

FINGAL COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS REPORT 2025

**Fingal
Community
Volunteers**



www.volunteerfingal.ie



Company Number: 434396



Registered Charity Number: 20066574

Introduction

The Fingal Community Volunteer Programme is delivered by Fingal Volunteer Centre as part of a national Community Volunteer Programme. The initiative aims to support local groups with their one-off events across Fingal by providing an experienced volunteer manager and a team of trained volunteers. It also has the capacity to deliver a coordinated volunteer response in the event of a civil emergency.

The programme is mostly funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) as part of a three-year national pilot (2021–2024), extended into 2025-2026 and ongoing a review. Incomes are complemented by a contribution from the Local Authority (Fingal County Council).

This initiative has broadened access to volunteering, acting like a stepping-stone into volunteering by offering people the opportunity to volunteer without long time commitments. It actively supports people from various under-represented groups to participate (people with disabilities, retired individuals, those who are new to either volunteering or Fingal). With reduced barriers, this programme allows people to remain active and connected by taking part in events in their community.

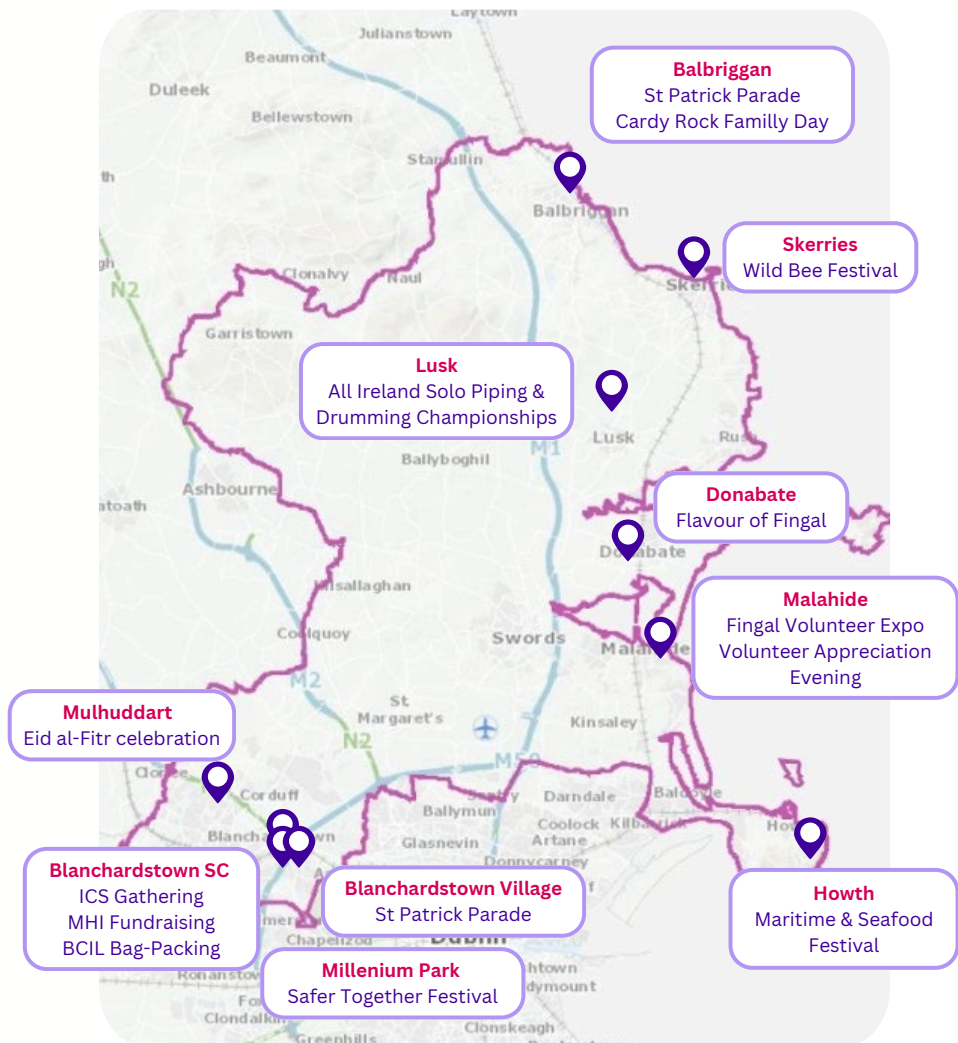
The current programme succeeded the Fingal Event Volunteer initiative which was established in 2013.



Key Statistics at a glance



13 unique locations over 8 towns/villages





Events Supported in 2025

Climate / Environment

Baldoyle Bay Biosphere Festival Baldoyle - 2 days - May

On the Friday the event was reserved for schools and our Volunteers acted as group leaders for children aged 10–12, guiding them through ten different environmental and biodiversity activities.

The Saturday was open to the public. Volunteers provided information on the event and helped ensure the event was safe for all attendees by monitoring each activity area and redirecting crowd when necessary.



The Skerries Wild Bee Festival Skerries - 2 days - June

Volunteers helped the organisers setup the activities areas before the event opened.

They then welcomed members of the public, assisting them to join their walking tours and wildlife talks.

They also got creative, helping with the face painting and the arts & craft area.

Family day / Community events



Flavours of Fingal Donabate - 2 days - July

With over 60,000 attendees, our Volunteers were kept busy all day by providing visitors with maps and directions as well as distributing children's safety wristbands.

Volunteers were located in the main three information areas, the sensory zones and throughout the venue.



Cardy Rock Family Day Balbriggan - July

A small team of Volunteers helped the residents association with setting up the event before supporting the games and face-painting areas.

Howth Maritime and Seafood Festival Howth - 2 days - September

At this other Fingal flaship event, the Volunteers once again maned the information points, providing information and maps to visitors, while distributing children's wristbands. We also supported Howth and Sutton Autism Friendly group with their quiet sensory zone.



Safer Together Summer Festival Blanchardstown - September

After entertaining young visitors with traditional games, the Volunteers got ready for the Colour run.

During the run, the Volunteers were spread alongside the course to "colour" the runners, before joining the fun on the stage area and helping with the clean up.



Cultural Festivals

St Patrick's Parade Balbriggan - March

Our team of volunteers were in the quiet/sensory zone at the Pocket Park in Balbriggan, supporting families and individuals with autism and other sensory needs. This designated area provided a calm and comfortable space to enjoy the local parade.



St Patrick's Parade Blanchardstown - March

Our second team of Volunteers were in Blanchardstown Village, once again supporting the quiet/sensory zone.



Eid al-Fitr celebration Mulhuddart - March

Celebrating the end of Ramadan, Volunteers supported over 200 attendees by providing directions and information. They also assisted with setting up the hall, distributing food, and managing queues.

All Ireland Solo Piping & Drumming Championships Lusk - September

In this highly competitive event, the Volunteers supported the organiser, the Black Raven Pipe Band, manage the 250+ participants.

Volunteers acted as Schedule coordinators, in charge of ensuring their designated musicians were adhering to the strict championship schedule to ensure the smooth running of the competition.



Fundraising / Charity support



Blanchardstown Centre for Independent Living Blanchardstown SC - April

Volunteers supported the B.C.I.L. team raise funds at their first bag packing fundraising event in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre.

All donations went to their bus service, which enables individuals with additional needs to travel to appointments and classes.



Mental Health Ireland Blanchardstown SC - 2 days - September

During this two day event, the Volunteers and the Mental Health Ireland' team provided shoppers with information on the various Mental Health supports available. They raised funds by selling discount wristbands, color books, Christmas cards and decorations.

Irish Cancer Society Patient & Volunteer Gathering Blanchardstown - June

The Irish Cancer Society (ICS) organised this gathering to thank their volunteer drivers and reunite them with the patients who access their service.

By assisting with registration and providing general stewarding throughout the event, our Volunteers ensured that every ICS volunteer was able to fully take part in the day as a guest.



Promoting volunteering



Fingal-wide Volunteer EXPO Malahide - May

Volunteers were instrumental in supporting the largest Volunteer EXPO in Fingal.

They welcomed and helped the 30+ guest organisations setup before the Mayor of Fingal opened the event.

Guiding visitors throughout the venue, the Volunteers provided information about the volunteering opportunities throughout Fingal.



Volunteer Appreciation Evening Malahide - December

Marking International Volunteer Day, this evening celebrated the commitment of 130+ volunteers and organisations from all over Fingal.

Volunteers assisted with setting up the venue before registering the guests. They were essential in coordinating the smooth running of the event, allowing the Volunteer Centre team to focus on welcoming guests and delivering the evening's recognition programme.



Fingal Community Volunteers

Behind the Scenes

Every successful volunteering day is the result of efforts that commence long before and continue after each event. These 2 pages highlight that hidden work from both the Volunteer Manager and the Volunteers.

Volunteer Journey - from registration to attending first event

Before attending their first event, every volunteer

1. Learns about the programme (online, during an outreach event, by word of mouth...).
2. Registers on i-vol, complete an interest form.
3. Receives a call from our Volunteer Manager during which the programme is explained in details, expectations are set, identity is checked....
4. Completes an online training course on “being a volunteer at events”.
5. When training is complete, is given access to upcoming events .
6. Registers for their first event.
7. Gets ready and travels to the event.

The volunteers are supported every step on the way by the Volunteer Manager.

Before the event - Volunteer Manager key tasks

Behind every event-day, a significant amount of coordination is carried out in advance. The Volunteer Manager will

- Meet with the event organisers to understand their vision of their event and agree how we can best support them. Can also provide expert advice on different aspects of the event and may join planning meetings.
- Advertise the volunteer roles to the team of Community Volunteers. Answer queries from volunteers. Manage registrations, cancellations and backfills.
- Run outreach events to continuously recruit new volunteers to maintain a strong team.
- A few days before the event, visit the site, agree last details and sign statement of work.
- Organise parking passes when required.
- Communicate key details to volunteers.
- Pack for the event — backpacks for volunteers, hi-vis, incident report cards, event specific materials...

During the event - Support to volunteers and organisers

On the day of the event, the Volunteer Manager would usually arrive well in advance of the volunteers in order to have a last minute debrief with the event organiser.

They will then get ready to welcome the volunteers and

- Distribute Hi-Vis, backpacks, lanyards...
- Deliver the pre-event briefing (volunteers tasks, reminder of Child safety policies and Incident Cards reports...).
- Walkthrough the site with volunteers.
- Assign tasks / positions
- Allocates breaks and lunch times.
- Ensure everyone is ready to get started.

Throughout the day, the Volunteer Manager will continuously support the volunteers. In coordination with the event organisers, they may reassign some tasks or even distribute new tasks.

After the Event

The effort doesn't stop when the events ends.

After debriefing with the volunteers and going through potential incidents reports, the Volunteer Manager will re-pack the equipment to be taken back to the office.

In the following days, suggestions and feedback collected from volunteers are shared with the event organiser.

Finally, the Volunteer Manager will organise the cleaning of the HI-Vis, reshelve equipment, restock supplies and everything is ready for the next event.

Organisation Testimonial

Skerries Mill Community Garden



“

The Bee Festival was deemed a great success this year with write ups in the Skerries News, Sustainable Skerries, and the Skerries Mills management team. We had well over a 1,000 people in attendance over the 2 day Festival.

The Volunteers were a huge positive addition this year and our committee felt their contribution on both days were Amazing and brought great energy and a very professional attitude to the event in all areas. We are very grateful to each volunteer. Volunteers were placed at registration tent, Art and crafts Tent, Face painting, supporting with costume competition, helping visitors get to Talks, and general assisting throughout the two days with set up and many other duties that arose on the days.

The volunteers arrived each day very well prepared and got straight to duties at hand and linked in with the public attending in a wonderful way enriching the experience for everyone. Having the well trained and experienced volunteers was amazing and we feel our Festival would not be the same without their help.

Fingal Community Volunteers are “Amazing People” they incorporate everything positive the community can do when we join forces!!

Orla L Jones (Lead Artist)

”



Organisation Testimonial

Baldoyle Biosphere

“

I just want to say thank you so much for all your help both before and during our event. You were very calm, engaged and a help with problem solving. I do not think we could have run the event without you.

It was fantastic to be able to hand over our young students to you knowing they would be given the care and support needed to do a successful job. You were extremely professional at all times, yet compassionate to the difficulties we were facing.

The Volunteers on Saturday did a super role and helped ensure a successful event. They knew what they needed to do and just quietly did it. It was great not having to worry about the volunteer roles on the day.

Everyone was a wonderful, happy addition to our event and we thank you for your input. We look forward to working with you on future events.

”

Cathy Lawless- Board of management Baldoyle Community Hall

BALDOYLE COMMUNITY HALL



Volunteer Testimonial

VOLUNTEERING: An experience of dedication, commitment, and solidarity

“

For us, Jessica and Julio, participating in the various volunteering events where we've had the opportunity to dedicate ourselves, give our best, and serve, has been a wonderful experience. It feels like sharing a "gift" we've been given.

It has helped us understand that sharing, helping, guiding, and accompanying others is the **perfect opportunity to meet people, integrate into a community, and show solidarity**. Solidarity with our surroundings, with nature, with the community, and with the local authorities, who organise these activities for the social well-being of their citizens with such great effort and care.

We have volunteered with the Fingal Volunteer Centre, as well as the Glas Community Garden and Friends of Elderly. Every single one has been equally important to us. However, we would like to highlight our time with the Fingal Volunteer Centre. We thoroughly enjoyed events such as Flavours of Fingal in Donabate, the Seafood Festival in Howth, the 77th All Ireland Pipe Band Championships in Donabate, the Skerries Eco Festival, and the Mental Health event in Blanchardstown.

In all of them, we realised that if you treat people with respect, they respond with respect. If you smile, they smile back. If you are kind, they are even kinder in return—regardless of where they come from, their age, skin colour, height, or social status. Nothing else matters. We are just people helping people, and that is truly moving.

You discover that just as you appreciate being looked after, they do too. Best of all, there is no underlying interest in recognition, or receiving anything in return.

...



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The truth is that our first experiences as volunteers have greatly helped our integration into the community. We have been lucky enough to meet such lovely, down-to-earth, and committed people like Ruth and Aurora, who helped us feel right at home. They valued our experience and our actions as volunteers, genuinely making us feel welcome and appreciated. This door that volunteering opened for us has given us the chance to meet many people, enjoy traditional Irish music, taste different Irish dishes, and appreciate the natural beauty found across the various volunteering activities where we participated.

Thank you for all the support we have been given, and thank you for allowing us to be part of this great volunteer family. Above all, we are grateful for life and for the opportunity to learn more about life in Ireland, its culture, its art, its history, and the culinary arts that we have been able to discover through the activities we took part in.

We believe the success of our volunteering experience comes down to the attitude we brought to it. We don't let the weather, the rain or the heat, the distance, or any travel complications hold us back.

We hope this brief reflection can inspire many more people to take the plunge, commit to serving, and enjoy helping others, because together we form a great community.

— ”

Jessica and Julio
Multiple events



Volunteer Testimonial's



“

John has “volunteered lots of times”.

“I like to volunteer for the community as we all should help each other and to do good for both our environment and our community’. Volunteering has really helped me as ‘I am now more confident and more open to meeting other people’ and ‘I feel appreciated’ whilst volunteering’. I ‘have never had a bad experience while volunteering’

”

**John Flannagan
Baldoye Biosphere**

“

What inspired you to volunteer?

‘To mix into the community’ ‘to meet new people and to speak with them’ ‘I have never had a bad experience instead I have met so many good people’ ‘I felt so much appreciated people have been so very nice’ ‘the volunteer manager was very good to me, explained everything to me before volunteering so I was confident.’

”

**Nothando & Limakani
Baldoye Biosphere**

Volunteer Testimonial's



“ I really enjoyed volunteering at Flavours of Fingal. It was such a fun and meaningful experience. I especially loved connecting with people and seeing how even the littlest things, like giving out wristbands to kids with their parents' phone numbers or handing out maps, made a real difference. It was great to feel part of something that helped families enjoy their day with more ease. I'd definitely love to volunteer again in the future. ”

Augustine Akpan
Flavours of Fingal



“ I am very delighted to be a volunteer today. It has been an exciting day for me actually. I am happy because I have never been in a location like this. And it is very nice. I most sincerely say thank you very much for the wonderful opportunity to be part of Fingal Volunteer Centre at Flavours of Fingal 2025. I was really delighted to encounter amazing and very inspiring people. To me it was a day not to be forgotten that was filled with teamwork, true community spirit and all smiles. ”

Samuel Matiro
Flavours of Fingal

Volunteer Testimonial's



“ First time volunteering as a Community Volunteer, I really wanted to participate in the Skerries Wild Bee Festival because it is a great opportunity to meet new people, to be outdoors in nature and to learn about bees, which I didn't know anything about before. Yeah, I'm really enjoying it! ”

Serena
The Skerries Wild Bee Festival

“ I love volunteering because it helps me find out more about my local area. Volunteering at a Community Volunteers events is very informative with regards to different topics that the festivals cover. For example, the Bee Festival in Skerries – I have been learning loads of new things today! ”

Bernie
The Skerries Wild Bee Festival

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS



Fingal
Community
Volunteers



VOLUNTEERING, MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Expenditures



**Snacks and Material
for Volunteers**

€ 1,458



Transport for Volunteers

€ 130

Transport for Staff

€ 650



Storage

€ 4,760



Project management costs

€ 29,722

Total Spent: € 36,720

Incomes: € 36,433

DRCDG € 28,433

Fingal CC € 8,000

Overspent

(€ 287)

*Amounts presented here are based
on 2025 accounts before audit.

Future Plans

This programme complements our core mission so much, that it has become a key part of our activities. Our ambition in the coming years is to continue to involve more volunteers into this programme as it acts, for many, as a stepping stone into volunteering.

We are hoping our funders will continue to fund this programme and increase the current funding, to allow us to have a full time dedicated Community Volunteer Manager. This will allow us to consider possible extensions in the scope of activities that are being delivered.

- Support emergency response teams in case of weather / catastrophic events. Our volunteers are not blue light response but can offer back-support to them and/or more sustained support to local communities after the emergency has passed.
- Increase the number of activities supporting the promotion of sustainable practices alongside organisations involved in gardening, clean-ups, waste reduction...
- Continue to deliver the programme across multiple towns and villages.
- Continue to open the programme to volunteers of all-abilities.

One day, we are also hoping to finance a minibus to be able to support the transport of volunteers and the ambitions outlined above.





Fingal Volunteer Centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Fhine Ghall



An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe
agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta
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Development and the Gaeltacht

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