

REAP Member's Survey, July – September 2021. Findings

Aims

- To establish personal contact to start to build a relationship with our members
- To find out more about our members, their volunteering interests, skills and experiences
- To find out what activities and priorities our members want REAP to pursue

Method

The trustees each contacted a block of members by phone or email inviting them to participate in a short survey. The membership list in mid July 2021 was used (66 members) Telephone interviews were carried out using a prepared script. (Appendix 1) A small number of members emailed their answers. The 7 trustees were not included in the survey.

Total members @15 July	66	
Completed survey	44	67%
Did not participate	9	14%
Did not respond to contact	11	17%
Not contacted	2	3%

The members who did not participate had either moved away or had personal or family health issues which prevented them for taking part in the required timescale.

NB. The membership has increased considerably since the survey was carried out and is currently 174 (31 October 2021) This means that we have the views of c 25% of our current membership.

Section A. What the survey told us about our members

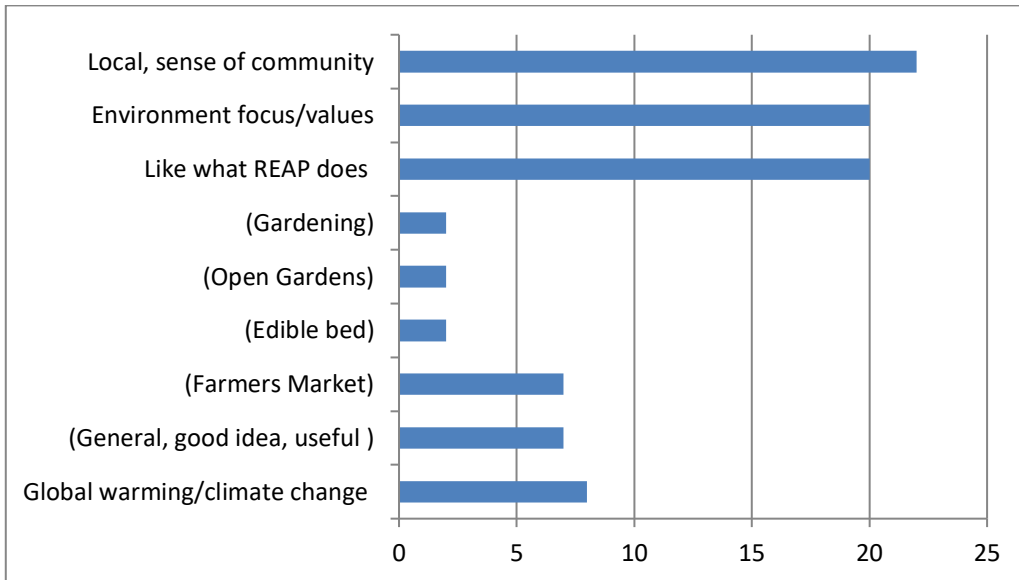
Why they joined

REAP's local focus was the most important factor for our members. People were also attracted by visible REAP activities (Farmer's Market, Edible bed and garden activities) and the focus on environmental issues which fitted with their personal values. A smaller number specifically mentioned concerns about global warming or climate change. (NB. Some members gave several reasons which have all been included in the analysis so the numbers in the table and chart below add up to more than the total number of respondents)

Table 1. Reasons for joining REAP

Reason	Number
Local, sense of community, meeting like-minded people	22
Focus on environment /Fits my values	20
I like what REAP does – including,	20
General overview, good idea, useful	7
Farmers Market	7
Gardening	2
Open Gardens	2
Edible bed	2
Concerns about Global warming/climate change	8

Figure 1- Reasons for Joining REAP

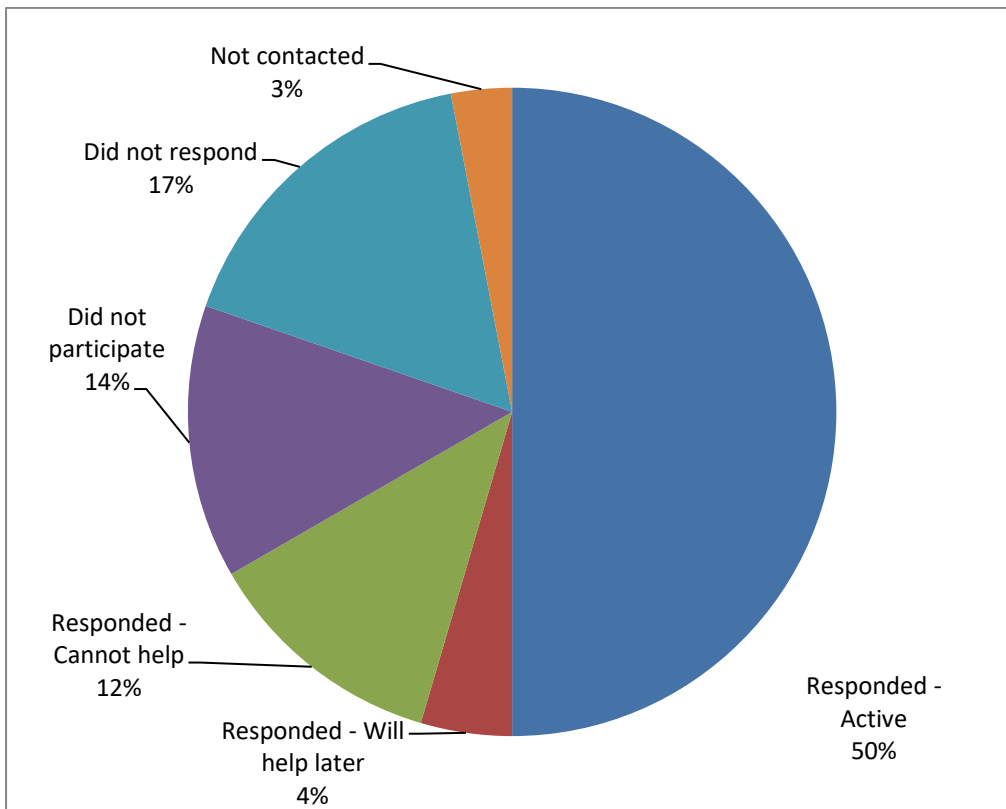


Involvement in REAP activities

Members want to get more involved with REAP. This is very encouraging, particularly the younger people and those with young families who have joined recently.

- Active - 33 members are already involved in REAP activities or are willing to do more.
- 8 members currently do not have time, are involved with other things or are moving away
- 3 members want to do more when they retire
- 20 members did not respond or could not participate in the survey

Figure 2. Responses to the survey and levels of involvement in REAP activities



Skills and interests

The majority of the 33 members who were willing to get more involved were interested in one –off or short term practical activities such as tree planting, events and gardening. A smaller number offered to contribute to home energy, waste reduction and IT activities.

Our members have a wide range of personal and professional interests, skills and experiences to contribute to the development of REAP's activities. These include involving children and young people, gardening and horticulture, footpaths, plastics and recycling, home energy and insulation, community development and Leeds City Council services. Several members have experience as school governors and trustees of charities.

Other groups and organisations

Over 2/3 (30 members - 68%) of our respondents are involved with other local and national organisations with an environmental focus. These include

- FORP, other Friends of... groups including Wykebeck Valley Woods, Gledhow Valley Woods (10 members)
- Other local groups - Church green groups, Allotments, Woodcraft Folk, Repair café, Community Clothes Exchange, Feed Leeds (13 members)
- National environmental campaign groups - Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, XR (7)
- National special interest groups – RSPB, Plantlife, Wildlife trusts, BTCV, (10 members)

These connections provide good opportunities for joint work, information sharing and recruiting new members for REAP.

What people like about REAP

This was not a specific question in the survey but several respondents told us what they liked and appreciated about REAP.

- Members update (16 comments) *“Informal and conversational style”*
- Farmers Market *8 comments) *“It's the flagship”*
- Practical focus of gardening group, Edible bed and Open gardens (6 comments)
- Organisation and activities (5 comments)

“REAP is unique because it's local” quote from member

Section B. What do our members want REAP to do ?

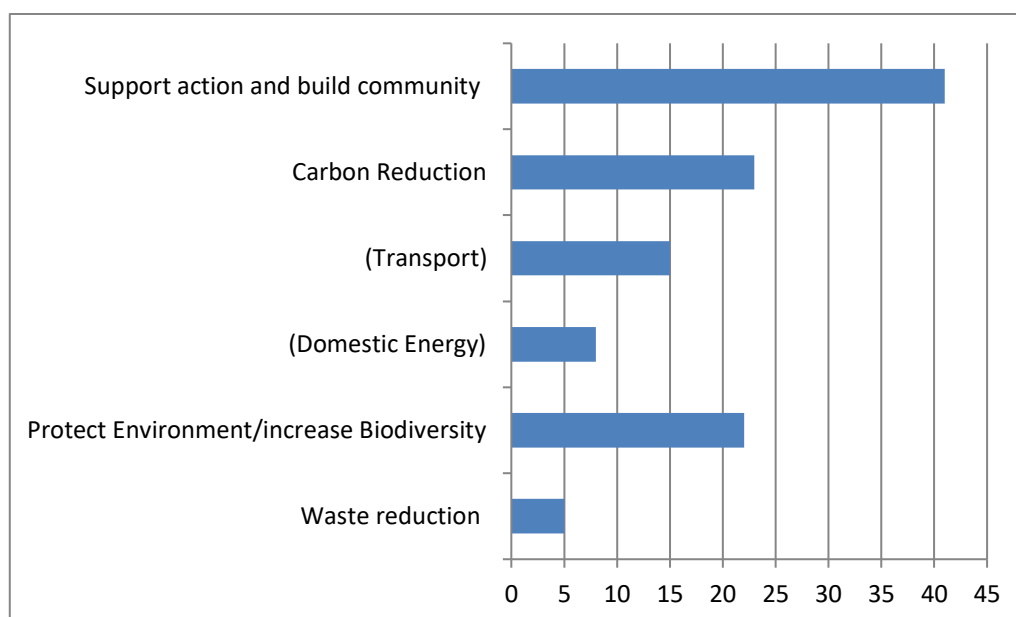
This section includes answers to two questions, “What would you like REAP to offer to members” and “What issues should be a priority for REAP” Respondents had lots of ideas.

Summary

- Our members want REAP to provide practical, local activities that will help them to change their lifestyles, talk to likeminded people and become more actively involved in community projects that will improve their environment and combat threats.
- The issues that matter most to people are protecting the natural environment, increasing biodiversity, influencing transport strategy and reducing domestic energy use. This is very much in line with REAP's current activities.
- Members want to see events, publicity and promotion and collaboration with local and national groups with shared interests

Most people made several suggestions. Every idea and issue that was mentioned is included in the detailed analysis below so the totals do not add up to 44. Suggestions have been grouped under the themes of REAP's aims and are summarised in this graph. For more information on REAP's aims, achievements and plans see ["What is REAP and what do we stand for"](#) (Insert web link)

Figure 3. Priorities for REAP



1. REAP Aims 'Increase local awareness and understanding of the actions that must be taken to combat the Climate Emergency' and 'Help build a sense of a community'

There were 41 separate suggestions that can be grouped under these aims, with 4 main themes

- Support, inspire and facilitate people to do more, individually and together 20 suggestions
- Make strategic inputs to Leeds City Council and beyond 10 suggestions
- Articulate how lifestyle changes can be made and bring people together to share ideas about changes and products that work at home and in their workplaces 8 suggestions
- Build resilience into people's actions and behaviour and promote local action to make people feel more secure (particularly with reference to flooding) 5 suggestions

We are listening Support action and build community The following activities that were suggested by members are already taking place or are being planned,

- Bring people together. **Member's social event 11 November with members talking about their interests and experiences**
- Use Market, REAP stall and Edible bed to get people talking and promote lifestyle changes (3 suggestions) **Themed programme at the market e.g. COP26, membership campaign, plastic free gardening, looking after fruit trees,**
- Involve children and young people e.g. gardening (3 suggestions) **Monthly programme is being for the Market**
- Make it easy for people to get actively involved. Give trees, seeds, bird boxes to members. **Wild flower seeds have been given out through REAP Facebook posts**
- Resilience - Front gardens – save it, don't pave it (2 suggestions) **The REAP Gardening Group has worked with LCC to write and publish a guidance leaflet on Front gardens (web link)**

Support action and build community – Member’s ideas for further activities

- Inspire and facilitate practical community activities on a task and finish basis (3 suggestions)
- Covid has shown there is an appetite for community action (2 suggestions)
- Influence local business and publicise their initiatives
- Some members are circulating their updates to their street WhatsApp group
- Create more discrete opportunities for volunteering
- Facilitate footpath clearing and litter picking activities (e.g. Wombles LCC backed scheme)
- Offer street level practical activities, simple, unstructured, e.g. children, litter, plastic free
- Use Community Development techniques to engage with hard to reach groups and provide a network for marginalised people (2 suggestions)
- Resilience – Make plans for floods, heavy rain (2 suggestions)

Strategic input to Leeds City Council and beyond . 10 Suggestions

- Facilitate local input into consultations **Action- REAP organised an event to get member’s views and made a submission to the Leeds Transport Strategy and also alerted members to consultations on the Leeds Local Plan**
- Makes links with Planning to ensure that sustainable development and ecology elements are built into in all plans. Alert members to applications with environmental consequences (4 suggestions)
- Become more vocal as a pressure group, raise profile to be seen as important (2 suggestions)
- Find out what council is doing on Climate Change and publicise (e.g. Leeds Carbon Roadmap)
- Support and congratulate as appropriate
- Local councillors – REAP can act on behalf of members when possible and also facilitate access to councillors at the Market (2 suggestions)
- Tell people how they can lobby their MP

2. REAP Aim - “Reduce local carbon emissions” There were 23 suggestions covering,

Influencing Transport Strategy (15 suggestions)

- General local and wider influence - 5
- Support for public transport – 3
- Encourage cycling and walking - 3
- Air ports - GALBA and Third Runway -3
- Transport arrangements for new housing

Reducing Domestic Energy use - (8 suggestions)

- General home heating/energy saving (5 suggestions)
- Retrofitting
- Insulation and Heat loss, buy heat imaging camera and offer heat loss survey

We are listening **Influencing transport strategy** - The following activities that were suggested by members are already taking place or are being planned

- REAP have published a walking, cycling and public transport map
- REAP donated to GALBA campaign and provided information for REAP members
- REAP contributed to Leeds Transport Strategy consultation
- Bike racks at Oakwood- Installed by LCC near Oakwood Club, recently tidied up by REAP member and promoted on Facebook page
- Promote play streets. Details of new council kit distributed through members update

Transport - Member's ideas for further activities

- Set up REAP Transport group
- Support Living streets initiatives (Reduce car dependency- Pedestrians charter)
- Car share schemes
- Advice/infrastructure on electric cars (2 suggestions)
- Make links to Zero Carbon Yorkshire which has a transport group
- Campaign to stop parking on grass verges and pavements
- 30 MPH speed limit on Roundhay Road

We are listening Reducing Domestic energy use - The following activities that were suggested by members are already taking place or are being planned,

- An Energy group has been set up. The group are going to do a sample survey of energy saving and retrofitting in 4 different types of house in Roundhay with financial support from REAP. The results will be disseminated to members
- REAP trustees have met the Chair of the LCC Climate Emergency Action Group to ask for information on energy saving for house owners

3. REAP Aim "Protect our local natural environment and increase biodiversity" There were 22 suggestions. Within this the themes were,

- General emphasis on improving the local environment and increasing green spaces – 4
- Create urban gardens, use public and/or unused land for cultivation, allotments, trees - 2
- Maintain and Increase tree cover- (8 suggestions) (Increase TPOs 3 , Plant more trees 5)
- Increase Biodiversity/Rewilding/Wild Flowers/Grass verges – (6 suggestions)
- Promote gardening and veg growing –(2 suggestions)

We are listening '**Protect our local natural environment and increase biodiversity**' - The following activities that were suggested by members are already taking place or are being planned,

- Tree planting with Leeds City council in Roundhay Park on 11 December
- Ongoing discussion with LCC about planting trees in grass verges
- Use gift a tree schemes e.g, National Trust , Woodland Trust– REAP has promoted this to members through member's update
- Tree – seed collection REAP has registered with LCC Woodland creation scheme and will be providing a collection site at the Edible bed
- REAP made an objection to LCC about tree felling at the Home Bargains site in Oakwood
- Gardening Group promotes gardening and vegetable growing

Environment and Biodiversity - Member's ideas for further activities

- REAP to offer social prescribing of gardening
- Set up seeds/spare tools/ plant share and swap scheme
- Educate people about invasive plants

4. REAP Aim "Help people to move towards using renewable resources and creating less waste"

There were 5 suggestions covering,

- Plastics (3 suggestions) Action REAP part-sponsored Tracy Foster's show garden at the Hampton Court Flower Show 2021 which had a theme of plastic free gardening
- Recycling 1
- Promoting sustainability in all aspects of life e.g. clothing

Environment and Biodiversity - Member's ideas for further activities

- Set up a Repair café in North Leeds and a Tool share/Library of things (cf Chapel Allerton)
- Suggest members use the Good for You Clothing app. **Action Promoted in members update**
- Educate people and promote LCC Recycling
- Hold a communal shredding event

5. Develop the Farmers Market There were 5 suggestions including,

- Ensure succession to keep the FM going
- Promote FM as an environmental project e.g. no plastics used (**This is current policy**)
- Sell green products
- Hold the market more frequently
- There was also a comment that parking is a problem for elderly people

6. Ways of Working

There were several additional suggestions from respondents which were about the different methods that REAP could use to meet priorities, promote activities, disseminate information and recruit new members and potential trustees.

Types of events (9 suggestions)

- Talks 4
- Reading group 3
- Zooms and webinars
- COP 26 Art Exhibition (with Roundhay Artists) Walk, rally and display

Publicity and Promotion (9 suggestions)

- Liaise with RORA, FORP, Feed Leeds to find trustees
- St Edmunds Green Group
- Promote membership at Oakwood Community Cinema
- Improve the web site, it is an underused resource
- Articles in local magazines are powerful e.g. tree planting, merits of bus travel, be controversial e.g. suggest increasing petrol prices by four
- Make good use of social media **Action REAP now makes weekly Facebook posts on a wide range of environmental topics**
- Still need to reach people who don't use social media , info at market, barbers, cafes, library

Collaborate, support, facilitate and get ideas from local and national groups with shared interests

(10 suggestions)

- Ensure we don't 'reinvent the wheel'
- Offer signposting to other groups and organisations
- Build interest and consensus around issues like climate change
- Act as a conduit to national organisations
- Work in partnership with bigger organisations e.g, Better Homes, Plantlife

C. What next

- The REAP trustees are continuing to plan activities in response to ideas from this survey.
- Practical tips, information about events and opportunities for participation and volunteering will be included in the regular member's updates and REAP Facebook posts
- **Over to you** – If you have seen something in this report that you would like to do or have an idea for an activity that REAP could support, please get in touch. info@reap-leeds.org.uk.