

Carlow Volunteer Centre

2018

Annual Report

Helen Rothwell
Carlow Volunteer Centre
11/2/2019

The Staff of Carlow Volunteer Centre



Helen Rothwell
Natasha Akerele
Sinead Kirwan
Saidhbhe Delaney

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1. OPERATIONAL CONTENT:

1.1 Governance: -

Carlow Volunteer Centre is an independent organisation. There is a volunteer Board of Directors in place made up of eight representatives from the local community which represent key stakeholders. The board oversee the strategic direction of the organisation and delegate operational activities to the manager.

Chairperson: - Michelle o Hara,

Company Secretary: - Frank Comerford

Martin Meagher

Martha Jane Duggan

Colette Lane

Fiona Dunne

Karl Duffy

Margaret Moore

1.2 Staffing: -

One full time member (Manager) and two-part time staff members. Volunteers are utilised to enhance services periodically. One Tus Participant until May 2019.

1.3 Area Profile: -

Carlow County is an inland county, measuring 896 sq. km in area, located in the South East Region and bordered by Counties Wicklow, Wexford, Kilkenny, Laois, and Kildare. Carlow Volunteer Centre serves the county-wide area – a population of 56,932. The population density for County Carlow of 56.4 people per sq. km remains below the national average of 60.6, thus indicating a relatively high level of population dispersal in the County. This suggests a likelihood of social issues related to rural isolation, and also impacts on the ability of isolated people to become involved in formal voluntary activity based within the urban centers. This is exacerbated by the poor public transport within the county, especially in rural areas.

Chairpersons Report



2018 was Carlow Volunteer Centre's busiest year to date. We continued to develop our mission and embed the goals set out in our strategic plan of 2017-2019.

In addition to the active involvement and engagement of our existing volunteers and registered organisations in a wide range of activities, the year marked a significant escalation in membership with 260 newly registered volunteers. There were 75 repeat callers to the Centre and 15 new organisations registered during the year. Volunteers that registered with Carlow Volunteer Centre gave 16,231 hours of their valuable time to volunteering in 2018. This voluntary effort has an equivalent value of €408,210 to the economy (applying the CSO Average Wage 2013).

The Centre continues to cultivate linkages and networks in serving the voluntary interest of local organisations. One particular highlight of the year was the awarding of the Volunteer Ireland Quality Standards to Carlow Volunteer Centre. This Quality Standards Award signifies the high standard of service the Centre provides to both volunteers and voluntary organisations.

Carlow Volunteer Centre launched their new Website in September which has brought a very modern look to volunteering. It is easily to follow and very accessible for volunteers to look up volunteer opportunities.

This work coupled with the work being undertaken to achieve the Quality Standards from the Volunteer Network, will further cement our commitment to best practice. The achievements of the Volunteer Centre are due in no small way to the high level of engagement of our dedicated and motivated team, diligently driven by Manager, Helen Rothwell and Placement Officers, Natasha Akerele, Sinead Kirwan and Saidhbhe Delaney.

I especially want to thank the members of the Board for their ongoing commitment, untiring and relentless involvement, and ongoing personal and professional support. Together with the Board and team, I look forward to continuing to work in the implementation of our Strategic Plan and to shape our services so they are best placed to respond to the need of communities within Co. Carlow.

On behalf of the Board I wish to express our thanks to our main funder - the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government for their ongoing commitment to the Centre and also to UNUM who continue to support the Centre through their sponsorship of the Volunteering events throughout the year. I would like to also thank Carlow Co. Council for the use of their premises.

Michelle O'Hara

Chairperson

3.OUR ACTIVITIES IN 2018

3.1 With Volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations



We supported
335
Volunteers



From
29
Countries



Who
contributed
16,231
Hours

- Engagements
with VIO's

259



- Garda Vetting
Forms
Processed

1291



- Volunteers
Referred to
VIO's

206



4. DELIVERED VOLUNTEER MANAGERS FORUM

19 Participants
from 14 VIO's

- Sue Ryder Shop
- Kilkenny Bereavement Support
- Carlow Older Persons Forum
- Barnardos
- Enniscorthy Credit Union
- Irish Cancer Society
- Eist
- Alone
- Visual Carlow
- St. Claires Hospitality Kitchen
- Samaritans
- Carlow Arts Festival
- Carlow Mental Health
- The Thomas Hayes Trust

"I really enjoyed both days.
The course was very interesting. I got a lot of advice."



98%
Satisfaction



"I learned so much about the Volunteering policies and how to recruit Volunteers"

"This was a great course. It was easy to follow and very informative"

"I loved how the group could get together and chat. I learned so much from the course."

5. CARLOW VOLUNTEER CENTRE WERE INVOLVED IN THE FOLLOWING:-



Syrian Befriending Program



Volunteer Recognition Awards



Daffodil Day



Volunteer Thankyou Event



Social Media Project with IT Carlow



Volunteer Group Projects



Volunteer Christmas Tree



Social Prescribing Pilot Project

6. OUR IMPACT IN 2018

95%

- Of Volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations stated that it is very important to have the support of the Volunteer Centre in the community

92%

- Of Volunteers and Voluntary Organisations stated that it is very important to have the support of the Volunteer Centre for them.

6.1 On Volunteer Involving Organisations

71%

- Of VIO's stated that because of the volunteers referred to them and the support and advice of the VC, their program has delivered on its objectives.

68%

- Of VIO's stated that because of their engagement with the VC their ability to attract new volunteers has increased significantly.

48%

- Of VIO's stated that without the support and advice of the VC they could not have delivered their programmes.

46%

- Of VIO's stated that because of the support and advice of the VC they have increased their number of service users.

47%

- Of VIO's stated that without the support of the VC's they would have to reduce the activities of their Organisation.

47%

- Of VIO's stated that because of their engagement with the VC their ability to retain volunteers has increased significantly.

6.2 On Volunteers

- 58% { • Of Volunteers reported an increase in their mental health and wellbeing as a result of Volunteering
- 61% { • Of Volunteers reported volunteering had increased their range of friendships
- 82% { • Of Volunteers reported and in increase in their self-esteem.
- 69% { • Of Volunteers reported and increased feeling that they were making a useful contribution to their community.
- 58% { • Of Volunteers reported an increase in their interpersonal skills. Eg. Communication, working with others etc.
- 70% { • Of Volunteers reported increased confidence in their own abilities following Volunteering.
- 88% { • Of Volunteers reported an increase in their interpersonal skills. Eg. Communication, working with others etc.

7. OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR 2018

Volunteers	2018 Target	Achieved in 2018	% +/-
New volunteer registrations this period	240	260	+8.3%
Volunteer placements (from this year's registrations)	150	186	+24%
Provide information & support to unemployed people	80	88	-
Assist unemployed people into a volunteer placement	40	60	+50%
Face-to-face meetings with new volunteers	160	225	+40.6%
Meetings/updates with returning volunteers	75	75	-
Organisations	2018 Target	Achieved in 2018	
New organisation registrations	15	15	-
New volunteering vacancies	90	94	+4.4%
Email Newsletter/Updates to organisations	9	6	-33%
Consultations with organisations	30	31	+3.3%
Garda Vetting Service provided to meet demand	900	1,221	+35.6%
Outreach/Presentations/Marketing	2018 Target	Achieved in 2018	
Outreach in Carlow town	11	7	-36.3%
Additional Outreach in rural Carlow	6	4	-33.3%
Volunteer Expo	1	1	-
Feature articles in local press	12	16	+33.3%
Features on local radio	3	3	-
Outreach in Carlow I.T. during term time	3	5	+66.6%
Monthly updated print-out of volunteering opportunities distributed to libraries, FAS, VEC etc	12	12	-
National Volunteer Week Local Media Features	4		-

National Volunteer Week Projects	2108 Target	Achieved in 2018	
Numbers participating in National Week of Volunteering	240	280	+16.6%
Presentations to groups of unemployed people	8	10	+25%
Presentations to schools	4	4	-
Text message updates to “once-off volunteers”	6	8	+33.3%
Volunteer appreciation event (Christmas Tree)	1	1	-
Volunteer Fair / Expo event	1	1	-
Weekly published “Volunteer Spot” in Carlow Nationalist	20	24	+20%
Weekly updates Facebook & Twitter	5	5	-
Increase Facebook Likes	2,200	2,635	+19.7%
Increase Twitter Follows	1,100	1,063	-3.3%
Training	Proposed 2018 Target	Achieved in 2018	
No. of Volunteer Management Training courses delivered	2	2	-
No of Volunteer Managers trained at VMT	10	12	+20%
Garda Vetting Training	4	6	+50%
No. of attendees at Garda Vetting Training	24	26	+8.3%
Total no. of people trained	28	30	+7.1%
Internal Good Practice/Administration	Proposed 2018 Target	Achieved in 2018	
Board meetings	9	9	-
Finance Sub-committee meetings	4	4	-
Staff Team meetings	4	4	-
AGM and Audit	1	1	-
Manager attendance at VCMN meetings	2	3	50%
Placement Officers attendance at P.O. Forum meetings	1	1	-
Annual staff appraisals	2	1	-
Salesforce data cleansing	6	12	100%
Reports delivered to Dept. Environment	2	2	-
Quality Standards Self-Assessment	1	1	-