

CARLOW VOLUNTEER CENTRE



2024

ANNUAL
REPORT



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

 Carlow
Volunteer Centre
Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Cheatharlach



**Carlow
Volunteer Centre**

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Cheatharlach



STAFF OF CARLOW VOLUNTEER CENTRE

Helen Rothwell – Manager

Natasha Akerele – Placement Officer

Sinead Kirwan – Placement Officer



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1. Operational Content

1.1 Governance:

Carlow Volunteer Centre is an independent organisation. Its volunteer Board of Directors consists of eight representatives from the local community, who represent key stakeholders. The board oversees the organisation's strategic direction and delegates operational activities to the manager.

Chairperson: - Martha Jane Duggan

Company Secretary: - Frank

Comerford Fiona Dunne

Declan O Kane

Tremayne

Horkan Niamh

Dowling Patrick

Kennedy Yvonne

Hoare

1.2 Staffing:

One full-time member (Manager) and two-part time staff members. Volunteers, TUS, and CE participants are utilised periodically to enhance services.



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 61,968. The average age of Carlow's population in April 2022 was 38.8 years, compared with 36.9 years in April 2016. Nationally, the average age of the population was 38.8, up from 37.4 in April 2016.

The number of people aged 65 and over continues to grow. This age group increased by 26% to 9,304 in Carlow, compared to 22% to 776,315 at a national level, since 2016. (2022 census)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 impacts on the ability of isolated people to become involved in formal voluntary activity based within the urban centres. areas.

Like most of Ireland, Carlow is becoming increasingly diverse in respect of nationalities, ethnicities, and languages. Non-Irish nationals and those with dual nationality account for 12% of the country's population.



2. Introduction

Carlow Volunteer Centre offers support and guidance to individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to reach their individual and collective goals while significantly contributing to their local community and society.

This report outlines the work and highlights the achievements of Carlow Volunteer Centre (CVC) in 2024.

CVC currently work with 195 Volunteer Involving Organisations, offering them a range of services. In addition, CVC works with 1454 active volunteers in Carlow, is part of a national network of volunteer centres and works closely with other organisations in the county, including Carlow Public Participation Network, Carlow County Council and both local partnership companies.

In 2024, Carlow Volunteer Centre focused on working with our Volunteer-involving organisations, delivering training and support.

We also

Held a volunteer Expo in Fairgreen shopping centre.

Promoted training and webinars from Carlow Volunteer Centre, Sports Partnership, ETB, Public Participation Network, Volunteer Ireland, The Wheel and others.

Advertised all our volunteer roles in the Carlow Nationalist and on our Social media platform, outlining new volunteering opportunities and thanking volunteers for their contribution to their community.



Our Vision

“A vibrant Carlow society where every person feels connected to their community through active participation in voluntary activities”

Our Mission

To promote the value of volunteering and increase the range and quality of

Volunteering in Carlow,

To help individuals find meaningful opportunities to volunteer and to support not-for-profit organisations, to involve volunteers in their work.

Our Values

Our key values are:



Equality.

We believe all people should be valued and respected equally. We are also committed to removing barriers that exclude vulnerable groups from participating fully in society.



Sense of Community.

Volunteering is ultimately about people helping others and feeling connected with their community.



Professionalism.

We work in an environment where honesty and integrity are paramount and where people are encouraged to bring their ideas to life while remaining accountable to ourselves and others.



3. Chairperson's address..

In 2024, Carlow Volunteer Centre significantly increased volunteer engagement and organisational support, strengthening community bonds. Volunteers provided essential support across numerous initiatives, receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback. Volunteering enriches both community recipients and volunteers, fostering a deep sense of fulfilment. Looking ahead to 2025, we will focus on expanding reach and continuing community-building efforts. Additionally, we recognise the growing importance of adapting to changing community needs and leveraging technology to broaden our impact. As we expand our initiatives and partnerships, we remain dedicated to innovation, responsiveness, and ensuring that volunteering remains accessible and rewarding for everyone in Carlow. My heartfelt thanks to our dedicated Board, staff, and volunteers for their exceptional contributions throughout 2024.

Martha Jane Duggan, Chairperson



4. Services Provided by Carlow Volunteer Centre



Help members of the public find suitable volunteer roles from a constantly updated list of volunteer opportunities.



Advertise volunteer opportunities on behalf of non-profit organisations to the public through our National volunteering platform and our social media outlets.



Provide training and consultancy on volunteer management to charities and community organisations. We provide access to Garda Vetting for non-profit organisations.



We are part of the many community agencies in Carlow, including Carlow Age Friendly, Healthy Carlow, Carlow Social Prescribing Service, a member of Carlow Social Inclusion Forum and Carlow Integration forum.



5. Our impact in 2024



355 New Volunteers Registered in 2024



506 Volunteers were supported in finding volunteer roles in Co. Carlow



16,972 Hours contributed by Volunteers in 2024



195 Organisations using our services in Co. Carlow



134 Volunteers took part in Community projects



962

**Volunteers placed in
Volunteer roles in 2024**



1,297

**Engagements with
Organisations in 2024**



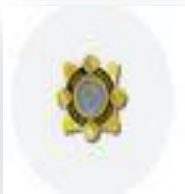
134

Community Volunteers



604

**Students attended our Volunteer
Education Program**



132

**Organisations using Garda Vetting
service and 911 Vetting Applications
processed.**



28

**Training Sessions delivered to
Volunteers and Organisations**

6. Sample of Events and Projects in 2024

Volunteer Expo 2024

Carlow Volunteer EXPO 2024 was held in Fairgreen Shopping Centre on March 8th and was a resounding success, with 29 Organisations coming together to showcase their valuable work and opportunities for community involvement. From local charities to environmental groups, attendees had the chance to learn about a wide range of causes and find ways to make a difference in their community.



One of the highlights of the event was the presence of KCLR, providing media coverage and shining a spotlight on the importance of volunteering. Their participation helped raise awareness and inspire more individuals to get involved in meaningful projects that benefit society as a whole.

With so many organisations in one place, the EXPO offered a unique opportunity for attendees to explore different options for volunteering and find the perfect fit for their interests and skills. Whether it's supporting the homeless, protecting the environment, or promoting arts and culture, there was something for everyone at the Carlow Volunteer EXPO 2024. Overall, the event was a powerful reminder of the positive impact that volunteers can have on their communities, and a call to action for everyone to step up and make a difference.



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*This was a great Expo, we met lots of Volunteers and other Organisations
Carlow Tidy Towns*

*Always a great event and perfect for networking. Well done to Carlow Volunteer Centre.
An Gairdin Beo*



Volunteer Recognition Event 2024

Carlow Volunteer Centre recently hosted a volunteer recognition event at Seven Oaks to honour and express gratitude to volunteers and volunteer-led organisations. The event was attended by over 130 guests who gathered to celebrate the selfless contributions of these individuals and groups. The morning was filled with appreciation, camaraderie, and a sense of community spirit.

The event provided a platform to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of volunteers who have made a significant impact in the Carlow community. It was a moment to shine a spotlight on their efforts and to thank them for their invaluable service. Volunteers play a crucial role in supporting various causes and initiatives, and their commitment does not go unnoticed.

The atmosphere at Seven Oaks was one of warmth and appreciation as volunteers mingled, shared stories, and enjoyed the festivities. It was a reminder of the power of volunteerism and the positive change it brings to society. Carlow Volunteer Centre's recognition event was a testament to the importance of giving back and the profound impact it has on individuals and communities alike.





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Thank you for inviting us to this wonderful event. It was a very enjoyable morning.
Alone



National Volunteering Week Tree Planting



As part of National Volunteering Week, Carlow Volunteer Centre planted a tree in An Gairdin Beo to recognise the invaluable contributions of volunteers in County Carlow. This not only serves as a token of acknowledgement but also as a lasting tribute to the selfless individuals who dedicate their time and efforts to making a positive impact in their community.

The act of planting a tree symbolises growth, strength, and sustainability, reflecting the invaluable contributions of volunteers to the community. It serves as a lasting tribute to their dedication and selfless service.

Carlow Volunteer Centre not only recognises past and present volunteers but also inspires future generations to get involved and make a difference.





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Integration through Craft

Upcycling

Carlow Volunteer Centre, with the support of KCETB, held training classes focused on integration through upcycling old clothing. Upcycling not only helps reduce waste and promotes sustainability but also fosters a sense of community and inclusivity. Individuals from diverse backgrounds come together to learn new skills, share ideas and work towards a common goal. This not only promotes integration but also empowers participants to make a positive impact on the environment.

Furthermore, upcycling training classes provide valuable opportunities for personal growth and development. Participants can learn valuable skills such as sewing, designing and creative problem solving, which can enhance their employability and self-confidence.



Corporate Volunteering

UNUM's partnership with Carlow Volunteer Centre and local organisations is a shining example of this commitment to corporate responsibility.

By volunteering with Carlow Volunteer Centre, UNUM is not only helping those in need but also fostering a sense of teamwork and camaraderie among its employees. Volunteering allows employees to step outside of their daily routines and make a real difference in the lives of others.

UNUM's partnership with Carlow Volunteer Centre and local organisations is a testament to the company's commitment to corporate responsibility. Through volunteering, UNUM is not only making a positive impact on the community but also reaping the benefits of a more engaged and fulfilled workforce. It demonstrates their dedication to supporting the community in which it operates. By working together with these organisations, UNUM can address important social issues and contribute to the betterment of society as a whole.





Biodiversity and Ecosystem Training

Carlow Volunteer Centre, in partnership with KCETB provided Biodiversity and Ecosystem training to all their Volunteers. In today's world, where environmental issues are becoming increasingly urgent, educating individuals about the importance of biodiversity is crucial.

By offering training programs on biodiversity, Carlow Volunteer Centre and KCETB are not only raising awareness but also empowering individuals to take action in preserving our planet's rich and diverse ecosystems. Through this partnership, participants have the opportunity to learn about the significance of biodiversity, the threats it faces, and the practical steps they can take to protect and conserve it.



Community Volunteer Training

Carlow Volunteer Centre provided five Community Volunteer Training sessions in 2024 aimed at equipping individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to contribute effectively to their community. As a result of these training sessions, the Centre now has a pool of 134 Community Volunteers who are available to participate in one-off events and festivals.

Community Volunteers bring a diverse range of experiences and expertise to the table, making them valuable assets to any community initiative. They are available for various events and festivals, and it allows for a more extensive reach and impact within the community, ensuring that more projects can be successfully executed with the help of these dedicated individuals.



CVC Education Program

Carlow Volunteer Centre delivered 12 education programs on volunteering to second and third-level schools in 2024. This initiative has not only raised awareness about the importance of giving back to the community but has also inspired the youth to actively participate in volunteer work.

These education programs provide valuable insights into the various ways in which volunteering can make a difference in society, instilling a sense of empathy and altruism in the students.

By targeting second and third-level schools, Carlow Volunteer Centre is reaching out to students at a crucial stage in their lives, where they are forming their values and beliefs. By promoting the value of volunteering, the Centre is not only enriching the lives of the students but also contributing to the betterment of the community as a whole.

*Carlow Volunteer Centre gave TY workshops this morning on volunteering in the community. An excellent and worthwhile workshop for our young people on the benefits of volunteering and giving back. Thank you to Sinead for delivering this educational and informative workshop.
Tyndall College Carlow.*



*I found the talk really interesting. I never really thought about volunteering before or how it could be used on my CV.
Student from Presentation College, Carlow.*

2024 Audited Accounts

Carlow Volunteer Centre CLG
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
TRADING STATEMENT
for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

	Schedule	2024 €	2023 €
Income			
Department of Rural and Community Development- Core		143,368	143,083
Department of Rural and Community Development- Additional		17,660	18,473
Sundry income		11,870	10,102
Volunteer Ireland		5,953	2,330
Carlow County Council		-	900
Kilkenny Carlow ETB		-	2,905
		<u>178,851</u>	<u>177,793</u>
Gross surplus Percentage		<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Overhead expenses	1	<u>(166,914)</u>	<u>(169,221)</u>
		11,937	8,572
Miscellaneous income	2	<u>2,461</u>	<u>1,361</u>
Net surplus		<u><u>14,398</u></u>	<u><u>9,933</u></u>



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Carlow Volunteer Centre CLG

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

SCHEDULE 1 : OVERHEAD EXPENSES

for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	€	€
Administration Expenses		
Wages and salaries	108,102	106,382
Social welfare costs	10,999	11,507
Wages and salaries - Ukraine project	6,117	4,998
Social welfare costs - Ukraine project	540	312
Staff training	1,100	1,180
Rent payable	100	100
Insurance	811	914
Printing, postage and stationery	7,370	6,460
Advertising	6,978	14,543
Telephone	2,330	2,238
Computer costs	2,979	3,125
Travelling and projects	10,193	8,512
Bank charges	408	407
Bad debts	(110)	135
General expenses	2,476	3,057
Subscriptions	719	457
Auditor's remuneration	2,460	1,661
Depreciation of tangible assets	3,342	3,235
	166,914	169,221