



# Volunteer Centre

Ionad Deonach Na Fhine Ghall

FINGAL

## **Annual Report 2007**

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## **Who Are FVC?**

Fingal Volunteer Centre is an independent and free matching service to encourage more people to become involved in volunteering across the county. The Centre aims to promote, support and encourage volunteering and good practice in volunteering.

FVC's role is to provide information and advice to people interested in volunteering and to organisations looking for volunteers. Fingal Volunteer Centre acts as link between such organisations and individuals. The service will advertise vacancies, advise people on their options and help organisations support their volunteers by adopting principles of best practice.

## **Background**

The Fingal Volunteer Centre Steering Group was brought together in 2005 to drive the Volunteer Action under the Fingal Improved Cohesion Plan. The group included Blanchardstown Area Partnership, Citizens Information Board, Co-operation Fingal, Fingal County Council, Volunteer Centres Ireland. The members are working to widen the group and to this end enlisted the involvement of Age Action since 2007.

Since November 2006 a Development Worker implements the project to encourage more people to become involved in volunteering across the county. The Centre is now open in Blanchardstown and Balbriggan.

Along with 17 other Volunteer Centres in the Republic of Ireland, the Fingal Volunteer Centre is a member of VCI, the national organisation with responsibility for developing volunteering nationally and locally, a mandate approved and supported by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

## Company Details

### Legal Status

Fingal Volunteer Centre Limited is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital, registered in Dublin, Ireland, with registered office at Dillon House, 106 Coolmine Ind. Est., Clonsilla, D. 15.

The incorporation date is 08.02.2007.

Registered No: 434396

Charity No: CHY 17730

FVC is registered with the data protection.

### Management Committee

<b>Terry McCabe</b>	(BAP)	Director and Company Secretary
<b>Noreen Colgan</b>	(Co-operation Fingal)	Director
<b>Amanda McLoughlin</b>	(CIB)	Chair
<b>Valerie McAllorum Byrne</b>	(FCC)	
<b>Linda Desmond</b>	(Age Action)	
<b>Ann Neville</b>	(Age Action)	

### Staff

The FVC employed in November 2006 one full-time Development Worker who was based in Blanchardstown, and in Balbriggan twice a month.

### Offices

Website: [www.volunteerfingal.ie](http://www.volunteerfingal.ie)

Email: [info@volunteerfingal.ie](mailto:info@volunteerfingal.ie)

Mobile: 085 165 44 30

#### **Blanchardstown Office**

Dillon House  
106 Coolmine Industrial Estate  
Clonsilla  
Dublin 15  
Tel: 01 8209550  
Fax: 01 8209551

#### **Balbriggan Office**

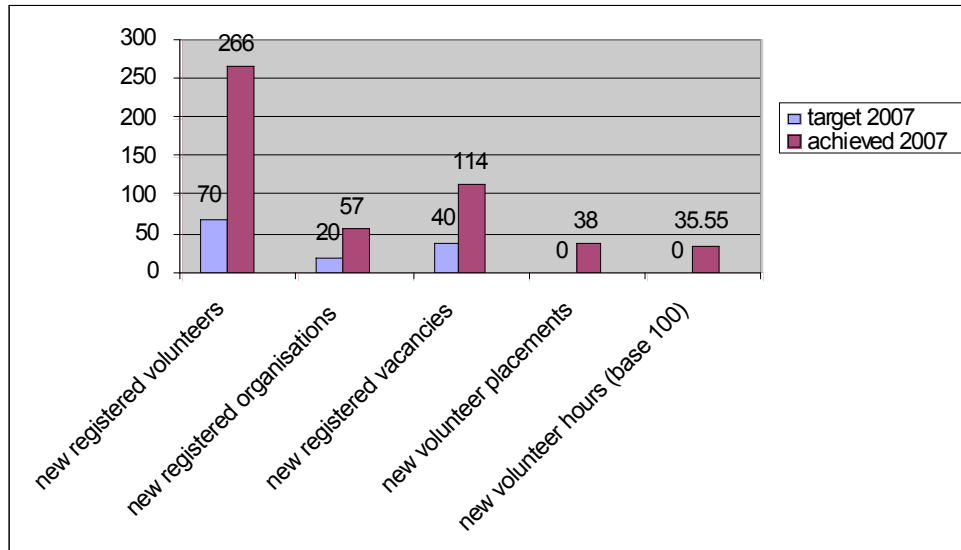
Unit 14, BEaT Centre  
Stephenstown Industrial Estate  
Balbriggan  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: 01 8020484

### Area Served

The FVC serves all the Fingal County. However the Development Worker emphasized the promotion of the centre in the Balbriggan and Dublin 15 areas in 2007.

## Placement Service

During 2007, 266 volunteers registered with the service. All the targets set up at the beginning of the year were over-achieved by the end of 2007. Information was also given to another 38 potential volunteers.



Volunteers who contact the service select one or more volunteering opportunities they wish to pursue. FVC provides as much advice and support to the volunteer as necessary to enable her/him to make a suitable choice. The decision for a volunteer to become involved in an organisation stays entirely with the organisation and her/him. FVC's role is to facilitate the match and give whatever assistance is necessary to make an introduction. The service does not select volunteers nor check references.

FVC follows up regularly with the volunteers until they are satisfied with their placement. In the FVC database registered volunteers are classified into three placement categories:

- An **'Awaiting Placement'** volunteer is someone who has registered and is waiting to be placed in a volunteer role.
- A **'Not Placed'** volunteer is someone the FVC cannot find a placement for. There could be a number of reasons for this e.g.
  - they have a volunteer interest that is not available in the FVC catchment area (such as, they want to work at an animal shelter but there is no shelter in their area);
  - the volunteer has registered but is not contactable currently and therefore cannot be placed;
  - they are no longer available to volunteer as they have started working or their circumstances have changed.

A majority of the 'Not placed' volunteers are volunteers who do not reply to the contact the FVC have made. As the registration process is really easy, people might register on a good thought and just wish to receive information but change their mind when they think again about the commitment involved.

- A **'Placed'** volunteer is someone who has been placed with an organisation and has started volunteering (a volunteer is not considered 'Placed' during the initial contact stages with an organisation).

Placements of Volunteers registered in 2007	
Placed	Record Count
Awaiting Placement	163
Not Placed	49
Placed	34

As the service is recent, the number of 'Awaiting Placement' volunteers is high. It takes time to find the right matches; the skills, interests, availability, and address of a volunteer all need to fit to one opportunity. Also, the recruitment process of a volunteer can take months, especially when it entails Garda Vetting.

Moreover some of the 'Awaiting Placement' volunteers are not available to volunteer when they apply but wish to receive information in order to volunteer in the future.

## Statistics

- **Monthly Recruitment Statistics**

There was an increasing number of people registering throughout the year.

- In March the website was launched and one can notice a rise for that month.
- The high number of volunteers registering in July could be explained by the media campaign in local papers (Community Voice, North County Leader, Northside People, Fingal Independent) and radio (Near FM). Leaflets were also sent to local CICs, Partnerships, and libraries for display.
- In September Volunteer Centres members of VCI organised the National Day of Volunteering (GIASD) which created a good publicity for the Centres; this is reflected by a steady increase of volunteers registering the following months.
- However the number of registrations lowered in December, as the centre was closed from the 19th December.

Volunteers Per Month	
Created Month	Record Count
January	4
February	3
March	13
April	11
May	19
June	21
July	46
August	22
September	33
October	34
November	40
December	20

- **Recruitment Method**

FVC website [www.volunteerfingal.ie](http://www.volunteerfingal.ie) is live since March 2007. The Staff of FVC is trained to update and add new information on the website.

The Internet is the most prolific source for recruiting volunteers in 2007. Volunteers can register directly through our website. They can also register on VCI website [www.volunteer.ie](http://www.volunteer.ie) and would be assigned to a VC depending on their home address.

The Centre is becoming part of the local awareness, as 29% of registered volunteers have been referred to the FVC by another agency, family or friends.

<b>Volunteer Recruitment Method</b>	
<b>Volunteer Recruitment Method</b>	<b>Record Count</b>
Internet	134
Referred by another agency	43
Family/Friend	34
Media	26
Outreach	15
Leaflets/Fliers	5
Through Work	5
Word of Mouth/Knew about Bureau	2
Passing by	1
School/College	1

Almost 14% of people visiting FVC website was directed by other websites (external pages or search engines); it reveals to be a great way of publicizing the Centre.

<b>Website visitors</b>	
<b>Direct address</b>	<b>85.9%</b>
<b>Links from an external page</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
<a href="http://www.volunteer.ie">www.volunteer.ie</a>	
<a href="http://www.volunteerdublin.ie">www.volunteerdublin.ie</a>	
<a href="http://www.activelink.ie">www.activelink.ie</a>	
<a href="http://www.volunteeringireland.ie">www.volunteeringireland.ie</a>	
<b>Links from an Internet Search Engine</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
Google	
Yahoo	

- **Age Profile of Volunteers**

A wide belief is that younger people do not volunteer. This is disproved by the FVC statistics. A majority of registered volunteers (64%) are under 35. The service seems to attract younger volunteers.

<b>Volunteer by age group</b>	
16-25	56
26-35	114
36-49	67
50-59	15
Other	14

- **Previous Volunteering Experience**

Moreover a majority of the volunteers (56%) had not volunteered before registering with FVC. This shows that people are still willing to volunteer but do not always have the information needed. There is a new way of volunteering and communicating. Getting the information from the Internet seems to be convenient for people. This is reflected by the number of people who heard about the centre through the Internet.

<b>Volunteers who volunteered before</b>	
No	150
Yes	116

- **Volunteer Gender**

The percentage of female who register with FVC is higher than the national average. Data from the census shows that 42% of males volunteer in the sports sector whereas only 17.5% of females do. As such a big percentage of men carry out their volunteering in the sports sector, they tend not to use the formal services of the Volunteer Centre to access their opportunities and in fact are either involved with or go directly to the sports club themselves.

<b>Volunteer Gender</b>	
Female	196 (74%)
Male	70 (26%)

- **Residential addresses of Volunteers**

The Development Worker was mainly working from Blanchardstown and had an outreach office in Balbriggan. This explains the repartition of volunteers from each area. It is interesting to note that a large number of volunteers do not live in the Fingal area; many of them living in Co. Meath where there is no Volunteer Centre.

<b>Volunteers Numbers By Local Area</b>	
<b>Local Area Fingal</b>	<b>Record Count</b>
Dublin 15	132
Balbriggan	19
Swords	16
Dublin 13	12
Malahide	10
Portmarnock	7
Rural Fingal	6
Rush and Lusk	6
Skerries	6
Donabate	4
Dublin 17	2
<i>Other</i>	48



- **Volunteer Nationality**

A majority of volunteers registered with the FVC are Irish (60%). This also means that 40% of registered volunteers are foreign nationals; volunteering is seen as a way of integrating to the Irish community by meeting people or having work experience.

<b>Volunteer Nationality</b>	
<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Record Count</b>
Irish	160
Nigerian	34
Other	13
Other African Nations	11
English	7
German	4
Other Asian Nations	4
Other European Nations	4
Congolese	3
French	3
Italian	3
Japanese	3
Ghana	3
American	2
Polish	2
Spanish	2
Lithuanian	2
Chinese	2
Hungary	1
Scottish	1
Welsh	1
Russian	1

- **Why People Volunteer and Areas of Interest**

Volunteers were asked to indicate their reason for volunteering and their areas of interest. The following are breakdowns of these figures.

A large number of people registering with the FVC are not sure in which area they wish to volunteer. The service is attractive for these volunteers as FVC enables them to get information on volunteering and find out about volunteering opportunities without having to make a commitment.

Volunteer Interests	
Main Interest	Record Count
Not sure	27
Office	26
Social Work	26
Youth/Children	25
Computers	21
Health/Disability	20
Animals	19
Older People/Active Retired	15
Education and Literacy	12
Environment	11
Shop/Retail	10
Arts culture and media	10
Childcare	9
Time Limited Commitment	5
Befriending	4
Driver	4
Practical Work	4
Mentor	4
Phone Line Help	3
Sports/Recreation	3
Church/Religion Based	2
Information Giver	2
Fundraising	1
Virtual Volunteering	1
Residential	1
Management	1

Reasons for Volunteering	
Why do you want to volunteer now	Record Count
Give something back	46
Want to do something in my community	36
Work Experience	34
Gain or Improve skills	29
Make a difference	28
Free time	19
Interested in Issue	18
New Challenge	12
Meet new People/Make new friends	9
For School/College	8
Get out of the house	6
To Feel Good	7
Try Something different from Job	4
Because I was asked	3
For Fun	2
Not Given	2
Part of Company Volunteering Team	2
Want do something in my community	1

## Referral Research

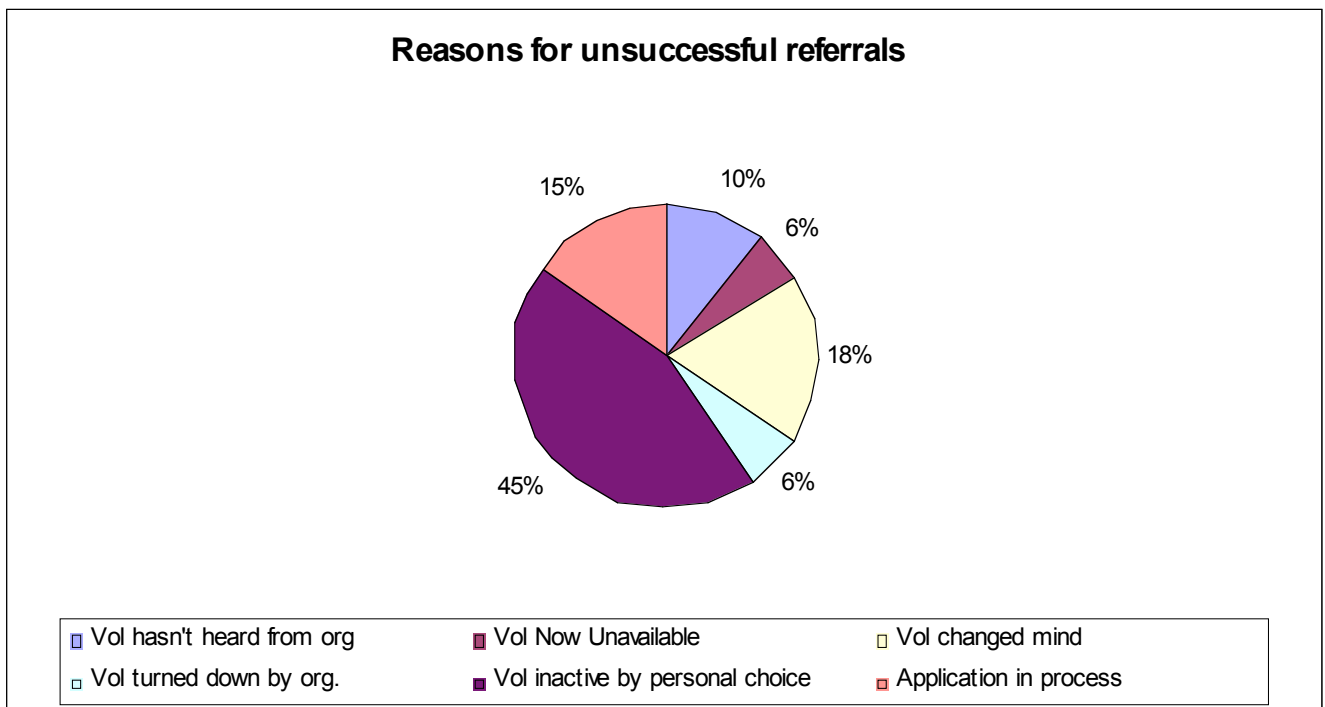
Volunteers are considered as 'Placed' from the date they start volunteering. The number of volunteers referred to organisations being much higher than the number of placed volunteers, the VCs members of VCI decided to undertake a research to follow-up volunteers referred to organisations and understand the reasons of their unsuccessful referral.

Referrals in 2007	
Sum of Opportunities Applied For	199
Sum of Volunteers Referred to Organisations	131
Placed Volunteers	34

FVC undertook the research in October, contacting volunteers referred to organisations from January to September 2007.

Referrals between January and September 2007	
Sum of Volunteers Referred to Organisations	99
Unsuccessful referrals	67
Successful placements	32

The majority of unsuccessful referrals are inactive by personal choice.



## **Recruitment service for voluntary organisations**

Any organisation in the Fingal area that requires the services of volunteers is able to register with the FVC. FVC staff visited the interested organisations and helped them with any issues about volunteering, such as taking on volunteers for the first time, giving advice on best practices and developing volunteering roles. Support, advice and information to organisations were also given through phone calls, e-mails and meetings.

Once the organisations fulfill certain criteria and volunteering guidelines, their volunteering vacancies can be added to the FVC database.

As the service cannot guarantee to fill the vacancies, particularly if the organisations require people very urgently or in large numbers, FVC advise organisations to continue and use other avenues of recruitment.

At the end of 2007, there were 57 organisations registered with the FVC. These organisations had 114 vacancies registered throughout the year. At the end of 2007, 55 opportunities were active and the organisations were looking to recruit 762 volunteers. These vacancies vary and some vacancies may require only 1 volunteer, and other 50 or more.

At the end of the year, all registered organisations were contacted to ensure that their vacancies were current and active, as to register new vacancies that they may have. The development worker also proactively searched for new local organisations to register with the service all through the year.

Many organisations who register with the centre may require volunteers on an occasional basis for once-off opportunities. FVC provided a mass e-mail service to all volunteers on its database who opted for this once-off option.

## **Corporate Volunteering**

Several corporate groups were involved in volunteering projects in 2007. A team from Salesforce painted the Travellers Resource Centre in Balbriggan, IBM was involved in GIASD. FVC also met Diageo who will volunteer in 2008 with Conservation Volunteers Fingal.

## **Garda Vetting**

FVC, as part of its service to support and promote volunteering, will act as an authorised signatory for Garda Vetting for organisations within the Fingal area that do not have access to an authorised signatory within their own organisation.

The FVC Development Worker followed the training to become the authorised signatory for the Centre. The service will be available in 2008 when the procedures are established.

## Training

### Scoping Exercise

From February to April 2007, FVC carried out a scoping exercise to identify the volunteering needs of voluntary and community groups in Fingal, as well as the gaps and barriers that exist to volunteering. 17 organisations, 15 from Dublin 15 and 2 from Balbriggan, have responded to the questionnaires. Altogether they involve 1711 volunteers.

These questionnaires have been analysed and the following recommendations have arisen:

- A clear profile of volunteer appears among the questioned organisations: “Employed female aged 50-64”. As a social inclusion service, FVC has to ensure that volunteering is open to everyone. In 2007 FVC’s figures show that younger people register their interest in volunteering through the FVC.
- The recruitment method the most used is “personal contacts”. This limits the recruitment panel and the diversity of the volunteers. This could explain why some organisations have difficulties finding volunteers with the right expertise. Training on “how to choose an effective recruitment method” would be useful to the organisations.
- The main problems the organisations have identified in involving volunteers are the lack of interest from volunteers, recruiting new volunteers, and time management. FVC addresses these issues by providing a new way of recruitment and directing volunteers to suitable opportunities.
- Referring to the answers given in the questionnaires and the training the organisations wish to follow, FVC has identified five volunteering topics of training local groups would benefit from:
  - Development of policies
  - Design of role description
  - Recruitment and selection
  - Support for volunteers
  - Relation between staff and volunteers

Moreover, these sessions would enable peer support and networking.

FVC plans to provide training when a sufficient number of organisations are registered with the Centre and enough interest arises.

### Focus Group

VCI asked VCs to organise a focus group meetings on volunteer management training needs with volunteer-involving organisations. In October the Manager of Carlow VC facilitated the focus group meeting in Swords. 4 workers of local organisations were present. VCI will gather the information received from the VCs and come back with some recommendations.

## Information Sessions

Volunteering Ireland, the Dublin City North Volunteer Centre, organised a Volunteer Recruitment Information Night in January 2007 to explain the services of a VC to organisations. As several of the organisations present work in Dublin City and Fingal Counties, the Development Worker presented the FVC.

In November FVC organised in Balbriggan an Information Evening for local organisations to present the services of FVC. Sandra Velthuis, consultant for the not-for-profit sector, then gave a general introduction on the involvement of volunteers and best practice around it. 2 volunteers and 9 members of 7 different organisations attended the session. The evaluation sheets were really positive and some organisations would be interested in further training. Due to a low response the session in Blanchardstown was cancelled.

## Resource Centre

Many documents around volunteering and best practices in volunteering management are available on the FVC website. Further literatures are available in the Centre upon request. The website and the resource centre will be developed and updated regularly.

Some of these documents have been translated into French and Spanish by the FVC Staff and volunteers.

## Give It A Swirl Day

Volunteer Centres Ireland and its member Volunteer Centres organised the first national day of volunteering in Ireland, "Give it a Swirl Day". The aims of the day were:

- To promote and raise awareness of volunteering in Ireland
- To create new avenues for people of all ages and from all walks of life to volunteer in their community
- To provide a day of national volunteering which takes place at a local level

The 26<sup>th</sup> September 2007, the following events took place in Fingal:

- A group from Peter Bradley Foundation painted the reception area of the Hartstown Community Centre
- Transition year students from Raheny volunteered for CASA fun activity day in Malahide with their new young group members, all of whom have special needs.
- A team composed of staff from Fingal County Council, Conservation Volunteers Fingal and IBM cut down the shrubs in Abbotstown Woodland area
- A Fundraising Pin Day for Children's Hospital was also organised nationally by VCI

All the groups enjoyed the day and sent positive feedback.

The Fingal events were well covered by the media (12 newspaper articles in Fingal Independent, Northside People West, North County Leader, Blanch Gazette, City Wide News North West, and 1 radio interview with Phoenix FM).

## Budget

FVC was funded in 2007 by the Cohesion Funds, Fingal County Council, Blanchardstown Area Partnership and Co-operation Fingal. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs accepted to core fund the project from November 2007 to December 2008.

<b>Funder</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Balance forward 2006	7259.34
Cohesion Funds	41000
DCRGA	11437
Co-operation Fingal	2000
FCC Community department	28000
BAP	9306
<b>Total 2007</b>	<b>99002.34</b>
<b>2007 Expenditures</b>	<b>63925.53</b>
<b>Balance forward 2007</b>	<b>35076.81</b>

## Lexicon

<b>BAP</b>	Blanchardstown Area Partnership
<b>CIB</b>	Citizens Information Board
<b>FCC</b>	Fingal County Council
<b>FVC</b>	Fingal Volunteer Centre
<b>GIASD</b>	Give It A Swirl Day
<b>VC</b>	Volunteer Centre
<b>VCI</b>	Volunteer Centres Ireland