



**Kildare
Volunteer Centre**
Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Cill Dara

20th Annual Report 2025

*Together for Kildare:
Building Stronger Communities
Through Volunteering*





Contents

CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION	3
1.0 COMPANY DETAILS	6
2.0 A YEAR OF IMPACT AND COMMUNITY	8
3.0 VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY AND DEMOGRAPHICS- 2024 AN OVERVIEW	10
3.1 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS	13
4. EVERYONE COUNTS: INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING IN KILDARE.....	14
4.1 INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING: KARE & KILDARE VOLUNTEER CENTRE PARTNERSHIP.....	15
4.2 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS AND INTEGRATION	17
5. INTEGRATION WORK IN THE COMMUNITY IN 2024.....	19
CASE STUDY 1 DOG TOYS FOR LOCAL ANIMAL SHELTER	20
CASE STUDY 2 TWIDDLE MUFFS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA	21
6. 2024 KILDARE VOLUNTEER CENTRE AWARDS.....	22
7. EMBEDDING QUALITY.....	24
8. OPERATIONS	25
8.1 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	25
8.2 BOARD MEMBERS	26
8.3 WEBSITE MOVE	26
8.4 GARDA VETTING.....	26
8.5 FUNDING	26
8.6 COLLABORATION	26
8.7 FINANCIALS.....	27



9 REFLECTING ON 2024 AND LOOKING AHEAD	28
-----------------------------------------------------	-----------



Chairperson's Introduction

As we reflect on the achievements of 2024, it's evident that volunteering continues to be the heartbeat of our communities in County Kildare. Throughout the year, volunteers from all walks of life have come together — not for recognition, but out of a shared desire to care, connect, and contribute. At Kildare Volunteer Centre, our mission remains clear: to promote, connect, and support volunteers and the organisations they support. The volunteers who make up our diverse community bring their unique qualities and motivations to create lasting impacts throughout the county.

A core component of our work is inclusive volunteering, ensuring that everyone, regardless of background, can find meaningful ways to contribute. We have seen significant growth in the demand for volunteering services across the county, driven by an increasing number of displaced individuals seeking to contribute to their new communities. This has highlighted the important role that our Centre plays in creating accessible volunteering opportunities for all, particularly for marginalised groups.

We've been able to collaborate with organisations like KARE, enabling individuals with intellectual disabilities to participate in volunteering, and we continue our efforts to include displaced individuals in volunteer activities, promoting community integration for all. In 2024, we were thrilled to see the Community Volunteer Programme grow in its diversity, with 63% of our volunteers identifying as non-Irish, including large numbers from the Somalian and Ukrainian communities.

We also celebrated these contributions at our annual awards ceremony, where we received over 150 nominations recognising exceptional volunteers and organisations. The awards highlight the incredible efforts made by individuals and groups across the county, reinforcing the powerful role that volunteering plays in Kildare. We are proud to support this vibrant spirit of volunteerism and recognise the countless hours dedicated to making our communities better.



On the quality front, 2024 saw a significant milestone for Kildare Volunteer Centre: we were awarded the National Quality Standard for Volunteer Centres. This accreditation reflects our ongoing commitment to excellence and accountability in service delivery, ensuring that volunteers and organisations receive the best possible support.

As we look ahead, 2025 will mark a significant milestone for Kildare Volunteer Centre — our 20th anniversary. This is an exciting time to reflect on our achievements, but also to look forward to the next chapter. In the coming year, we will launch a new five-year strategy which will focus on inclusive volunteering and expanding community engagement. We remain committed to breaking down barriers and enhancing opportunities for all members of our community.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed to the success of Kildare Volunteer Centre this year—our dedicated staff and our Manager David, the volunteers, and partners, including our funders, the Department of Rural and Community Development and Kildare County Council. I also want to thank our previous board members Martha Whyte, a long-standing member of our board, and Tanya Brennan for their contributions and support. A special thanks to Helen Mulhall our previous Chair, your efforts have helped to make Kildare a more inclusive, compassionate, and resilient place. I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you as we work together to build a stronger, more connected community in 2025 and beyond.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and I am excited to see what we will accomplish together in the years to come.

Luiz Pinto
Chair



Kildare Volunteer Centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Cill Dara



Our Vision is of a society where volunteering is promoted, valued, facilitated and supported so that people can contribute to developing and maintaining vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities



Our Mission is to promote the value of volunteering and increase the range and quality of volunteering in Kildare



Our Objectives

Increase the visibility of volunteering and ensure recognition for all those involved in creating cohesive and vibrant local communities

Increase opportunities and engagement in volunteering
Continue to build effective support structures for VIOs in order to deliver on the national volunteering strategy and our local strategy

Support the continual development of good governance



1.0 Company Details

Legal Status

Kildare Volunteer Centre is incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Directors

Helen Mulhall	Chairperson/Secretary March 2025
Martha Whyte ¹	Secretary
Ronan Kierans	Treasurer
Luiz Pinto	Director/ Chairperson March 2025
Tanya Brennan ²	Director
Bernie Morley ³	Director
Ian Russell	Director
Daniel Sogaolu ⁴	Director
Sarah Owen ⁵	Director

The Board met six times during the year. Board meetings are in person meetings with the occasional hybrid meeting also occurring when necessary.

Auditors: McMahon and Co, 9 Academy Street, Kildare Town, Kildare

CHY: 22760

RCN: 20200083

Charities Governance Code submitted October 2022

¹ Resigned March 2025

² Resigned December 2024

³ Resigned December 2024

⁴ Appointed December 2024

⁵ Appointed December 2024



Office

Kildare Community Development Centre

Meadow Road

Kildare

R51 RF88

Tel: 045-449156

Website: www.volunteerkildare.ie e-mail: info@volunteerkildare.ie

Staff

There were two fulltime staff during the year, a Manager and Participation Officer/Development officer. The Centre also employed two part-time staff, a Community Volunteer Coordinator, and a Ukrainian Support worker. We are also supported by our long-time placement volunteer Victor Purcell and a Graphic Design Volunteer Matheus Gomes

Area Served

The Centre serves all of Co. Kildare with an area of 1,693km² and a population of 247,774 (CSO 2022)



2.0 A Year of Impact and Community

In 2024, volunteering proved once again to be the heartbeat of our communities. Across County Kildare, volunteers from all backgrounds stepped forward—not for recognition, but out of a shared commitment to care, connect, and contribute. This annual report celebrates their stories, their impact, and the collective power of coming together in service. Guided by our vision of a more inclusive, compassionate, and resilient Kildare, we continued to strengthen partnerships, empower local action, and create opportunities for everyone to make a difference. The year brought its challenges, but volunteers turned every obstacle into an opportunity to strengthen our communities.

Some highlights of 2024 saw the continuing growth of the Community Volunteers in the county, with the increasing trend of them taking on bigger and more frequent community events continuing. We also became the first volunteer centre to adapt the programme to allow it to become more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities by working in conjunction with KARE on a specialised programme. Our integration work with new communities also continued in 2024. During the year there was a large number of displaced people relocated to Kildare to new custom-made accommodation centres in Punchestown and Floods Cross in conjunction with the existing centres throughout the county. This saw an increase in the demand for our services in this area.

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, we are reminded that the strength of our communities lies in the willingness of people to continuously show up for one another. The stories, statistics, and snapshots in the pages ahead offer just a glimpse of the impact of volunteering. They highlight the breadth and depth of volunteering in Kildare,, demonstrating the vital role it continues to play in fostering inclusion, resilience, and civic engagement. We are grateful for the commitment shown across our communities by volunteers, non-profit organisations and community partners, and look ahead with confidence as we continue working together to build a stronger, more connected Kildare.



Kildare Volunteer Centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Cill Dara

2024 in Numbers

678

New Registered
Volunteers

145

Repeat Callers
(already registered and
applied for another
opportunity)

28

New Organisations
(registered with KVC)

76

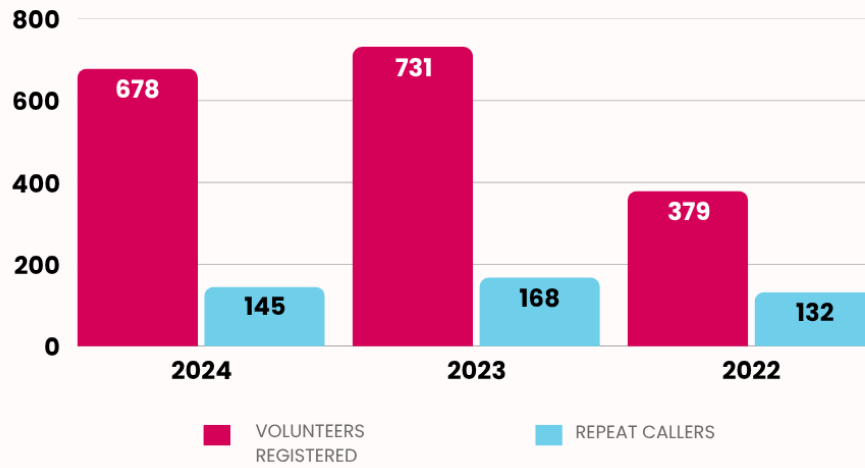
Active
Opportunities

13,396

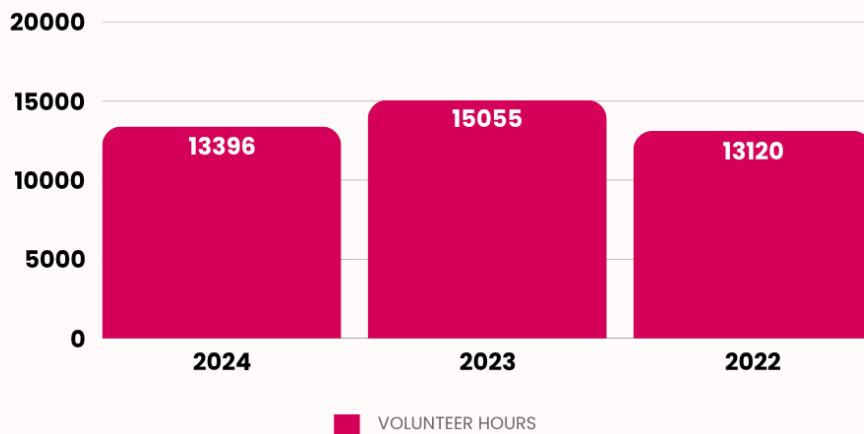
Volunteer Hours
Recorded



VOLUNTEER REGISTRATIONS

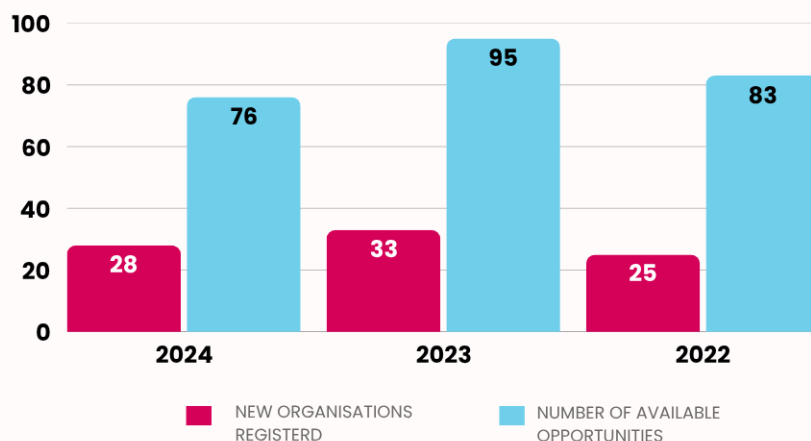


VOLUNTEER HOURS





VIO STATS



3.0 Volunteer Activity and Demographics- 2024 An Overview

In 2024, Kildare Volunteer Centre welcomed 678 new volunteer registrations. While this represents a slight decrease compared to 2023, which had seen a near 100% increase on the previous year, it confirms that the growth experienced was not a one-off surge. Instead, we are now witnessing a consistent and sustained increase in demand for our services. This is a positive reflection of community engagement but also presents challenges in terms of resourcing and capacity.

A significant factor contributing to this increased demand has been the rise in the number of displaced people being accommodated in Kildare. For the first time, the proportion of volunteers identifying as non-Irish (53%) surpassed those identifying as Irish (47%). Among non-Irish nationalities, Ukrainian volunteers represented the largest group at 9% of total registrations, followed by Nigerian volunteers at 6%. In total, more than 15 different nationalities were represented among new volunteers, highlighting the growing diversity of our volunteer base.



In addition to the new registrations, we were pleased to see 145 repeat volunteers return to the Centre in 2024. These are individuals who had previously found a placement through our services and chose to seek out another opportunity. This figure is significant, as it reflects the positive experience and satisfaction these individuals had with our processes and support.

Female volunteers continued to represent the majority of our registrations, accounting for 63% of the total—unchanged from previous years. The age profile of our volunteers also remained consistent, with 65% falling within the 23 to 49 age bracket. The 50 to 64 age group remained the least represented, making up just 14% of registrations, the same as in 2023. However, this trend contrasts sharply with the demographic of our Community Volunteers Programme, where 45% of all fully trained and active volunteers are aged 50 and above. This pattern suggests that more traditional volunteer roles, which often involve set shift patterns, may be less appealing to older adults, whereas the flexibility and episodic nature of community event volunteering seems to better match their preferences.

Over the course of the year, volunteers placed through Kildare Volunteer Centre contributed a total of 13,936 volunteer hours. When measured against the current living wage in Ireland (€14.75 per hour), these hours equate to a monetary value of €197,951. This figure does not include additional employment costs such as PRSI, and it underscores the significant economic value that volunteers bring to the community.

Kildare Volunteer Centre recorded 9,800 interactions with volunteers in 2024, reflecting the high level of support, communication, and engagement facilitated throughout the year. In total, 760 volunteers were referred to not-for-profit organisations across the county, demonstrating the Centre's pivotal role in strengthening the connection between volunteers and the wider community.



3.1 Community Volunteers

2024 marked the third full year of the Community Volunteer programme in Kildare, and it continues to go from strength to strength.

Throughout the year, Kildare Community Volunteers supported a wide range of events and organisations, including: Brigid 1500, CKLP, Newbridge Family Resource Centre, Kildare Sports Partnership, Naas Colour Run, Bealtaine Festival, June Fest, Darkness into Light walks, Kildare County Council's Annual Play Day, St. Patrick's Day Parades, and a medieval festival in Kildare—to name just a few.



The growing involvement of our volunteers at these events highlights the impact and reach of the programme across the county.

In 2024, Community Volunteers in Kildare contributed over 2,500 volunteer hours at community events across the county. The programme now includes 93 fully trained and



active volunteers. Notably, 63% of our Community Volunteers identified as non-Irish, highlighting the programme's key role in engaging and integrating new communities into volunteering. The Somali and Ukrainian communities were the most represented among our non-Irish volunteers.

This is a programme we are proud to take ownership of and model as best practise volunteering, as it reflects the strength of inclusive volunteering.

An important feature of the programme is its national portability—once trained, a Community Volunteer can remain active if they relocate to another county. This is especially beneficial for those seeking international protection, who may be moved between counties multiple times.

"I just want to pass on my sincere thanks and appreciation for all of the community volunteers yesterday. They were invaluable in ensuring that the event was successful and we're massively thankful to each one of them. Not only was everyone enthusiastic, helpful and kind, they went through the day with a smile and a positive attitude"
Maynooth St Patricks Day Parade

4. Everyone Counts: Inclusive Volunteering in Kildare

At Kildare Volunteer Centre, we hold a core belief: volunteering should be accessible to everyone in our communities. This principle is firmly aligned with the goals of the National Volunteering Strategy, which prioritises the inclusion of marginalised groups in volunteering.

Through our Community Volunteer Programme, we have a unique opportunity to extend meaningful and rewarding volunteering experiences to populations who are often underrepresented. In 2024, we demonstrated this commitment in two significant ways:

- By adapting the programme to be more accessible for individuals with intellectual disabilities, in partnership with KARE, ensuring they are seen, heard, and valued as part of the volunteering community.



- By involving displaced people living in accommodation centres throughout Kildare, overcoming barriers such as transport and unfamiliarity with the volunteering culture.

These initiatives reflect our ongoing dedication to making volunteering inclusive, impactful, and open to all. We will look at both of these projects in more detail below.

4.1 Inclusive Volunteering: KARE & Kildare Volunteer Centre Partnership

About KARE

KARE is a Kildare-based organisation that promotes inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities in all aspects of society. Their vision is that people of all abilities are supported in their right to have real opportunities and choice to live their best life.

Shared Values

KARE's mission aligns closely with that of the Kildare Volunteer Centre. We believe that volunteering should be accessible to everyone. We promote this principle among all nonprofit organisations we work with and are committed to leading by example.

Identifying the Need

In late 2023, the Kildare Volunteer Centre met with the Social Inclusion Development, Education and Research Officer at KARE to explore opportunities for KARE service users to engage in volunteering. It became immediately clear that people with intellectual disabilities face a noticeable lack of accessible volunteering opportunities.

Service users expressed interest in participating in local events—activities they regularly see in their communities. This feedback pointed us toward the Community Volunteer Programme, which supports community events and is managed by Kildare Volunteer Centre.

Together, we identified the programme as a potentially ideal fit due to its opt-in, flexible nature, and community focus. KARE also emphasized a key concern: their service users often aren't seen or treated as individuals when volunteering, but rather as part of their



group. A core objective for both organisations was ensuring that volunteering would be a meaningful, individual experience.

Implementation Plan

KARE introduced the Community Volunteer Programme to a few of their most independent service users. Any interested participant had to genuinely want to volunteer and complete the standard registration process, with support from KARE as needed. Two individuals registered their interest and signed up for training.

We recognised that the initial stage—attending training and volunteering without knowing anyone—would be the most challenging part. To ease this transition, we adapted the usual in-person training to include, the two new volunteers and a small group of existing Community Volunteers. This was essentially a buddy system which allowed for introductions and early relationship-building, helping the new volunteers feel welcome and supported.

Our existing Community Volunteers were enthusiastic about participating in this adapted training, reinforcing the inclusive spirit at the heart of the programme.

To further support the transition, KARE staff attended the first few volunteering events. Importantly, they participated in different tasks, allowing the new volunteers to operate independently while having a safety net in place. Over time, the goal was for KARE service users to feel confident, integrated, and eventually not need staff presence at events.

Outcomes

By the end of 2024, our two new Community Volunteers had participated in 5 events each. They no longer needed to be paired with a buddy, having built relationships with many members of the team.

Feedback from their families indicated that the experience has been genuinely positive. Volunteering has become something they look forward to. This collaboration has



demonstrated how, with thoughtful adaptation and partnership, volunteering can be made more accessible.

The success of this pilot has opened the door for more KARE service users to become involved. In recognition of their trailblazing role, our two new volunteers were honoured at our 2024 Awards Ceremony with a Pathfinder Award, celebrating their courage in taking the first steps and leading the way for others.

4.2 Community Volunteers and Integration

When displaced people first arrive at accommodation centres, volunteering is often far from their minds—and sometimes an entirely unfamiliar concept. To bridge this gap, our Integration Officer regularly visits centres across Kildare with our Community Volunteer Coordinator, offering informal drop-in sessions where individuals or groups can learn about volunteering, register online, register as a community volunteer and become familiar with platforms like I-VOL.

However, there are two significant challenges:

- A shortage of suitable local volunteering opportunities for the number of interested participants.
- Limited access to transport, especially from remote centres such as Newhall, Punchestown, and Bert House. These centres are located on the outskirts of towns and have inadequate public transport, a challenge raised frequently at Local Agency Integration Team meetings by Kildare Volunteer Centre and others.

Meaningful volunteering for Displaced People

The Community Volunteers programme has proven to be an effective and adaptable tool for involving displaced people in meaningful community roles.

Its sporadic, once-off nature makes it more feasible to arrange transport, even if only occasionally. Importantly, it offers a visible, valued role in the community and fosters a strong sense of team spirit and belonging.



A Success Story: Kildare's National Play Day

A standout example was Kildare County Council's National Play Day, a large-scale family event hosted at the Council's headquarters in Naas.

- Displaced people from Punchestown Accommodation Centre, who had registered and completed Community Volunteer training, were able to participate thanks to arranged transport.
- Our team also facilitated transportation for volunteers from Newbridge accommodation centres.

At the event, volunteers in high-vis vests were clearly seen contributing and engaging with families from across Kildare. For many attendees, this was their first personal interaction with displaced people, opening the door to conversations, shared stories, and a greater understanding of the desire among newcomers to be part of their new communities.



"Just a note to thank you and the volunteers who helped out for Play Day. The volunteers were very polite and a big help with running the event.. Without the volunteers provided it would have been very challenging to manage the event". Kildare County Council

Being a Community Volunteer means being part of a small, tight-knit and welcoming team. Our existing volunteers take pride in the commitment shown by their new colleagues from accommodation centres—many of whom go to great lengths to attend events. The sense of friendship, pride, and belonging this creates should not be underestimated.

Looking Ahead

We successfully replicated the Play Day model at several other Community Volunteer events throughout 2024. However, advance notice is crucial—it gives us time to coordinate one-off transport for volunteers from accommodation centres.



The willingness to volunteer is always present among displaced people. The key challenge lies not in motivation, but in ensuring the structure and support systems are in place to enable their involvement

5. Integration work in the community in 2024

At Kildare Volunteer Centre, we believe that volunteering is one of the most effective vehicles for integrating displaced people into their new communities. It provides individuals seeking international protection with opportunities to:

- Meet local people and build friendships
- Engage in meaningful, purposeful activities
- Establish personal support networks
- Empower themselves and contribute positively to their new environment

For many, volunteering becomes a powerful source of self-esteem, empowerment, and connection. It allows individuals to use their skills, receive appreciation, and feel part of something bigger, countering the isolation and marginalisation that can so often accompany displacement.

Beyond the personal benefits, volunteering also creates opportunities for cultural exchange and mutual understanding, allowing host communities to see displaced people not as strangers, but as neighbours—willing and eager to contribute. These human connections are essential to breaking down harmful stereotypes and disempowering the divisive narratives that have gained traction in some parts of our society.

Navigating New Challenges

Over the past 12–18 months, the rise of far-right rhetoric has made the work of fostering these connections more complex. Where once volunteering workshops were open to both local residents and displaced people, new safeguarding concerns—particularly from accommodation centre managers—mean we must now carefully manage public access to protect residents' safety and well-being.

In this context, we adapted our approach. Many of our 2024 volunteering workshops took place:



- Within accommodation centres, among residents
- Or off-site with trusted, handpicked volunteers from our existing network

These sessions had four core aims:

1. To provide meaningful volunteering experiences that offer all the associated personal and social benefits
2. To introduce displaced people to the Kildare Volunteer Centre and the wider volunteering landscape
3. To showcase positive stories through social and traditional media—demonstrating how displaced people are actively contributing to their communities and countering far-right narratives of fear and division
4. To promote the Community Volunteer Programme as a gateway to more visible, community-based roles for displaced volunteers

This work continues to be vital—not just for displaced people, but for the health and cohesion of our communities as a whole. By making space for new arrivals to contribute, be seen, and be valued, we are helping build a more inclusive, resilient, and compassionate Kildare.

Case Study 1 Dog Toys for Local Animal Shelter

This project aimed to engage displaced individuals in meaningful, inclusive volunteering opportunities, offering a supportive environment where they could contribute positively to the community. Acknowledging the barriers many displaced individuals face in



accessing traditional volunteer roles—such as transport, unfamiliarity with local systems, and social isolation—the initiative focused on creating tailored opportunities that promote community integration and skill development.

In early summer 2024, a series of hands-on workshops were held in accommodation centres. Facilitated by our integration worker, participants crafted dog tug toys for donation to the KWWSPCA animal shelter in Athgarvan. The toys were made from upcycled

materials, including old clothes donated by local residents and tennis balls kindly provided by Rathangan Tennis Club. This thoughtful approach created an immediate, tangible connection between displaced people and the wider community.



The initiative resonated strongly with the public and was featured in the local press, including Kildare Now, which highlighted that *"the volunteers, many of whom are displaced people from various countries, are eager to contribute to their communities."* This coverage was especially encouraging as it perfectly captured the message at the heart of our work: displaced people are active, willing contributors with much to offer their new communities

Case Study 2 Twiddle Muffs for People with Dementia

Twiddle Muffs are colourful, sensory therapy tools designed to provide comfort, stimulation, and a sense of calm for individuals living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. Each one is uniquely crafted to support the evolving needs of its users—offering both physical warmth and emotional reassurance.

In 2024, Kildare Volunteer Centre's Integration Worker partnered with the Dementia Café



in Kildare Town and Alone to create an inclusive volunteering initiative where displaced individuals could contribute to their new community by making and donating Twiddle Muffs.

The workshops began at the Newhall Accommodation Centre near Naas, where displaced Ukrainians are temporarily housed for up to 90 days. Despite the short-term nature of their stay, participants enthusiastically took part in the project, eager to give back in a meaningful way. Recognising the time and care required to create each Twiddle Muff, a series of workshops were held from

September to December, with materials also made available so volunteers could continue crafting independently.

The spirit of community extended well beyond the accommodation centre. Among the contributors were Valentina, a 95-year-old woman, and her daughter Tamara, in her seventies, from Naas. Working together from home, they lovingly created beautiful Twiddle



Muffs that were donated alongside those from Newhall residents. The finished items were distributed to Alone, the local Dementia Café, and day care centres across Kildare.

"Thank you for the opportunity to be helpful and make a difference" Newhall Resident

6. 2024 Kildare Volunteer Centre Awards

On Thursday, May 30th, a special ceremony took place at Renehan Hall on the Maynooth University campus, celebrating the exceptional contributions of volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations throughout Kildare. This year we moved the ceremony to mark the culmination of National Volunteering Week, which carried the theme 'Uniquely Us'.

Over 150 nominations were received for the awards, showcasing the remarkable dedication and passion of Kildare's volunteers. Cathaoirleach Daragh Fitzpatrick of Kildare County Council presented the winners with commemorative trophies during the ceremony.



This year's award recipients were:

Volunteers of the Year:

- Pa Carey (Leixlip): Pa brings joy to his estate and community with his magical Christmas lights extravaganza, raising funds for charity by hand-making decorations year-round and even welcoming Santa to visit.
- Jacinta Kenna (Monasterevin): Jacinta is deeply involved in her community, from organising local events such as Streetfest to running the Peoples Market, a non-profit group offering seasonal craft markets and a community café serving handmade treats.



Lifetime Achievement Award:

- Angela Lane (Kildare): A retired nurse, Angela has been a lifelong volunteer, contributing her time to Kildare Alzheimer's, women's groups, and food markets, while also sharing her knitting and crochet skills with international refugees and asylum seekers in Newbridge.

Volunteer Involving Organisations of the Year:

- North Kildare Carers Support Group: This organisation provides much-needed support, care, and companionship for carers and their families. By offering professional talks and organising relaxing and fun events, they are a second family for many carers.
- Leixlip Youth and Community Centre: A safe, welcoming space for individuals of all ages, this centre provides opportunities for socialising and community engagement. The centre is run by friendly and dedicated staff and volunteers.

Board Member of the Year:

- Kate Monks (Kilcullen Scout Group): Kate has been a key figure in her local scout group for nearly 10 years, offering exceptional support to younger sections and fellow leaders, while also serving as group treasurer.

Community Event of the Year:

- Kildare Wildlife Rescue: The First Kildare Biodiversity Conference in October 2023, hosted by KWR volunteers and attended by over 100 guests, brought together volunteers from Kildare-based community groups to promote biodiversity in the county.

Community Volunteer of the Year:

- Angela Tracey (Community Volunteer): Angela, one of the original members of the Community Volunteers, has shown unwavering commitment, volunteering at COVID vaccination and test centres and playing a key role in making the programme more accessible and inclusive.



The Kildare Volunteer Centre Annual Volunteer Awards highlighted the incredible dedication and spirit of individuals and organisations that make a significant impact on



the community. From supporting vulnerable groups to enhancing local environments, this year's winners exemplified the core values of selflessness, collaboration, and community engagement. These awards are a testament to the power of volunteering in fostering stronger, more inclusive communities throughout Kildare. We look forward to continuing our work in empowering volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations to drive positive change across the county in the coming year.

7. Embedding Quality

In 2024, Kildare Volunteer Centre was proud to be awarded the National Quality Standard for Volunteer Centres, marking a significant achievement in its ongoing commitment to excellence. This recognition followed a two-year process of developing and embedding robust policies and practices across all aspects of the organisation's work, guided by the Volunteer Centre Quality Standards Framework.



The framework, which aligns with the Charity Regulator Governance Code and the 2021–2025 National Volunteering Strategy, consists of twelve key standards covering governance, operations, and service delivery. Achieving this standard reflects KVC's dedication to continuous improvement, accountability, and the provision of a high-quality, community-focused volunteer service.



This milestone, reached as the Centre approaches its 20th anniversary, provides a strong foundation for the future, reinforcing KVC's role as a trusted, professional resource for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations across County Kildare.

8. Operations

8.1 Staff Development

In 2024, Kildare Volunteer Centre maintained a strong focus on staff development to enhance service delivery and organisational capacity. The Manager completed a Level 7 Certificate in Further Education, aimed at enabling the delivery of high-quality training to Volunteer Involving Organisations in Kildare, undertook bystander Intervention Training to support safer, more inclusive environments and completed GDPR training to ensure best practice in data protection and privacy compliance.

All staff participated in in-person Salesforce training to strengthen our work in IVOL. The Community Volunteer Coordinator completed training in managing volunteers in urgent response situations, ensuring preparedness for crisis or event-based volunteering. Meanwhile, the Participation Officer and Integration Officer took part in LGBT+ sensitivity, awareness, and terminology training to further promote inclusivity in all engagement. The Integration Officer also completed training in creating Meta Reels, supporting the Centre's digital outreach and storytelling efforts



8.2 Board Members

2024 saw the resignation of two board members but the recruitment of two new board members through Boardmatch Irelands future leaders programme. Kildare Volunteer Centre also attended Boardmatch Irelands annual speed dating event for new board members.

8.3 Website Move

During 2024, Kildare Volunteer Centre undertook the unexpected but necessary and complex task of sourcing a new website host. This transition was prompted by the requirement to integrate DKIM and DMARC protocols with the I-VOL system, ensuring enhanced email security and system compatibility. A new hosting provider was successfully secured, and the migration was completed seamlessly with no disruption to services.

8.4 Garda Vetting

In 2024, Kildare Volunteer Centre processed over 400 Garda Vetting applications on behalf of 66 registered not-for-profit organisations across County Kildare. 4 Online training sessions were also held for 15 newly registered organisations in 2024.

To meet growing demand and ensure continued efficiency and data security, we invested in new software to streamline the vetting process. This investment enabled us to maintain high service standards without increasing costs for the community organisations who rely on this essential support.

8.5 Funding

Core funding was received through the Department of Rural and Community Development. Funding towards the running of the Volunteer Centre is also received from Kildare County Council. There was additional funding received from the DRCD allocated to support specific projects relating to the integration of displaced people. Additional Income is generated by the centre through Garda Vetting.

8.6 Collaboration

Kildare Volunteer Centre is represented on the following local, regional, and national working groups:



Volunteer Centres Manager Network
Full Community Volunteers Steering Group
Volunteer Centres National Forum Working Group
Participation Officer Network
IPAS Support Worker Network
South Leinster Regional Volunteer Centre network
Kildare Community Response Forum
Kildare Integration Strategy
Kildare Social Inclusion Week

8.7 Financials

The financial year ended 31 December 2024 was marked by continued stability and growth for Kildare Volunteer Centre. The organisation maintained sound financial health, with a surplus recorded for the year.

Financial Performance

For the year 2024, the organisation reported a surplus of €24,019, reflecting responsible financial management. The surplus is as a result of the Board's recognition that as the organisation continues to grow, the level of financial reserves required must also increase to ensure long-term sustainability. It was also acknowledged that the initial costs associated with the development of the upcoming strategic plan will need to be covered from the organisation's own funds, with reimbursement from grant funding expected upon the plan's completion.

Total income for the year amounted to €209,786, sourced primarily from core funding and Garda vetting fees. Expenditure was carefully managed, amounting to €185,767, ensuring the organisation remained well-funded while fulfilling its commitments.

Balance Sheet Position The organisation's financial position strengthened, with total assets increasing to €128,195 from €95,431 in 2023. Liabilities stood at €35,860, compared to €27,115 the previous year, demonstrating controlled financial obligations.



Cash Flow & Reserves The organisation maintained a healthy cash flow, ending the year with cash and bank balances of €116,100, up from €84,095 in 2023. The net assets increased to €92,335, reinforcing the Centre's financial resilience for future operations.

Future Outlook . The organisation remains committed to prudent financial management and sustainability. With a steady cash flow, controlled liabilities, and strategic funding management, the Centre is well-positioned to continue its mission of supporting volunteering initiatives in Kildare.

9 Reflecting on 2024 and Looking Ahead

2024 marked another year of continued growth for Kildare Volunteer Centre. At the heart of our work is a firm belief: community work cannot happen in isolation. That's why, throughout the year, we strengthened our partnerships with organisations like KARE to deliver collaborative programmes that benefit all communities across Kildare.

We believe volunteering – and all the benefits it brings – should be accessible to everyone. In 2024, we remained committed to breaking down barriers and creating inclusive opportunities, and we will continue to work hand in hand with our partners to make this vision a reality.

Next year, we proudly celebrate 20 years of Kildare Volunteer Centre. As we mark this milestone, we will also launch our new five-year strategy, shaping the future of volunteering in our county.

With initiatives like the Community Volunteers programme and a renewed focus on engaging marginalised groups now imbedded in our work, we are excited about what lies ahead. Together with our communities and partners, we look forward to building a more connected, inclusive, and empowered Kildare.