

SUPPORT TO UKRAINIANS AND NEW COMMUNITIES REPORT 2025



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Company Number: 434396



Registered Charity Number: 20066574

Introduction

This report outlines our work supporting Ukrainians, International Protection Applicants, and other new communities across Fingal throughout 2025 made possible by a dedicated funding from DRCDG.

This year has seen continued growth in our efforts to welcome and integrate people newly arrived in Ireland, whether living in emergency and temporary accommodation, IPAS centres, or settling into the wider community. In partnership with local groups (LAIT Team, members of the Community Integration Forum, non-for-profit organisations...) and with the 3 other Dublin Volunteer Centres (via the - ThrIVE Involving Volunteers - programme), we have continued to build pathways to volunteering, connection, and belonging for people who are new to Fingal.

Over the course of the year, we engaged with hundreds of new volunteers and residents, through events, workshops, and outreach. We continued to enroll new members in our Community Volunteer Programme which is acting as a stepping stone into volunteering. We also supported individuals through significant transitions, including the closure of accommodation centres, providing welfare check-ins, job references, and continued advocacy.

This report outlines our key activities, outcomes, and figures for 2025, alongside stories from the volunteers themselves, whose contributions and resilience continue to shape and strengthen our community.



2025 Activities in numbers

Throughout the year, we organise and attend several events to engage with people from new communities.

87 New volunteers living in an IPAS centre signed up to I-VOL*

This number supplements the numerous registrations from the previous years. Additional support is available through our in-person outreach programme enabling one-to-one support for the ones who want it..

15 Community Volunteer Events

We had 15 Community Volunteer events over 20 days through 2025. We facilitated the participation of Volunteers from new communities by covering transport costs and making sure sufficient food was provided to volunteers, being mindful that the volunteers may miss lunch/dinner time in their accomodation centres.

1 Support Worker for the - ThrIVE Involving Volunteers - project

Along with the 3 other Dublin Volunteer Centres, we continued to co-fund the salary of a support worker for the ThrIVE project, delivering dedicated actions and support in IPAS centres and working to reduce barriers to volunteering.

5 “Welcome to Volunteering” information sessions

We continued to visit IPAS centres to meet new residents and deliver “Welcome to Volunteering” sessions, not only to promote volunteering but also to ensure that future volunteers are aware of what volunteering is (and is NOT).

5 Community Integration Forum (CIF) meetings (online).

As a member of the Fingal CIF team, we attended regular online meetings throughout the year to liaise with partner organisations and stakeholders, ensuring we remained informed of the latest developments and changes. During one of the meetings, we gave a presentation on the supports available via the Volunteer Centre for the beneficiaries.

2 Meeting with Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT)

We had 2 bilateral in-person meetings with the Fingal LAIT team specifically to discuss ongoing support to new arrivals and cross-opportunities between our 2 teams. This was complimented by regularly catch-ups during various events and workshops.

11 Days of training

Our team attended 11 days of training / workshop on topic specific in relation to working with people from new communities and how to better support them. Topics included being an active by-stander, managing communications, anti-racism policies in organisations.....



Focus on Key Events



Meakstown Community Garden - January

We met with residents from Meakstown and visited their new Community Centre and garden. Extra volunteer support was needed to get the garden properly established and we advised how to engage with Baleskin Reception Centre to get residents involved in the community garden.

“Welcome to your New Community” Blanchardstown - February

On St Bridgit's Day, the Blanchardstown Tidy Towns group organised an event to thank the residents from Edmand Rice, the local IPAS centre, who were volunteering every Saturday with them.

We were also invited to attend as a recognition of the support and advises we provided the previous year to help build this relationship.



Eid al-Fitr celebration - Mulhuddart - March

Our Community Volunteers supported the End of Ramadan celebration in Mulhuddart Community Centre. After helping setting up the event, they provided directions and support to the over 200 attendees, also distributing food, and managing queues.



Communication workshop - March

Organised by Hope and Courage, the workshop “Navigating Conversations and Building Inclusive Narratives” was an opportunity to develop resilience when faced with negative comments in person or online, directed at our volunteers or at the centre. It was interesting to learn from shared experience and understand the level of verbal violence that some organisations are faced with.

H&CC



Airways Centre Connections Expo - April

Organised by the Fingal LAIT team, the Connections Expo gathered 25 organisations that support people living in the Airways IPAS centre. Joined by the ThrIVE support worker, we supported many of the residents with queries on volunteering opportunities as well as registering people onto our Community Volunteer Programme.

Anti-Racism Conference - May

We attended the launch of the collaborative research project by TU Dublin and the local community organisation Empower. Their work aimed at advancing anti-racist and anti-bullying practices in the higher education and community sectors.



Open Information Day - Baleskin - August

This event, organised by AkiDwA, aimed at providing newly arrived residents at the Baleskin reception centre with accessible, relevant and timely information about services, supports and opportunities available available to them..

We met with residents at this early stage of their integration journey which allowed us to share practical information about volunteering.

Connections Expo - Holiday Inn - September

Organised by the Fingal LAIT team, the Connections Expo gathered 16 organisations that support people living in the Holiday Inn IPAS centre. We supported many of the residents with queries on volunteering opportunities as well as registering people onto our Community Volunteer Programme. We were pleased to see several residents joining the Community Volunteer Team from the subsequent in support of Mental Health Ireland.



Community Inclusion Showcase - November

Organised by the Northside partnership, we attended this afternoon of sharing, learning & connections centered around community development & creative ways for creating opportunities for inclusion within our communities.

It was a celebrations of what is already happening in our community to aid inclusion and collaborate on ideas, inputs and suggestions to extend this further.



Hope and courage collective Blanchardstown - November

The team attended a workshop delivered by Hope and Courage and facilitated by the Fingal LAIT team. We were presented with cases studies regarding mis/disinformation before exploring how we can be part of a positive community response to hate speech and negative social media posts.



Fingal Inclusion Week - November

We took part in Fingal Inclusion week 2025, by going to the Holiday Inn IPAS centre and inviting residents to craft Christmas Cards what were later distributed to isolated adults accross Fingal. This micro-volunteering event was also an opportunity to connect with new residents and introduce them to volunteering.

IPAS Residents Christmas Fair - December

We were invited to a Chrstmas fair and fundraiser event hosted by the resident of an IPAS centre.

It was a great opportunity to show support and see residents in a more relaxed environment.



Our Journey with the Residents of the Edmund Rice Reception Centre

Since 2023, we worked very closely with both staff and residents of the Edmund Rice Reception centre. Throughout this time we built strong relationships through our in person “Welcome to Volunteering” sessions, one-to-one outreach service, and group craft activities.

We also supported the residents to join the Community Volunteer programme by distributing free bus tickets to enable them to travel to events.

As the reception centre grew in numbers, we reached out to local volunteer groups to include residents in their activities.

Through support and guidance, we facilitated community groups such as the G.L.A.S. Community Garden in TU Dublin, Blanchardstown Centre for Independent Living (B.C.I.L.) and Blanchardstown Village Tidy Town to become more inclusive by making small adjustments to facilitate the participation of these new volunteers.

We kept in touch with residents, seeing them at activities and Community Volunteer events. When the time came for some to receive their permit to work, we were happy to provide references for the ones we knew.



*Easter Cards
making event in
Blanchardstown
library*



*Volunteering with
Blanchardstown
Tidy Town*



*Residents receiving
an award for
volunteering in the
G.A.P. Garden*

In July 2025, residents received 2 weeks notice of the closure of Edmund Rice. Each resident was allocated to a new reception centre elsewhere in the country. Many of the residents were living in Blanchardstown for 2 or 3 years and the sudden closure and relocation was extremely distressing for them.

The Volunteer Centre contacted the ladies to support them with the transition. We provided references, practical and moral support and connected many residents with the Volunteer Centre in their new area, to help them establish new connections in their new communities.

A month after relocation, we did another round of check-in calls to see if we could provide any further assistance.

We were happy to hear that many ladies had brought their volunteer experience to their new communities joining their new local Volunteer Centre, Tidy Towns and other community groups.

The closure of the reception centre and departure of all its residents also had a real impact on local community groups and organisations. Overnight, they lost a significant number of their volunteers. Some ladies were also volunteering as be-friender with people with disabilities and their companion were devastated when they lost their friend. We supported those groups to drive new recruitments campaign to rebuild their volunteers numbers.



*Community
Volunteers
Programme, event
celebrating Ei- al-
Fitr in Mulhuddart.*



*Volunteer receiving
the Audience Award
for her Radio Show
on 92.5 Phoenix FM*



*"Welcome to New
Communities"
appreciation event
organised by
Blanchardstown Tidy
Town*



Thrive (Involving Volunteers) is a joint project of the **four** Dublin Volunteer Centres.

During the year, the 4 teams, supported by a shared Thrive worker, worked with organisations across county Dublin to increase the capacity to involve displaced people.

The project year 2025, has been one of remarkable growth for Thrive. Our goal to empower displaced individuals through volunteering continues to strengthen, building inclusion, connection, and belonging across Dublin. THRIVE surpassed its project goals by delivering “What is Volunteering” sessions, strengthening partnerships with volunteer-involving organisations, and developing lasting resources for inclusion and sustainability. These achievements reflect the dedication of displaced people who want to volunteer and the commitment of volunteer-involving organisations who bring THRIVE’s vision to life.

We extend our sincere thanks to all volunteers, VIOs, and supporters, with special appreciation to the Dublin Volunteer Centre Managers, colleagues, and the Department of Rural, Community Development and the Gaeltacht for their funding and support. We also acknowledge the IPAS (International Protection Accommodation Service) and centre managers for their commitment to inclusion, and the Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs) across Dublin for fostering local connections and promoting integration.

**Together, we are creating communities
where **everyone**, regardless of background
has the opportunity to **Thrive**.**



Key Outcomes from the information sessions



21 "What is volunteering" information sessions delivered across Dublin.

300 people attended and directly benefited from the information sessions.

300 follow-up emails were sent to all participants for continued engagement and support.

Over **75%** of participants reported **feeling confident to very confident** in understanding "What is Volunteering".

Over **80%** of participants said they enjoyed attending the information sessions.

Volunteering Participation

506 displaced people registered and placed in volunteer roles.

4 high profile events attended to raise awareness about the ThrIVE project.

1 "Unconscious Bias" training delivered to volunteer-involving organisations.

1 International Protection application process and volunteers information session.



Volunteer Stories

When I arrived in Ireland, I was looking for ways to become part of my new community and give something back. Volunteering with the Community Volunteer Programme gave me that opportunity. It allowed me to connect with people, contribute positively, and feel that I was making a difference.

What I enjoyed most was meeting people from different backgrounds and working together to support community activities. Every volunteering opportunity was rewarding because it gave me a sense of purpose and belonging. It was also a chance to learn more about Irish culture and the people around me.

Volunteering has helped me build confidence and develop valuable skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. It has also helped me expand my social network and form meaningful connections with people in the community. As someone who was new to Ireland, these connections were very important and helped me feel more settled and included. Throughout my time as a volunteer, I always felt welcomed, supported, and appreciated. The kindness and encouragement I received motivated me to stay involved and continue contributing whenever I could.

The positive impact volunteering has had on my life cannot be overstated. It helped me feel connected to my community, improved my confidence, and gave me opportunities to grow both personally and professionally. It reminded me that even small contributions can have a meaningful impact.

To anyone who is new to Ireland and is considering volunteering, I would say: "Go for it". Volunteering is a wonderful way to meet people, learn new skills, gain experience, and become part of your community.

It can open doors, build confidence, and create lasting friendships. One thing that stands out to me is the feeling of being part of something bigger than myself. Knowing that my time and effort could help others made every volunteering experience worthwhile, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been involved in the programme.

Temitope Akano Ajiboye
Community Volunteer since 2022



Expenditures



**Project and salary contribution
for development officer shared
across the 4 Dublin Centres** **€ 10,000**



Material for activities **€ 267**

** Further material costs for specific activities were covered by a separate funding.*



**Transport to and from
events for volunteers*** **€ 118**

** Further transportation costs to attend Community Volunteer events were covered by a separate funding.*



Project management costs **€ 29,956**

Total Spent: € 40,341

Incomes: € 40,274

Overspent: (67)

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





Fingal Volunteer Centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Fhine Ghall



An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe
agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta
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