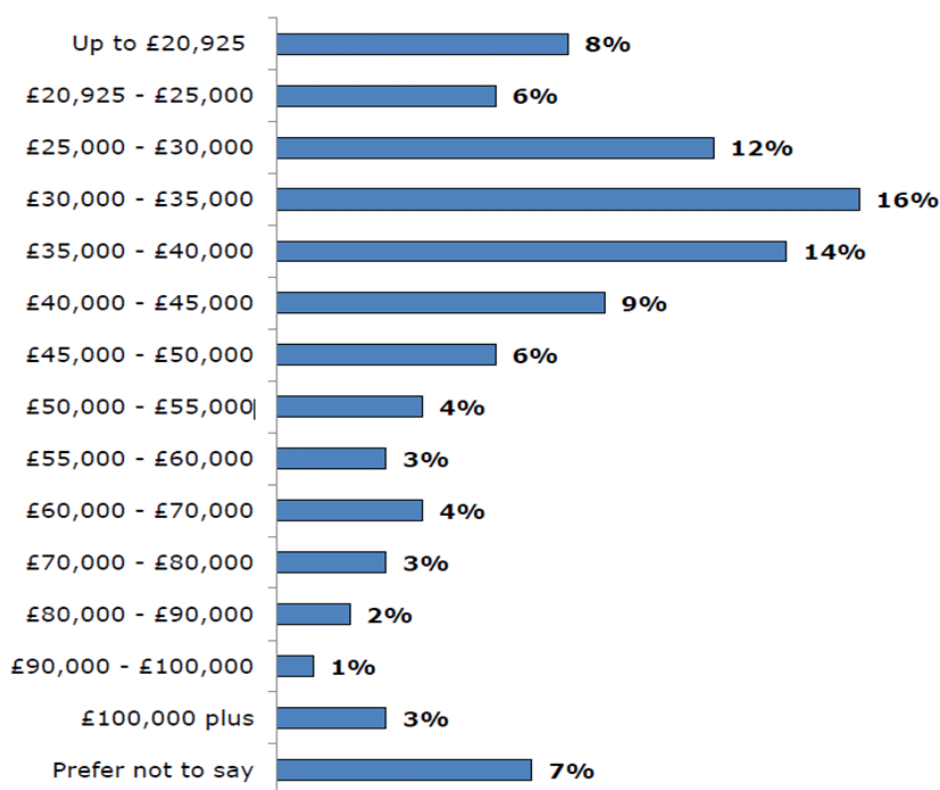
The majority of members are in full-time employment (65%), with a further 11% working part-time and 10% self-employed/freelance. One in eight members is retired (12%).

In terms of employers, half of members work in local government. More than a fifth (22%) of members work for consultancies; 5% work for international consultancies, while 9% and 8% work for national and local consultancies respectively.

The areas in which members work are also diverse. Half of members engage with development management and/or local planning policy, 26% work in urban policy, 21% regeneration, and 18% in heritage or conservation (again, members were allowed to select up to five responses to this question). One in eight members are involved in community engagement and economic development.

Members have a wide range of salaries/incomes, with the most common being £30-35k (16%) (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Members' salaries/income (of those currently working)



As might be expected, this varies somewhat by nation and region, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 – Salary/income by nation

Salary	Overall	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Ireland	Outside the UK or Ireland
Up to £25,000	14%	14%	13%	12%	18%	17%	15%
£25,000 - £35,000	28%	28%	37%	32%	43%	17%	9%
£35,000 - £45,000	23%	24%	17%	26%	19%	15%	11%
£45,000 - £55,000	10%	9%	15%	11%	9%	7%	15%
£55,000 plus	17%	17%	12%	13%	7%	29%	33%
Prefer not to say	7%	7%	5%	6%	3%	15%	17%

Table 2 – Salary/income by English region

Salary	Overall	East of England	East Midlands	London	North East	North West
Up to £25,000	14%	14%	18%	8%	14%	18%
£25,000 - £35,000	28%	24%	36%	20%	36%	31%
£35,000 - £45,000	24%	27%	20%	24%	23%	22%
£45,000 - £55,000	9%	14%	7%	11%	8%	8%
£55,000 plus	17%	16%	14%	30%	14%	15%
Prefer not to say	7%	5%	6%	8%	5%	6%

Salary	Overall	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire
Up to £25,000	14%	13%	13%	15%	22%
£25,000 - £35,000	28%	22%	33%	32%	33%
£35,000 - £45,000	24%	25%	25%	24%	22%
£45,000 - £55,000	9%	11%	9%	7%	7%
£55,000 plus	17%	20%	14%	14%	12%
Prefer not to say	7%	9%	6%	7%	5%

In terms of the benefits of membership, Chartered members are more likely to earn £35-55k plus compared to the rest of the RTPI's membership. More than half (54%) of Chartered members earning £45-55k say it has affected their salary. There is also a clear correlation between salary and length of membership.

Reasons for joining the RTPI

The most popular reason for originally joining among members was 'to further my career' (91%), especially among student members. This was followed by 'because my employer/clients required it' (70%) and status (67%) and skills/knowledge (64%). (Members were allowed to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with seven statements about why they joined the Institute). Salary, promoting the profession and networking were seen as important but less significant.

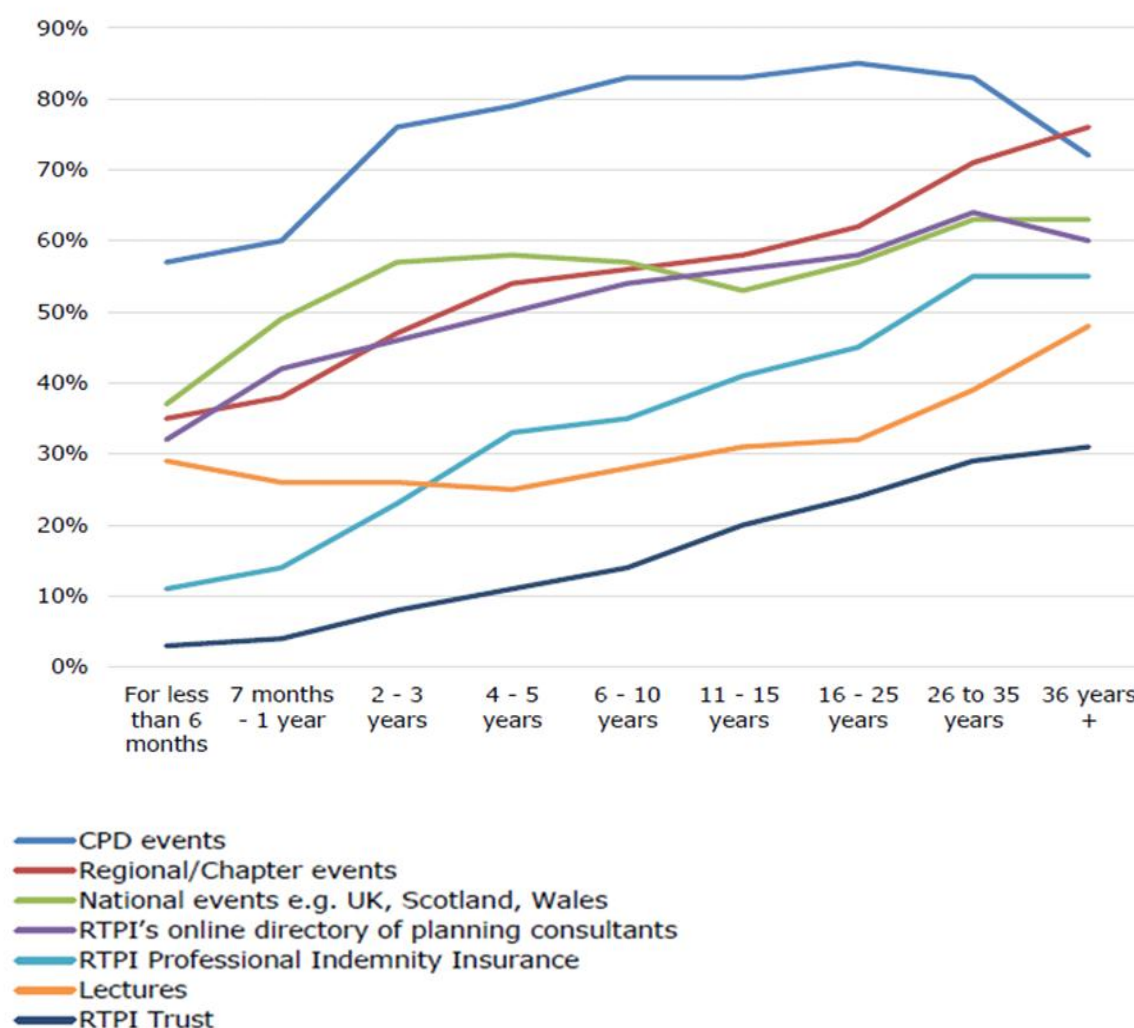
Reasons for maintaining membership of the RTPI

The majority of members indicate their employer regards their membership either as essential (33%) or desirable (39%). Nearly half of members (45%) say they are part of the Institute because their employer or clients require it, followed by 38% who say that they are members because it provides them with essential skills and knowledge (members were allowed to cite up to three reasons). Almost two in five respondents (37%) state they are members because of the status and to further their career. Nearly a quarter of members (23%) also say that helping to promote the planning profession is a key reason for membership.

Awareness of RTPI services and activities

As might be expected, there is varying awareness of RTPI services and activities. Members have a high awareness of CPD events (80%), regional/chapter events (61%), national events (58%) and the online directory of planning consultants (56%) (chapters are the RTPI's regional networks in Scotland). However, this varies by nation. Members in England have higher awareness of CPD events, while regional events are most well-known in Scotland. Awareness of RTPI services and activities is generally lower outside the UK and Ireland. Awareness of services and activities also tends to rise with length of membership (see Figure 5).

Figure 5 – Awareness of RTPI selected services and activities by length of membership



Use of RTPI services and activities

The most used services in the past 12 months were CPD events (41%), regional/chapter events (26%) and RTPI networks (19%). These are also the services members expected to use in the next 12 months. Members' future expected usage of services is also higher than past usage.

Perceived quality of RTPI services and activities

Members have a generally positive view of RTPI services. The most highly rated service is professional indemnity insurance. Regional/chapter events, Scottish Planner and RTPI's employment law helpline are also rated very highly. The lowest rated services are the RTPI Trust (but from a very small sample size), Workplace support and Management information and guidance.

RTPI communications, website and social media

Half of members indicate they receive communication from the RTPI once a week or more, and over a quarter two to three times a month (28%). More than four in five members describe the amount of communication they receive as 'about right'. The most frequently accessed areas of the RTPI website are Events, Membership and Knowledge. 14% of members follow the RTPI via LinkedIn, 10% via Twitter, 5% via Facebook. 38% of RTPI members don't use any social media.

Future RTPI services and priorities

Seven in ten members prioritise policy and influencing (69%), good practice (42%) and training and development (39%) (see Figure 6) (members were allowed to select up to three responses for this question). The former set of potential priorities increase strongly with length of membership, while the latter decrease (see Figure 7).

Figure 6 – Future priorities for the RTPI

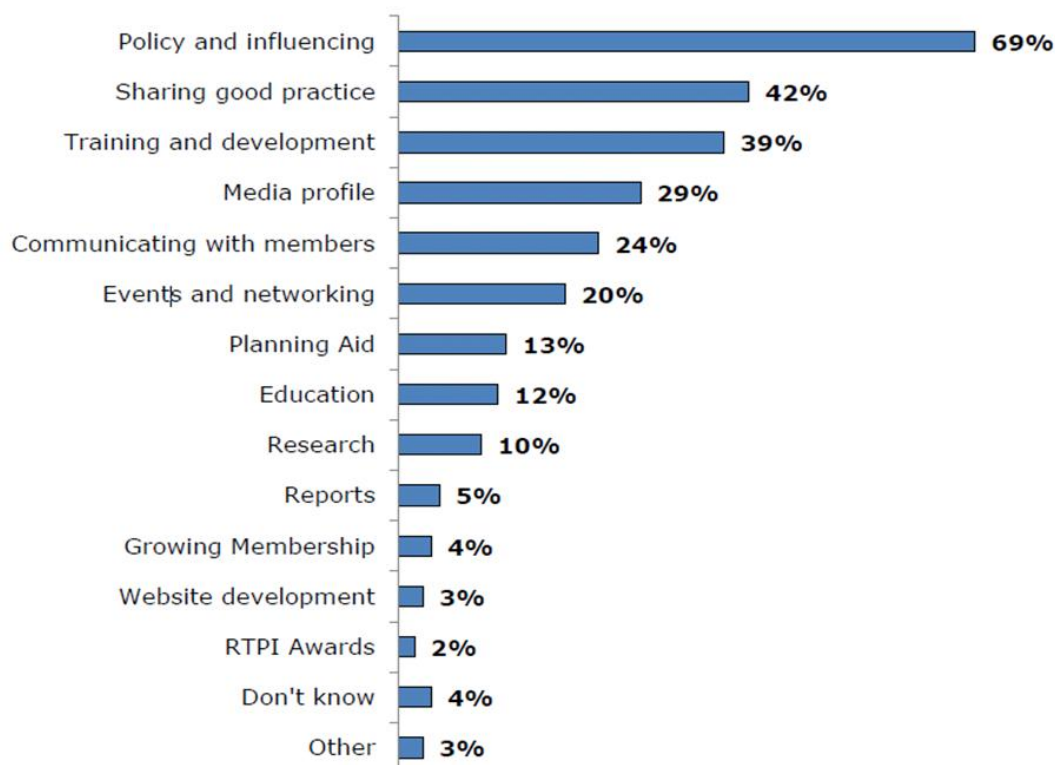
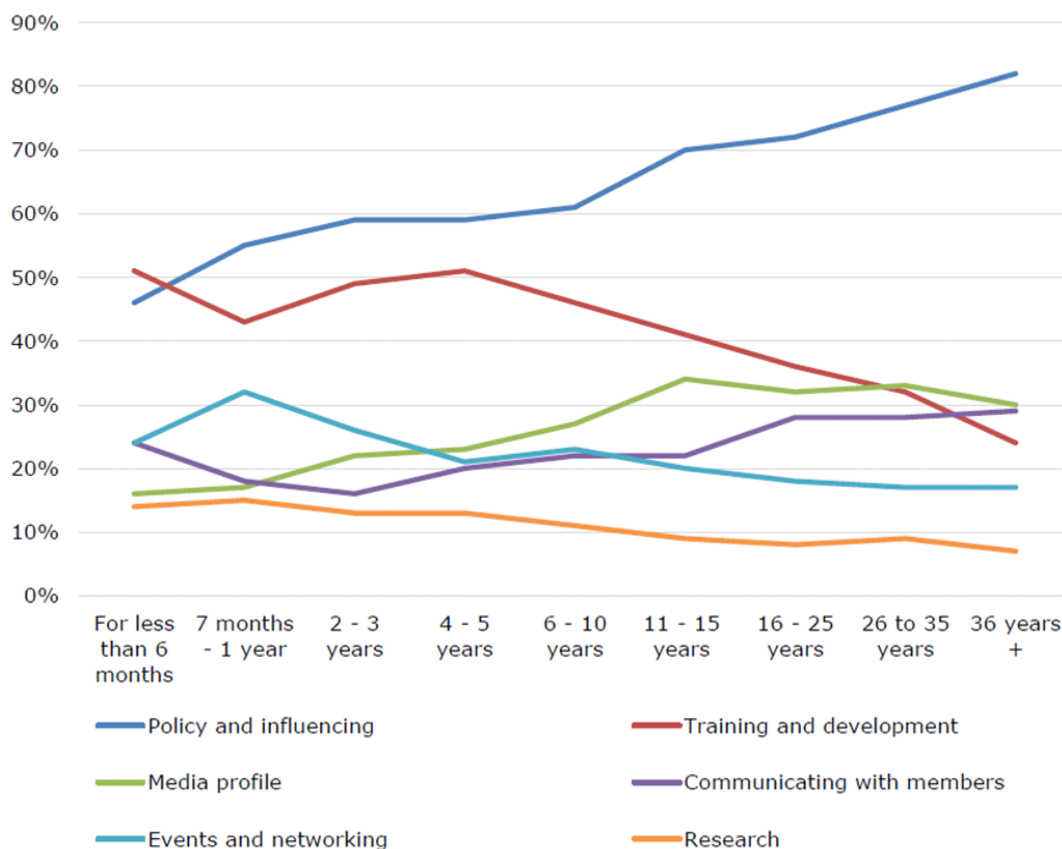


Figure 7 – Selected future priorities by years of RTPI membership



In terms of additional services, over half of members (56%) indicate that online learning should be a priority. News services (46%) and additional publications (38%) were also priorities, especially among student members. Members also supported website forums to discuss planning issues (32%) and a blog covering planning issues (29%).

Members' views of planning

More than three-quarters of members say they are proud of working in planning (77%) (7% of members said they weren't, 12% 'don't know', and 4% said this was not applicable to them). The proportion of members who are proud of working in planning is higher in central government, national agencies and international consultancies (83-85%). It is also higher among those who live/work outside the UK and Ireland (84%).

Further research

The Membership Survey has provided the RTPI with useful data on its current membership, but as noted the survey is only the first part of a programme of research into the planning profession. In order to develop the RTPI's membership, and to represent the planning profession in the future, we will be conducting further research on the RTPI's membership and the wider planning profession.

The RTPI has prioritised areas for further research into the following phases of work (Phase 1 being the initial Membership Survey), to be undertaken during 2014-15:

Phase 2:

- Non-member planners (including in local government, and of networks);
- Lapsed members;
- Students (members and non-members, including overseas students).

Phase 3:

- Licentiate members (APC candidates);
- Diversity of membership;
- Overseas members;
- Retired members;
- Members not 'proud of planning';
- Implications for future membership from our developing understanding of the demographics of the planning profession.

As stated, the reason for conducting the survey was to improve the RTPI's services through better data on the Institute's members and their views of its services and activities. The RTPI will set-out how it is responding to the survey through an article in the March edition of *The Planner* magazine.

**RTPI**

mediation of space · making of place

About the research

This report is based on a survey of RTPI members conducted on behalf of the Institute by Enventure, a market research company, during October and November 2013. The report was written by Martine Koch, Head of Membership, and Dr Michael Harris, Deputy Head of Policy and Research, at the RTPI.

Further information

The report is available on the RTPI website at:

www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/projects/membership-survey/

About the RTPI

The Royal Town Planning Institute holds a unique position in relation to planning as a professional membership body, a charity and a learned institute. We have a responsibility to promote the research needs of spatial planning in the UK, Ireland and internationally.

More information on our research projects can be found on the RTPI website at:

www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/

You are also welcome to email us at: research@rtpi.org.uk