

SHAPING THE FUTURE



In October 2023 when the steering group was launched, the brief was to recommend to the Flowers from the Farm AGM in 2024 a revised organisational structure for Flowers from the Farm.

As a steering group, we were determined to consult as broadly as possible with the membership to find out what members thought about the way forward for Flowers from the Farm, and how to build on an amazing legacy.

In November 2023 we launched the survey with the aim of understanding where are members stand on a number of areas and what members say our future should be built on.

A big thank you goes to the many members who completed the survey. Not only answering all the questions but providing commentary too. We have had literally hundreds of comments and we have read every one of them and pulled out the themes that are most frequently raised.

This document highlights the results from the membership survey and should be regarded as confidential, for FFTF members eyes only

Without your fabulous response to the survey the steering group would not have been able to build on the incredible legacy which is FFTF



- We had a fantastic response to the survey with around a third of members taking part
- In the main, all questions were completed in full
- We decided not to make every question compulsory, so some questions were not completed by everyone taking part

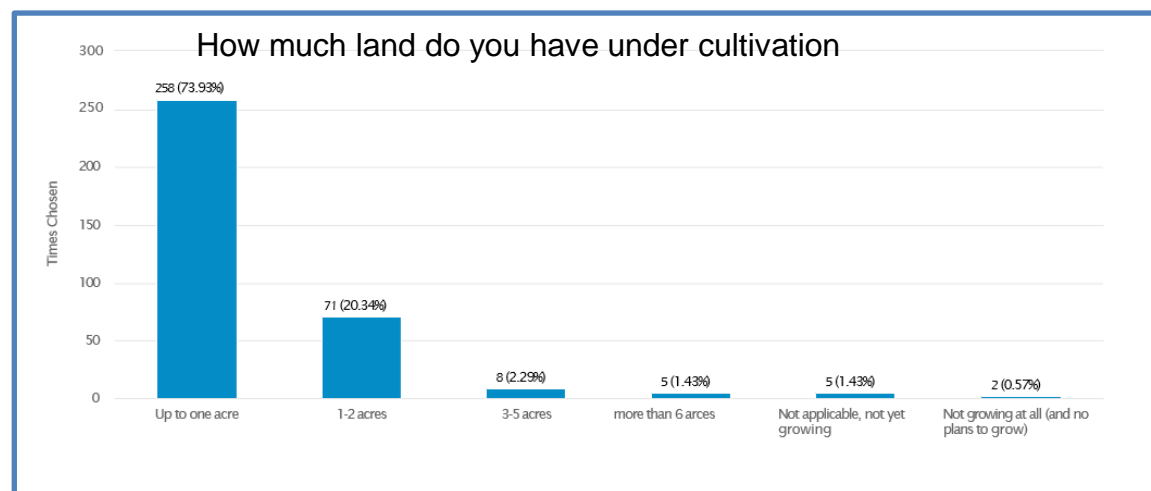
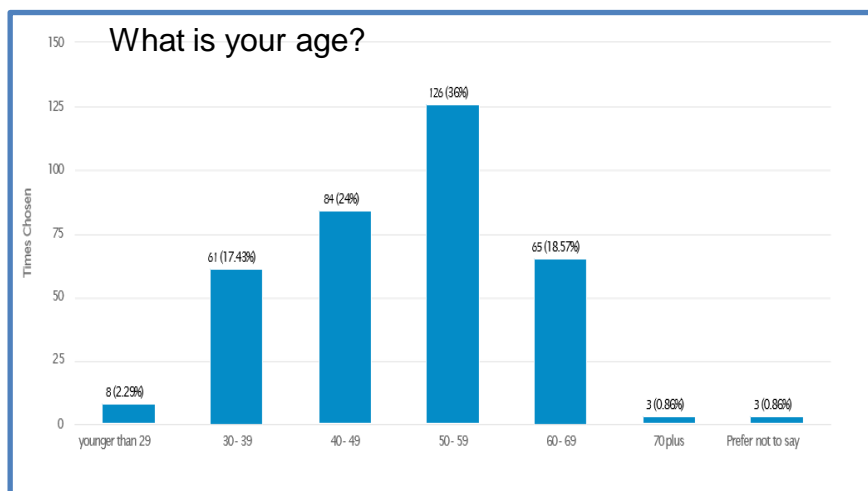
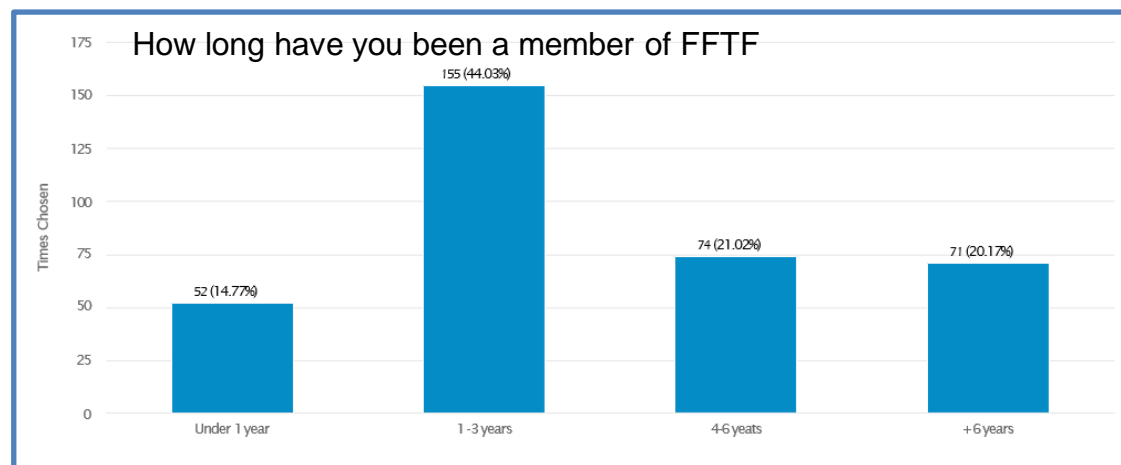
Answer Choice	Response Total	% Share of Response	Membership Number (based on 22)	% of Membership responding
South East	65	18.52	193	33.68
South West	76	21.65	203	37.44
West Midlands	38	10.83	94	40.43
East Anglia	37	10.54	87	42.53
East Midlands	31	8.83	76	40.79
North West	22	6.27	68	32.35
North East & Yorkshire	29	8.26	85	34.12
Scotland	28	7.98	68	41.18
Wales	24	6.84	58	41.38
Northern Ireland	1	0.28	7	14.29
	351		939	

"I think FFTF is great, I am looking forward to seeing what the new organisation looks like and all the good things that it can offer me to help make my business more of a success."

Some background on the members who completed the survey



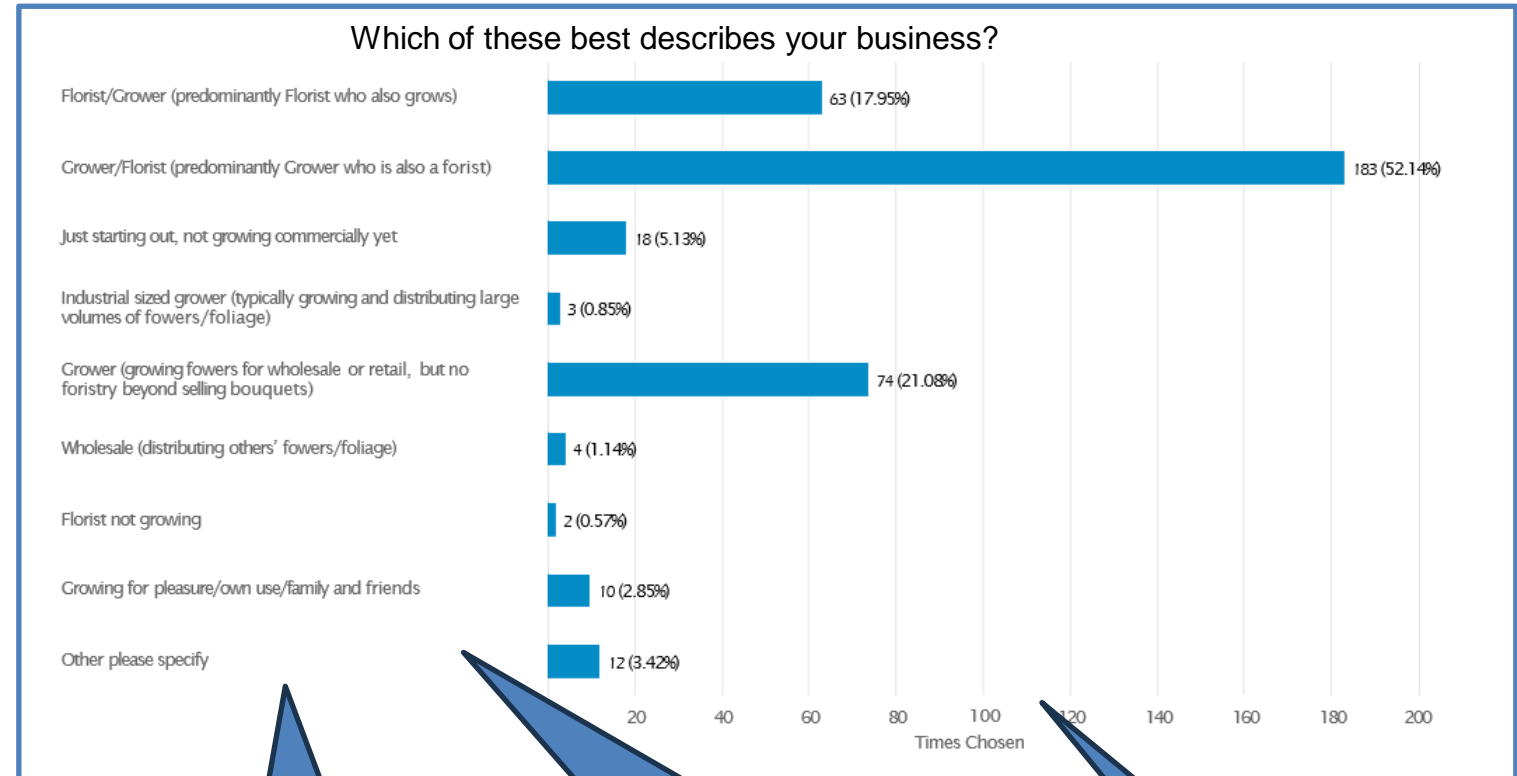
- The majority of responders are growing on less than an acre (73%) and are relatively new to FFTF (60%) less than 3 years
- With an older age profile, 55% are 50+ (this may be because a lot of members have career changed into Flower Farming)



The vast majority of our members are growers with some level of floristry



- Obvious, but we really wanted to understand our core member profile so that core members are at the front & centre of our thinking when redesigning the organisation
- That is not to say that other members are not important, it just helped us focus
- More than half the respondents in the other section described 50:50 split Grower/Florist



“Grower and florist in equal measures”

“I honestly don’t consider myself more florist or more grower - I’m a 50:50 split and both aspects feel interdependent and essential to me”

“Florist and a grower equally?!”

We asked you to rank in order of importance the services you most valued from FFTF today



Rank	Choice	Distribution	Score	Times Ranked
1.	Sense of community / broadening flower farming network		2121	312
2.	My business location map on the website		1928	307
3.	Advice resources available on the website		1773	312
4.	Local networking meetings		1705	308
5.	Discounts with relevant suppliers		1579	311
6.	Managed social media platforms		1395	312
7.	National conference		1219	308
8.	FRtoolkit on the website		1081	312
9.	Events diary on the website		1068	313
		Lowest Highest		

This ranking question did not work for everyone and it generated lots of comments/.....

"the above list was required to send the survey in. I do not necessarily value any of those things"

The ranking did not give us the full picture, you had a lot to say which was difficult to express with the ranking alone



Other key values mentioned in order of priority:

1. The Facebook group and social media – many references to how useful the Facebook group is to members (45%)
2. Advice and Knowledge sharing were specifically sited via other routes as well as Facebook (24%)
3. The benefits of being part of a professional organisation/movement (16%)
4. FFTF promoting British Flowers, Local & Sustainability (16%)
5. Friendships made through FFTF (9%)

“Facebook group is the top resource for sharing knowledge and experience and seeking support”

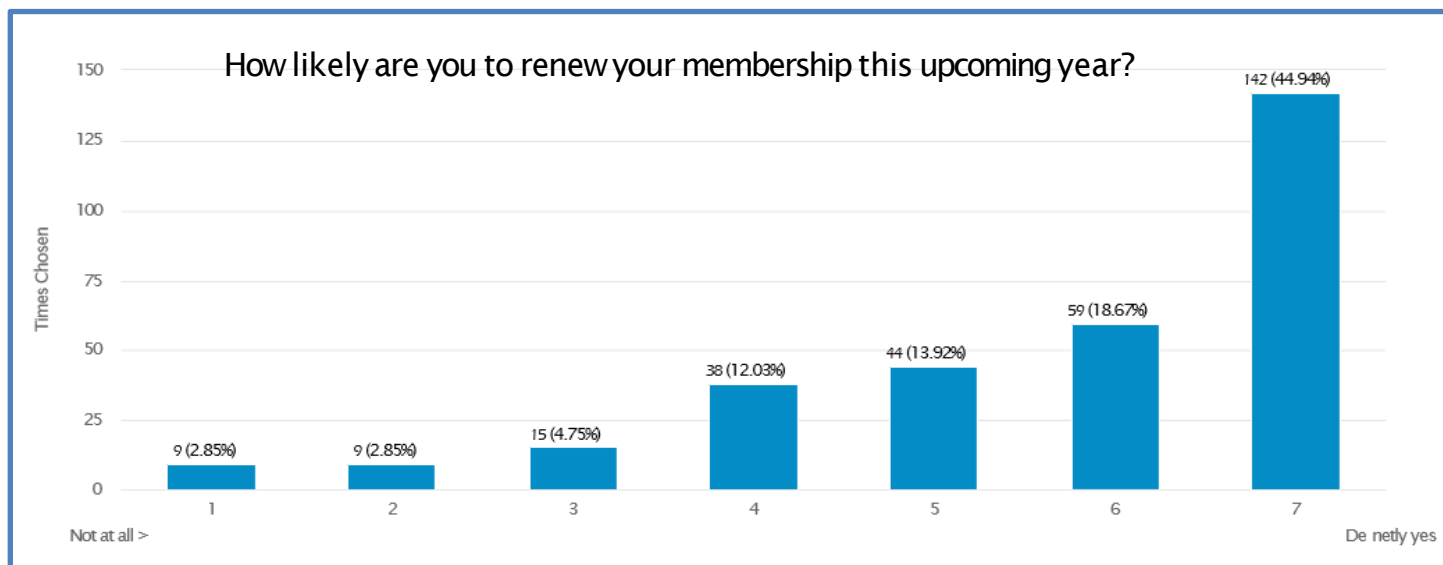
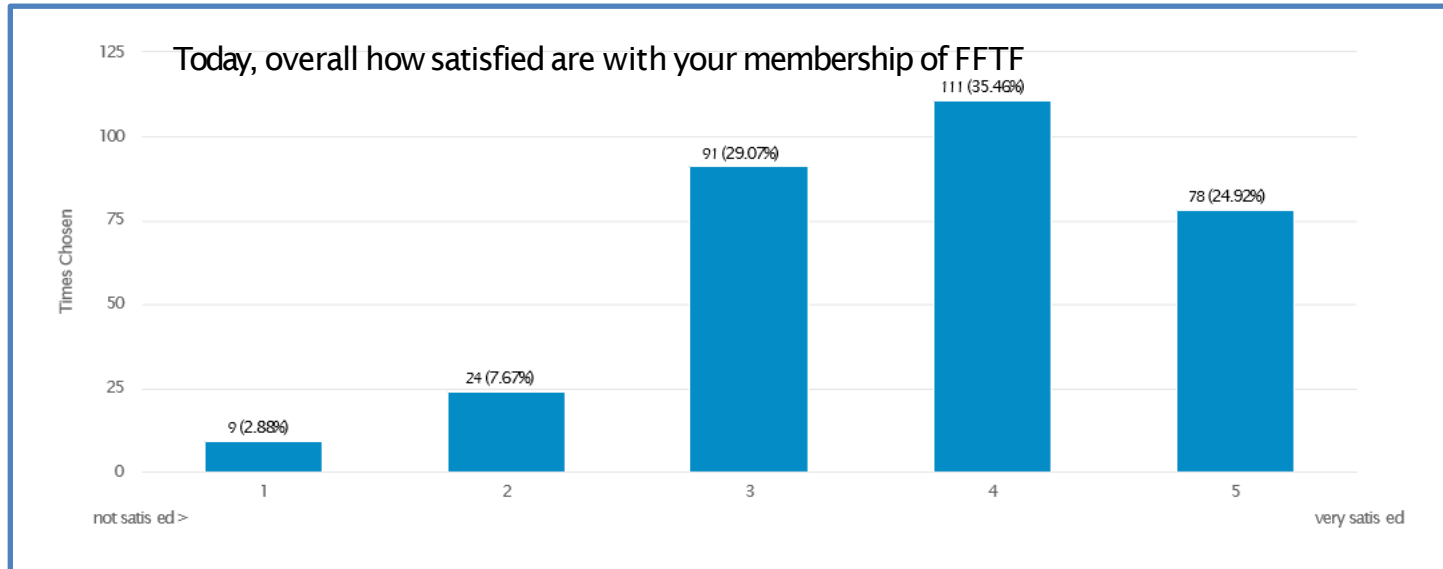
“Sharing growing/selling/business advice through Facebook group and local and national meetings”

“Being part of something here everyone striving to showcase British”

“Being part of an organisation that promotes and supports British/locally grown”

“Friendship and the generosity of knowledge sharing”

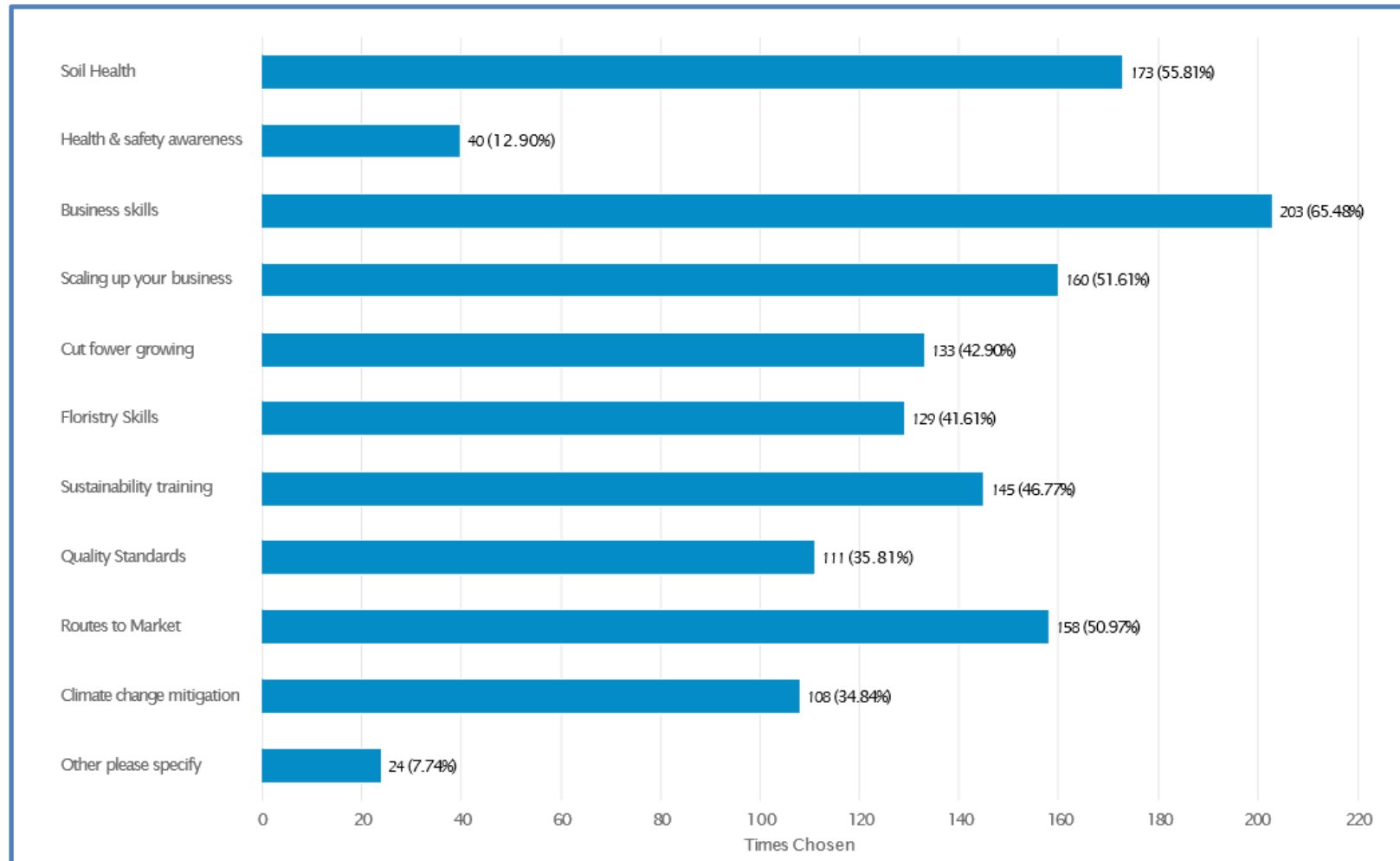
There are opportunities to improve overall satisfaction levels with the membership and it looks like you are prepared to stick with it while this happens!



There is an appetite for FFTF to take a lead in providing training and education to members



If FFTF were to invest in providing training and education for members what would you like to see?

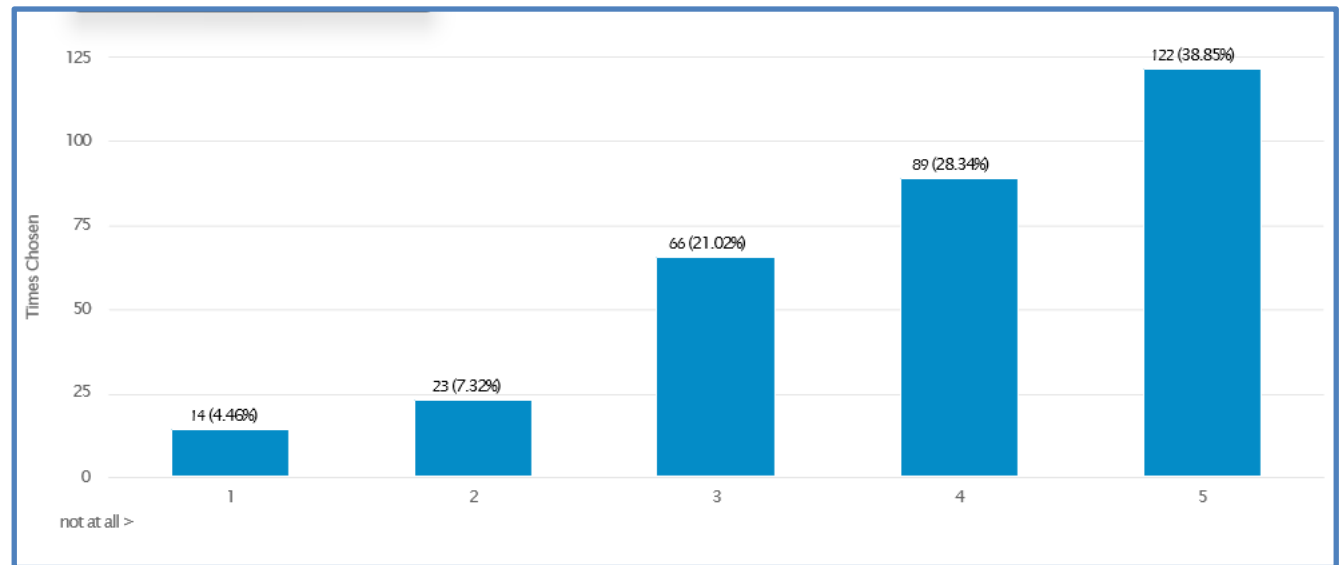


And a recognition that for good quality training/education members would consider paying a supplement



Would you be prepared to contribute to/pay for, on top of membership fee, training & educational costs for the right course?

- A high proportion of members are prepared to pay a supplement: Further analysis of the core data required to determine which training is seen as most valuable
- And there are lots of ideas for other training needs, for example – Standards, Mentoring Apprenticeships, Pricing, PR, Social Media, Marketing, General Insurance, Wellbeing



“I would particularly like to see Flowers from the Farm take on a standard for industry stance”

“Social media/Google Business/seo/ A1/Canva”

Free peer to peer mentoring

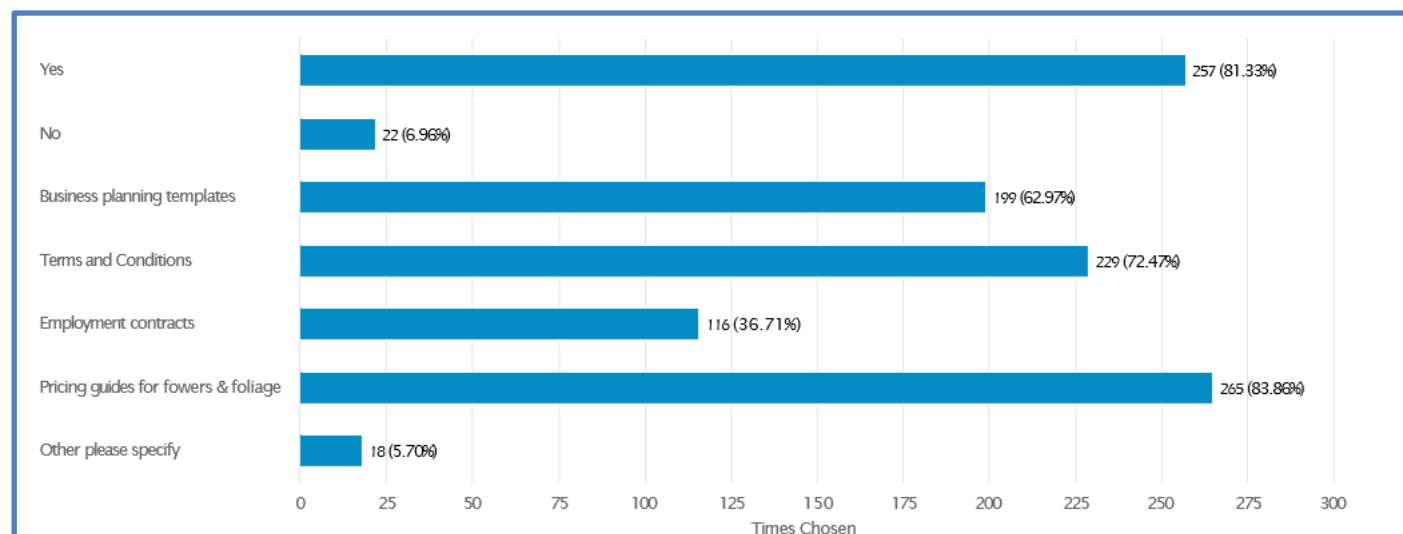
Perhaps a collaboration with Ins companies for example to provide a better package for flower farmers

Members would also like to have access to templates which help their business to run successfully



- Other mentions featured also included pricing (6 mentions), followed by examples of plots and succession plans (4 mentions). Remaining comments were only mentioned once: Health & Safety, How to Run Workshops, Orders and Invoices, Induction for volunteers and Work Experience, Land Rental Contracts.

Would you like to have access to model documentation (templates) (y/n), if yes what would you like to see?



- Documents would need to be updated to keep pace with any changes in the law for working practices

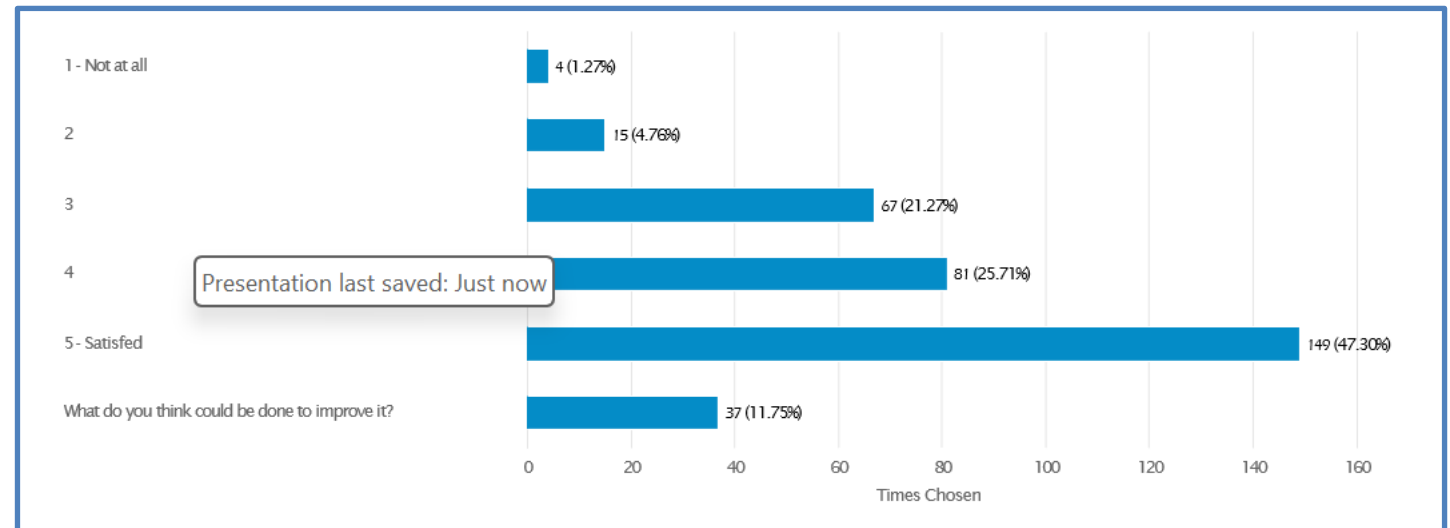
“The above if they are regularly updated by a solicitor to ensure they comply with law”

On the surface it does look like members are generally happy with the level of communication



- Often commenting on liking the newsletter and the meetings.
- However when we explore some of the structural issues a little later, there are issues around transparency and visibility of decision making which we will need to address.

How satisfied are you with the communication you receive from FFTF?



“More visibility of discussions being held by chairs and regional coordinators”

“More transparency with decision making”

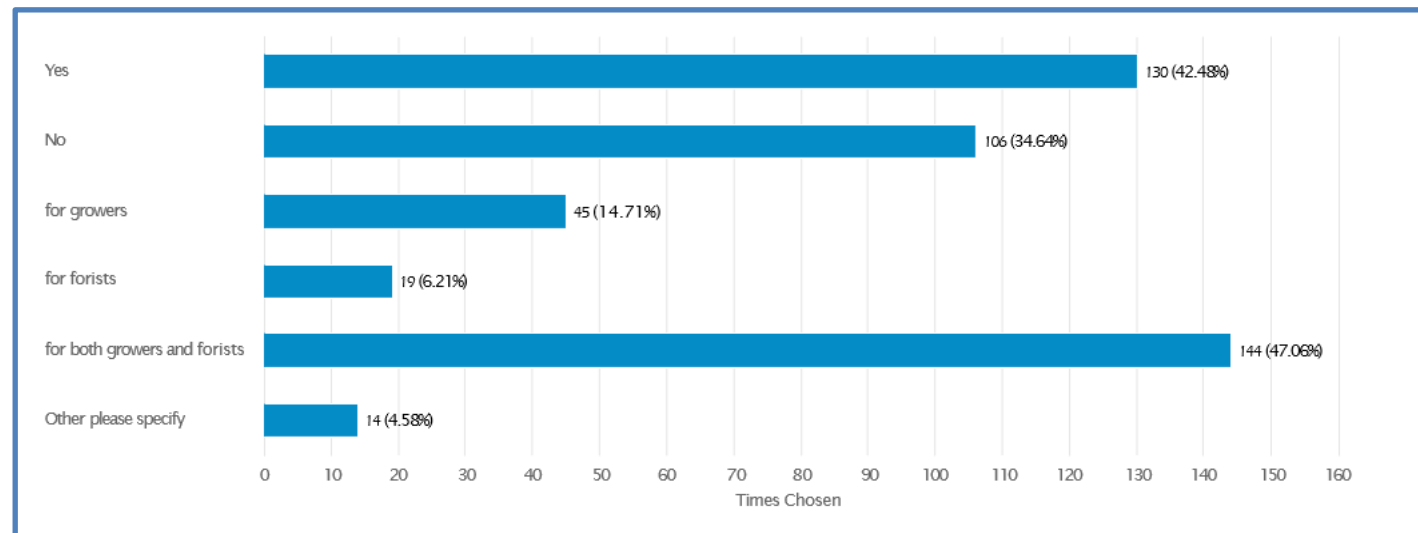
“I have had reason to contact FFTF for advise and on both occasions received no response. I emailed both the regional lead and national members, but received either no response, or no further communication beyond an initial acknowledgement.”



We did not get from members an overwhelming desire to FFTF focus/target resources at different groups/type of member

- So for now this will not be a focus for the steering group
- We will focus on delivering a recommended organisation design for our core member the Grower/Florist

Would you like to see FFTF offer focused resources to different member groups?



"I don't think this matters so much"

"Not quite sure what the value of this is"

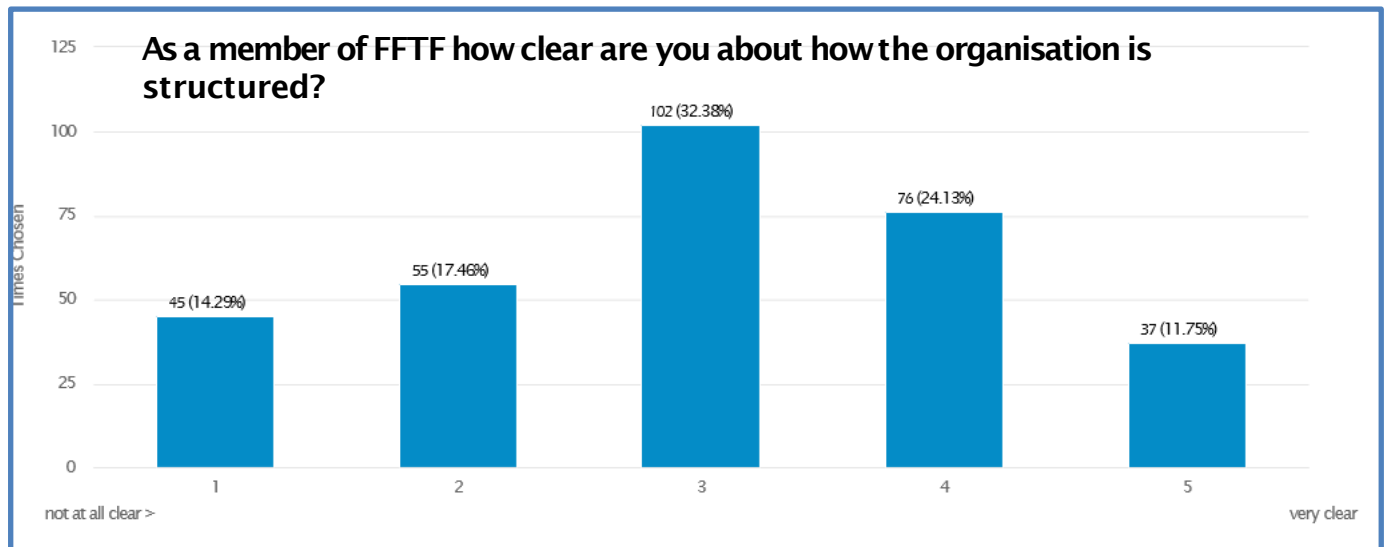
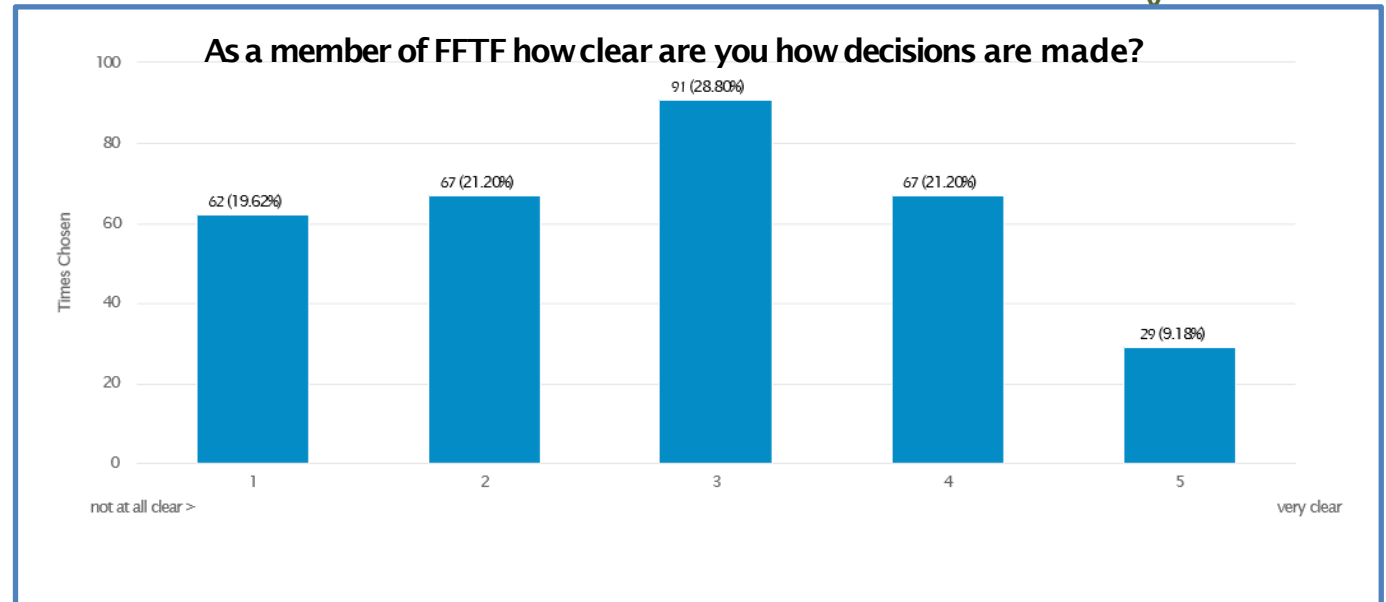
"not sure"

We asked two key questions about how the organisation is structured today and how decisions are made



In both cases members are generally unclear about both the decision making processes and the way the organisation is structured

We further explored these questions **by asking what you would like to see change in the future...**



When we analysed the responses and there was a clear top 4



What changes would you like to see in the way FFTF is organised in the future? (please specify)

1. Democratic decision making with transparency (26%)
2. Smaller regional groups (21%)
3. Clear accountability – so we know who to go to (16%)
4. More paid roles (15%)

All responses expressed in a word cloud



The question of the region size – there is some work to do as size of region is seen as a barrier to many members

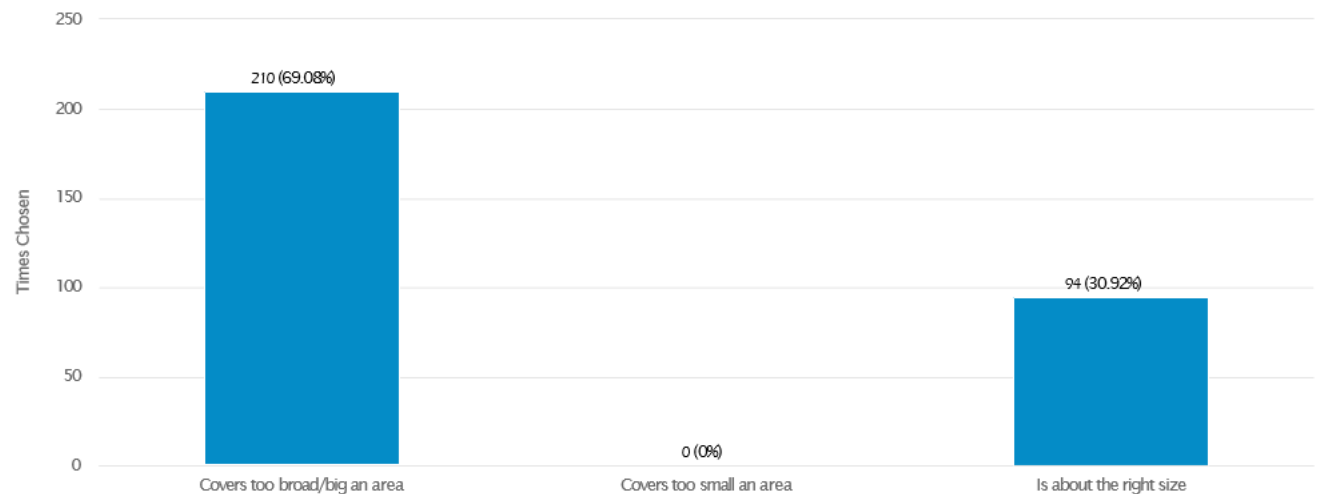


“Perhaps expand the regional groups to smaller areas so less distance to get to regional meetings etc”

“The Regions are too far apart. We are basically the only one near us and struggle to engage as we have to travel 2-3 hours to attend a meeting”

23. In terms of the size of your region

Number of responses: 304



“Eg the West Midlands covers a vast geographical area and as a result I do not attend regional meetings as they are so far flung! I'd prefer smaller regions even by county which may allow for more involvement and networking”

“why can't I belong to more than one region?”

“...” the distance that these are held, make them impossible to attend”

“The regions could do with subdividing into smaller groups, say within 20 - 30 miles as some of them are so big it's hard for people to get to regional meetings”

These comments are illustrative of the huge response we had to this question



What changes would you like to see in the way FFTF is organised in the future? (please specify)

"More transparency around decision making, increased number of members running organisation"

"More transparency about decision making and reasons for decisions taken"

"I think if there was a way to fund some paid roles for admin it would be valuable, as its a lot for volunteers on top of their businesses"

"Transparency - this is paramount to ensure all members are aware of details. Equality- everyone (all members) are equal"

"I think the areas are too big and maybe should be split to make it more relevant ie southeast should be Kent".

"clear governance and clear accountability"

"More democratic decision making / input - and more support for the organisers / volunteers, and more paid roles to take the pressure off volunteers"

"Clear structure and clear governance, transparency is key"

"There needs to be a clear 'chain of command'. It needs to be obvious who to go to with a query and that person needs to have answers - not just delay until the next meeting..."

". A clear leadership structure is vital which everyone understands."

"Greater clarity around structure and how FFTF is organised and how decisions are made and who makes them. "

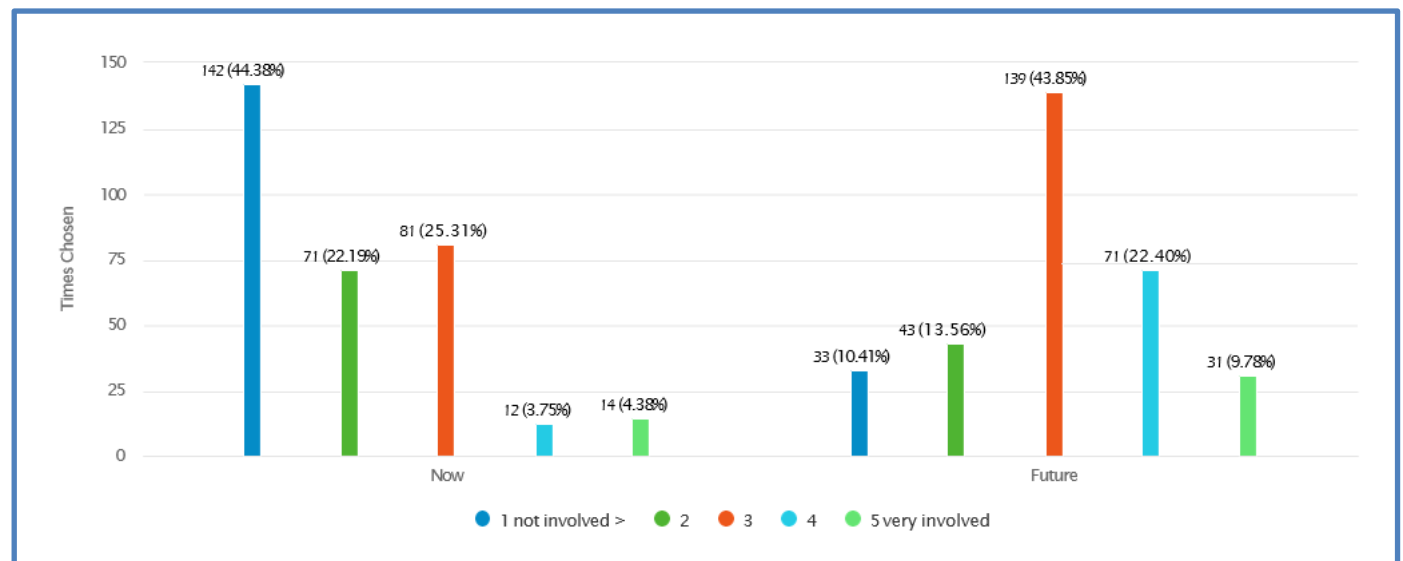
"I would like full transparency on how decisions are made on which occasions or events to support. I would like to see a system that invites all members to have a choice or a say in such decisions, rather than a small and selected group of members."

This was further echoed when we explored how involved members feel in decision making



It is clear that in the future there is a greater expectation from members who want to be involved in the decision-making process

As a member, how involved do you feel in the decision-making process of FFTF now and how would you like to be in the future?



"I think representation is key, ensuring decision making is done with voices from a range of different regions and business models."

"To be kept informed and included in decisions of all activities that the chair and committee raise"

"more decisions by votes like the one for British flowers week"

"Important decisions like cancellation of the 2024 conference should have been a full membership decision."

We explored with members whether there was a desire to offer different affordability grades of membership – there was no clear consensus



Would you like to see FFTF offer different affordability grades or levels of membership, if yes please specify?

49% = No

25% = yes

16% = maybe

9% = not sure

There were some suggestions which we can keep in mind for the future, although there was a watch-out/concerns about the complexity of managing and administering different tiers/levels:

- Corporate membership for a higher fee
- Lower fees for hardship and Students
- Different member type for Growers and Florists
- Reduction in fees for using elements of the offer (Facebook mentioned)
- Entry level membership, converting to full membership after a time period

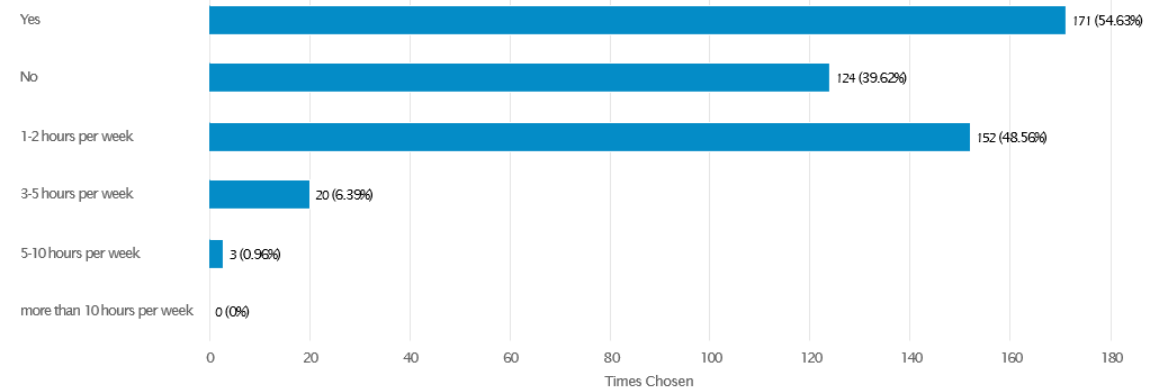
There are still a large number of members willing to volunteer for roles in FFTF (more than we have today)



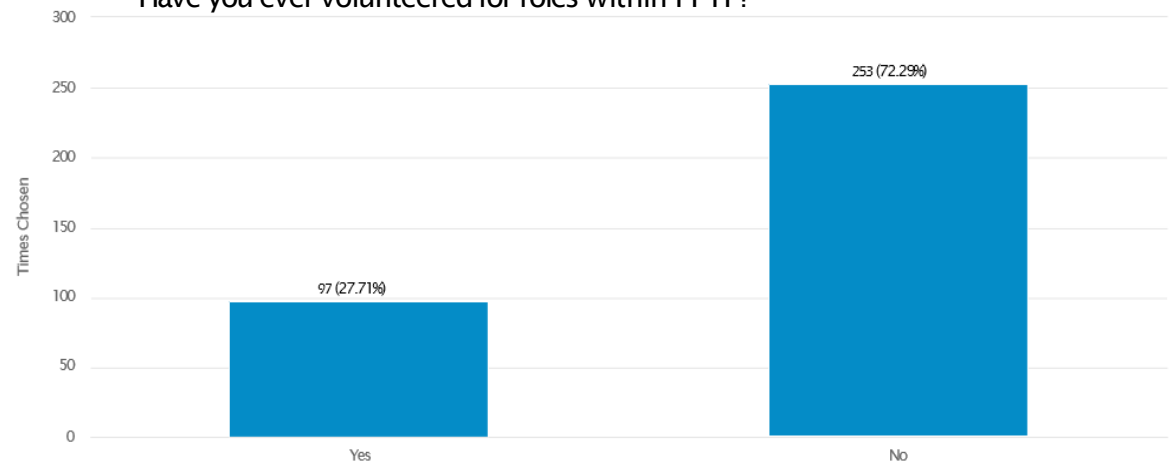
- Flowers from the Farm will always be a members organisation, run by members for the benefit of its members
- It's great to see that there continues to be an appetite for members to volunteer
- Our future design recommendations need to work out how to involve as many people as possible, without creating a 'burdensome' role which takes members away from their own business for too long

26. In the future FFTF will continue to require members to volunteer in certain areas, are you willing to volunteer your time?

Number of responses: 313



Have you ever volunteered for roles within FFTF?



We explored the opportunities to take a clear position within the British Cut Flower Industry including sustainability



There is a lot of support from members for FFTF to have a clear position on both:

- **Quality standards** for the British cut flower industry and **sustainability & ethics** within the British cut flower industry.
- Particularly requested (25% of comments) related directly to some sort of accreditation and 16% to generally raising awareness/education of the uniqueness of British grown flowers and lobbying for external funding
- The watch-out expressed is not to do this in a way that 'shouts' or demonises

"We need accreditation or a code of conduct"

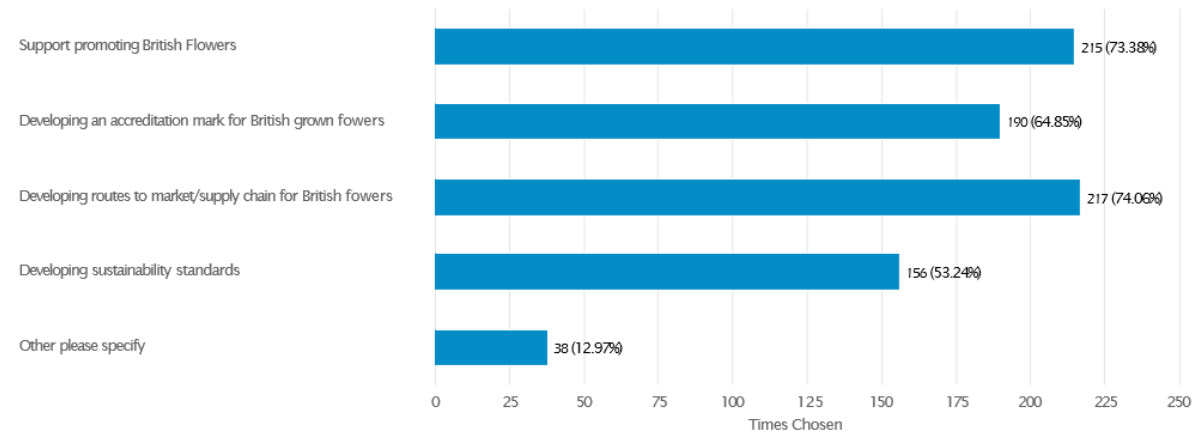
"Advocating for financial support from Government, applying for large scale funding, attending business events/conferences, and public events"

"An ethical code we sign up to"

"Statements on the use of"

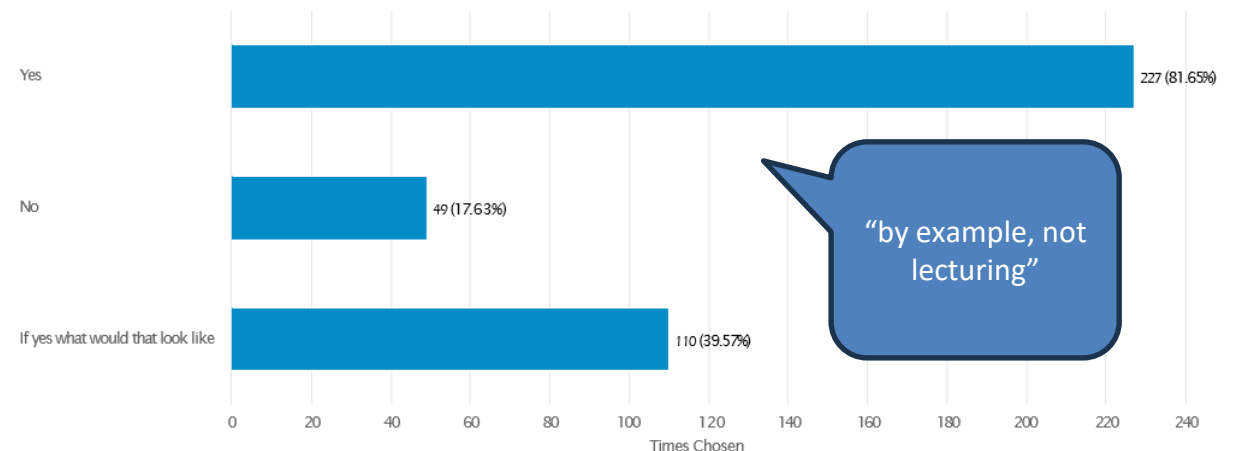
27. If FFtF were to lobby for serious investment in the British Cut Flower Industry what would that look like?

Number of responses: 293



28. Do you think FFtF should take a clear position on Sustainability of the local industry?

Number of responses: 278

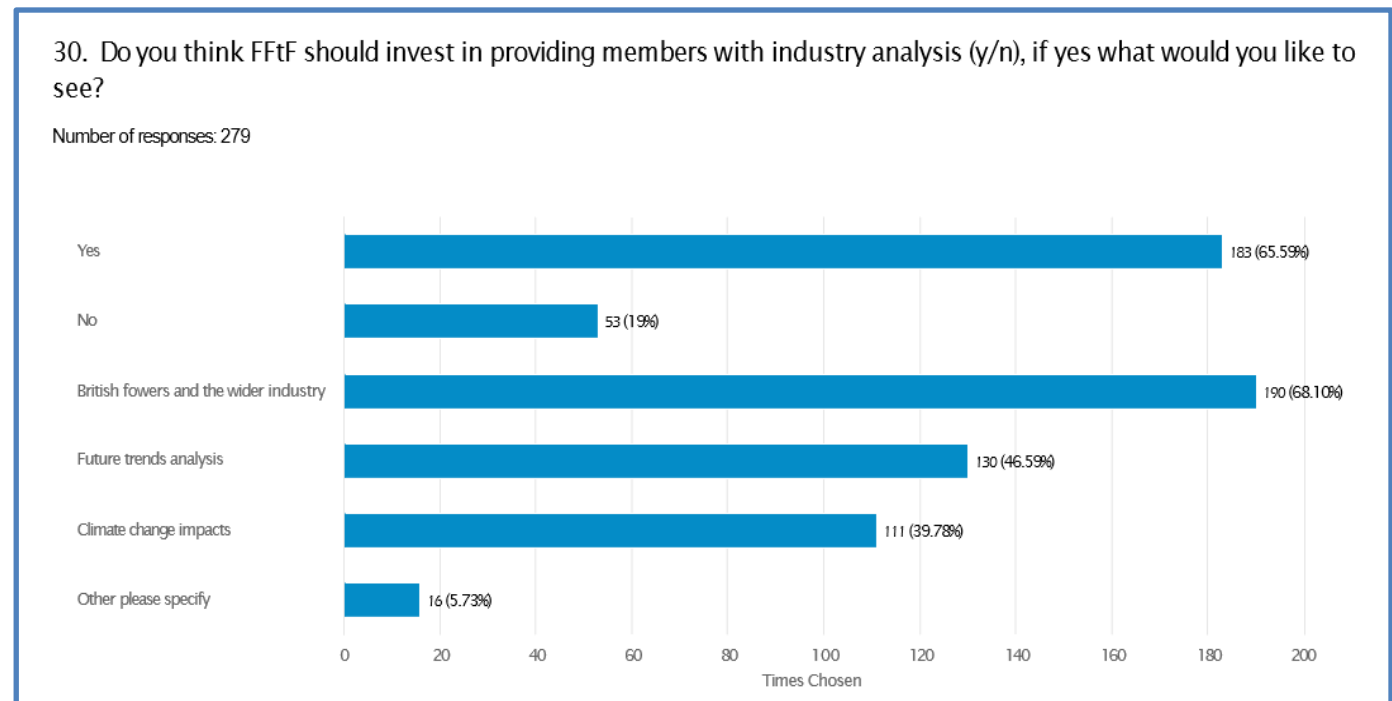


"by example, not lecturing"

Whilst providing data is seen as useful, it's not necessarily seen as a priority right now



- Although members have said industry analysis would be useful there were comments about this not being a priority and our ability to do this right now
- We do need to update data already available to make sure it's current
- Also we did not include a 'maybe' box which might have been helpful for this question
- So one for the future!



"Don't think this is a priority, most members already have enough awareness."

"Up to date stats on the British grown flowers - % of sales, value, carbon and air miles. Some data we are still quoting are very out of date"

"yes if FFtF has the ability to do this, to educate its members to in turn educate their customers this could only be a good thing"

"I think it would be helpful but I don't consider it a priority"



When we asked about the biggest issues/challenges facing our industry we got quite a mixed response

31. What do you see as the biggest issues/challenges our industry is facing? please specify

- 22% the general lack of awareness of the benefits of buying British seasonal flowers, including how they are produced and perceptions of quality/availability (both general public and florists), *how to do this without preaching/alienating*.
- 17% Climate change impacts
- 11% Competing on pricing British flowers v Imports and Supermarket pricing
- 10% Finding routes to market, British Flowers supply chain
- 8% Current economic climate/crisis
- 8% Inconsistency with the member group (pricing, quality, knowledge, standards)
- 8% Producing sufficient volume to meet demand and scaling up accordingly

Others of note:

- Need a clear position on Sustainability
- How to supply/generate income in the winter months
- No provenance rules for British Flowers
- Availability of / cost of land
- How to get scalability/access to grants without Government recognition
- Aging membership (55% respondents over 50), how to encourage younger new growers
- How to get greater collaboration between commercial growers and small scale growers
- Lack of diversity in the membership



We also explored the opportunities for our industry

By far the biggest opportunity was seen as:

- How to capitalise on the growing momentum and general awareness of the sustainability benefits of local/seasonally grown flowers (45% of comments were in some way related to this topic)
- Coupled with the growing awareness of the environmental issues associated with imported flowers (11% of comments)

Other notable mentions:

- The British Flowers market is on the up (market share is increasing), how to build on this trend and grow the market further, promoting with the public and florists (17% of comments)
- Developing a British Flowers supply chain/routes to market to enable significant increase in volumes (9% of comments)
- Collaboration featured quite prominently – with trusted brands, growers (not necessarily members), commercial growers, colleges, big named florists. Both to promote British Flowers but also to deliver training/apprenticeships (6% of comments)
- The need to get Government backing if the industry is to seriously scale up (3% of comments)

“More and more people are waking up to the fact that British grown flowers are so fresh, healthy and gloriously scented compared with most imported flowers. Similarly the sustainability both of flower growing practices, no-dig soil health and floristry are becoming discussed more and more in the press/media. It is a very exciting time to be a flower farmer in UK.”

“British Flowers are in huge demand, we just need to supply them”

“Replacing imports with better quality & more sustainable products Growing awareness of environmental impact of importing flowers”

“There is enormous growth potential as consumer awareness on environmental issues and supporting local businesses increases. be a good thing”

“More flower farms creating greater choice for customers to choose seasonal and local”

This reinforces that our members believe the future is very bright for the UK flower industry

And finally we asked if you would like Flowers From the Farm to take a more active role in influencing the outcomes of the challenges and opportunities our industry is facing? And you said YES



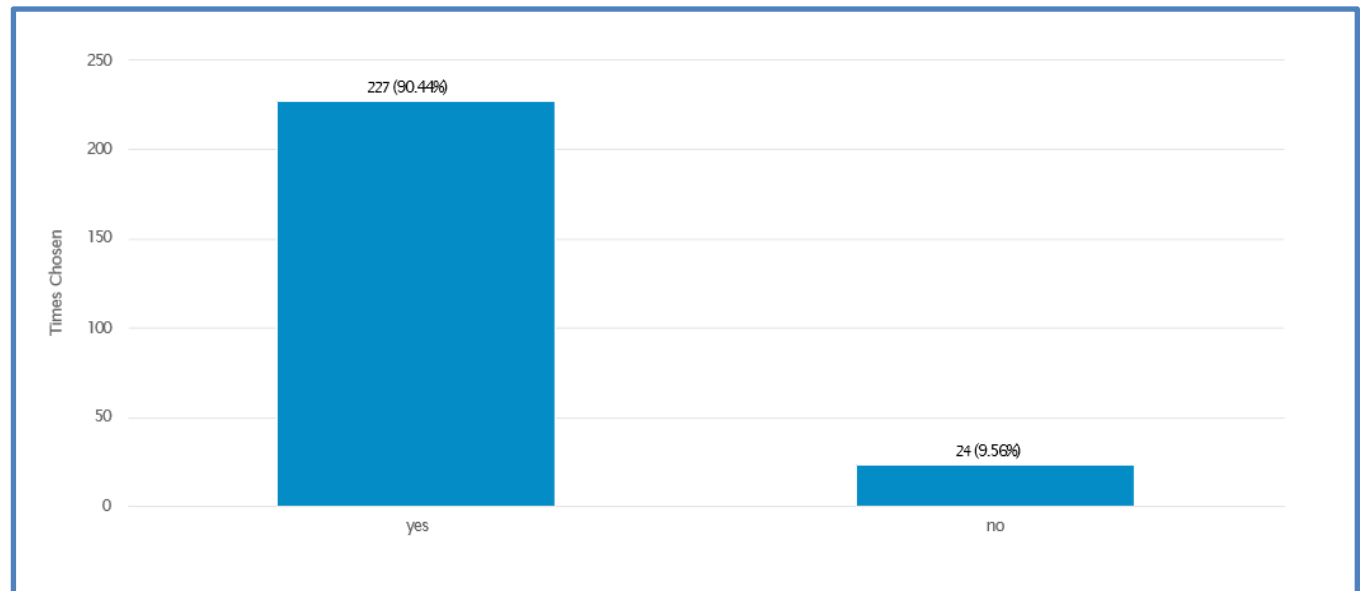
Thank you for supporting the survey

It has helped us understand where there is a need for change

It has informed the work of the steering group and enabled us to build on the immense legacy which is Flowers from the Farm

We will shortly be putting our recommendations to you at the AGM on 18th March 2024

Would you like to see FFTF taking a more active role in influencing the outcome of the challenges and opportunities our industry is facing



You will shortly have the opportunity to hear how the survey results have influenced the way we have focused the structure going forwards, when you receive the papers for the AGM.

Please join us at the AGM on 18th March as we put our recommendations to the vote and have your say in shaping our future.