



**Waterford
Volunteer Centre**

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Port Lairge

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted to the Department of Rural &
Community Development
June 2023



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

Waterford Volunteer Centre CLG
4C Manor House, Manor Village,
Cork Road, Waterford,
X91 HH9P

Registered Charity Number
(RCN): 20205996
Charity Number (CHY): 22885
Companies Registration Number
(CRO): 676571

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Company Details

Name of Charity:

Waterford Volunteer Centre CLG

CHY Number:

22885

Registered Charity Number:

20205996

Company Registration Number:

676571

Registered Office:

4C Manor House
Manor Village
Cork Road
Waterford
X91 HH9P

Website:

www.volunteerwaterford.ie

Directors 2022

Catherine Power

Deirdre Power

Pat Power

May Doyle

Sharon Doyle (resigned February 2022)

John Hawkes

Karen McGrath

John Power

Pat Wallace (resigned April 2022)

Auditors

Park Chambers Chartered

Accountants & Registered Auditors,

96 Lower Yellow Road,

Waterford, X91HH27.

Bank

AIB The Quay, Waterford

Structure, Governance & Management

Waterford Volunteer Centre (WVC) is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Our governing document is our Constitution. The company was incorporated on August 27th, 2020. Prior to this there was a part-time Volunteer Information Service hosted by Waterford Area Partnership.

WVC is an affiliate of Volunteer Ireland, the national support structure for volunteering. It is part of the national network of 29 volunteer centres, at least one in each county.

We have a voluntary board of directors made up of 7 members who guide Waterford Volunteer Centre in our objectives. The board of directors place an emphasis on ensuring that we are open, transparent and follow the highest standards of governance. Our aim for 2023 is to increase our compliance with the Charities Governance Code.

The Board of Waterford Volunteer Centre met 9 times, including the AGM, in 2022. In addition to the board, there are also a number of committees to support and report back to the board:

- Finance Committee
- HR Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Governance Committee

Main objective of Waterford Volunteer Centre

To strengthen and support volunteering in Waterford City & County.

Funders

Department of Rural & Community Development

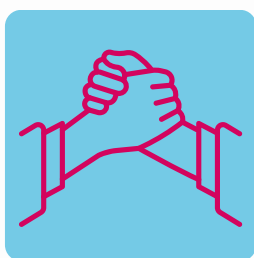
Our Mission & Vision

To actively promote and provide opportunities which engage people in volunteering, and to support voluntary organisations with a quality-based service that is person-centered, for the benefit of Waterford City and County Communities.



Volunteering opportunities in Waterford are fulfilling, engaging and contribute to the development of our community with volunteers respected for their individual contributions and voluntary organisations providing robust, appropriate opportunities.

Our Core Objectives



Objective 1

Increase access to volunteering by offering a support service to the public and to Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO's).



Objective 2

Increase the quality of volunteering



Objective 3

Increase awareness of volunteering by marketing and promoting volunteering.



Objective 4

Ensure the organisation is sustainable through good governance and management.

Our Team

Sharon Higgins - Centre Manager



Sharon has been Centre Manager since the establishment of Waterford Volunteer Centre in January 2021. She is responsible for the day to day operations of Waterford Volunteer Centre and the management of its resources and staff. Sharon works closely with the Board trustees and sub-committees of Waterford Volunteer Centre to ensure the delivery of the annual work plan. She provides support in relation to the implementation of the Charities Regulator Governance Code. Sharon acts as Garda Vetting Liaison Officer and delivers a range of training and information sessions to students, corporates, and relevant volunteer-involving organisations. She represents the Centre on relevant local and national networks and is part of the Community Response Forum. She engages with local media on behalf of Waterford Volunteer Centre. Sharon has responsibility for the health and safety of all staff and volunteers of WVC

Paul Deegan - Placement & Development Officer

Paul has been WVC Placement & Development Officer since January 18th, 2021. His role involves volunteer referral and organisational development support. Paul meets with volunteers and organisation representatives to discuss all aspects of volunteer recruitment and development. He acts as the broker between the individual wanting to volunteer and the organisation that engages the volunteers. This approach aims to ensure that volunteers are engaged in roles that are rewarding and enjoyable. He hosts our outreach sessions which aim to increase awareness of volunteering across the county. Paul also acts as a Garda Vetting Liaison Officer for Waterford Volunteer Centre. As well as supporting volunteers and organisations, Paul also maintains our website .



Caitríona Ní Mhaidín - Support Coordinator

Caitríona joined Waterford Volunteer Centre on March 21st, 2022. She provides administrative support to the Manager & Placement Officer as required. She is also responsible for creating social media content and maintaining the social media scheduling. Despite working just ten hours per week, having Caitríona on board has made a huge difference to our operations. She also helps organise our networking events and coordinate the Welcome Ambassadors Programme.



Alina Kundukova - Ukrainian Volunteer Outreach Worker

Alina joined the WVC team on September 26th, 2022 thanks to additional funding made available from DRCD to support the Ukraine Crisis. She was employed on a full-time, fixed term contract of 12 weeks. Her tasks include meeting Ukrainians to explain and promote volunteering and how it can be beneficial for integration into their new communities. She translates information booklets and other resources into Ukrainian and creates social media posts in Ukrainian. Her role was due to finish on December 16th and it was decided to keep her on for an additional six weeks until we knew if further funding would be made available to further extend the contract.



Our Numbers

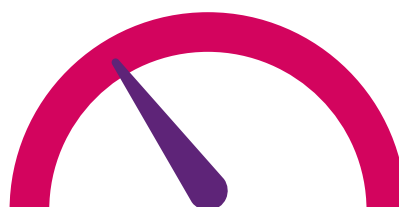
As in 2021, we were delighted to achieve and surpass the targets for most of our actions. Organisation registrations were much lower than anticipated and for 2023 we will look at how we can engage more organisations.

Volunteer Registrations



Target 250 – Actual 419

VIO Registrations



Target 125 – Actual 32

New Opportunities



Target 60 – Actual 124

Registered Volunteers



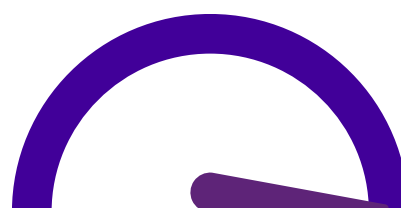
Target 100 – Actual 297

Repeat Callers



Target 100 – Actual 174

Volunteer Hours



Target 5000 – Actual 6917

Our Thanks



First and foremost, we would like to thank DRCD for their continued commitment to funding Waterford Volunteer Centre. Funding received allows us to strengthen, support and promote volunteering across the county. Their additional funding in 2022 to support the Ukraine Crisis allowed us to reach those that were new in our communities and to give them an opportunity to become involved in local groups and activities.

Volunteer Ireland and the network of Volunteer Centres are a huge support in reinforcing the work we do. Ideas and resources are shared which increases our capacity to reach more people and organisations.

We have also been supported by local organisations and the media and this has helped to promote the service being offered by Waterford Volunteer Centre.

Waterford City & County Council

Waterford PPN

Waterford Area Partnership

Waterford Sports Partnership

WLR FM

Beat 102 103 FM

Waterford News & Star

Waterford Today

Dungarvan Observer

Dungarvan Leader

Finally, we would also like to extend a very special thank you to the members of the public who volunteered in their community in 2022 and to the many non-profit organisations who worked throughout this year and every year to make Waterford the best place to live.

Chairpersons Message

2022 was another positive year for Waterford Volunteer Centre. Our official opening by Minister of State for Department of Rural & Community Development Joe O'Brien TD, our engagement and support to volunteers and organisations, our collaborative work with our partners and other events has strengthened our role within Waterford as an invaluable resource for all aspects of volunteering.

Our team of Board members, staff and volunteers bring a passion and energy to ensure volunteers and volunteer led organisations in Waterford receive the supports they need for the amazing work they do within their communities. We are all in debt to those who give unconditionally of their time in providing services, activities, support programmes etc. to those of us who need 'a helping hand' in our lives.

Waterford Volunteer Centre was part of the local community response to the Ukrainian crisis as it emerged during 2022. In welcoming newly arrived Ukrainians to Waterford communities we were delighted to receive additional funding to support social and community integration through volunteering opportunities.

On behalf of all of us in Waterford Volunteer Centre I thank you for reading our Annual Report 2022 which reflects all the work we achieved. We look forward to continuing and strengthening our supports to all in Waterford.

Catherine Power 9th May 2023



Catherine Power - Chairperson

“ Our collaborative work with our partners and other events has strengthened our role within Waterford as an invaluable resource for all aspects of volunteering. ”

Our Progress: Objectives, Achievements & Performance

- **Increase access to volunteering by offering a support service to the public and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO's)**

2022 saw a continuance in building awareness of WVC and the supports it offers. The year began in Covid lockdown so outreach was put on hold, again, until restrictions allowed. We held our first Volunteer Leaders Coffee & Chat event, virtually, on January 26th. By March restrictions had eased and we opened our doors to weekly drop-ins. Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11am and 3pm volunteers and organisations can call to the Centre and learn more about volunteering and how we can support them.

Supporting Volunteers

419 New Volunteers

297 Referrals

174 Repeat Callers

6917 Volunteer Hours
Delivered

Supporting VIO's

173 Registered organisations

40 New organisations

124 New opportunities

We were delighted to surpass our targets for volunteer registrations, new opportunities listed and the number of volunteers that applied for registrations. However, we fell short of the mark when it came to new organisations registering and we realise this is an area that will need some attention in 2023.

Garda Vetting

One of the supports we offer is a Garda vetting service for organisations that don't have their own authorised signatory. Training is provided for new affiliates to ensure they are aware of and follow proper guidelines for vetting individuals. In 2022 we processed an additional 50 invitations in comparison with 2021.

3

Trainings delivered

3

New affiliates

71

Vetting invitations

"Sharon from the WVC is incredible. She is so professional, knowledgeable and always so approachable. She is out on her own! She knows everything!"

Elaine, Kidspace Learning

• Increase the quality of volunteering

We endeavour to increase the quality of volunteering in a number of ways, including monitoring volunteer opportunities to ensure they are relevant and engaging and will inform prospective volunteers what the role entails. We also meet or chat to volunteers to understand what their expectations are and how we can help to make the experience rewarding.

We provide training for Volunteer Involving Organisations on many aspects of volunteering. In 2022 we were able to offer a number of free training opportunities under the Recovery & Resilience programme, thanks to Carmichael and The Community Foundation of Ireland. This provided groups with a variety of sessions to choose from to help them get back up and running after the pandemic restrictions.



Organisations were also invited to take part in the Fundamentals of Volunteer Engagement (FVE) training sessions which are delivered by Volunteer Ireland and the Volunteer Centres Network, of which WVC Manager, Sharon, is a member. The FVE is a two part training that looks at all aspects of volunteer engagement from planning to recruitment and retention. Six registered VIO's took part in the FVE training.

Lunchtime training sessions on Volunteer Policies were attended by 4 Waterford VIO's. These trainings help organisations to deliver informed and sustainable volunteer programmes.

Our Volunteer Leaders Coffee & Chat networking events were also popular in 2022. These started off virtual and by National Volunteering Week in May we were holding them in the Centre. These events are a great opportunity for volunteer coordinators to meet with peers and discuss all things volunteering in an informal way.



6

Volunteer Leaders Events in 2022

- **Increase awareness of volunteering by marketing and promoting volunteering**

Increasing awareness of WVC and volunteering was an important aspect of our work plan for 2022. We continued to build on the progress made in 2021. The introduction of a Support Coordinator to our team in March really helped with this. Caitríona took on the bulk of the social media advertising, keeping new opportunities advertised and notifying volunteers and organisations of upcoming events. The number of posts for 2022 far exceeded the numbers in 2021 and our followers also grew.



1948 followers



325



1134 followers



150



529 followers



59

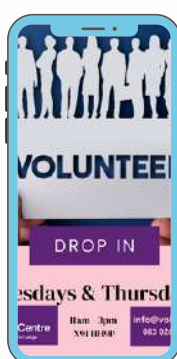
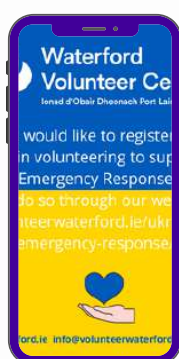


154 connections



44

Social media will continue to be an integral part of our plan for 2023, and we will continue to develop our followers. Social media is a cost effective method of reaching a large relevant audience. It is especially important as a means of communicating with younger people as technology plays a large role in their lives. We will be exploring engaging volunteers to help us with our social media campaigns.



National Volunteering Week

National Volunteering Week is a week-long celebration of volunteering across the country and is an opportunity to promote and recognise volunteers and organisations in Waterford. We encouraged organisations to thank their volunteers and we held one of our Volunteer Leader networking events. Centre Manager, Sharon, spoke about the benefits of volunteering on WLRfm's Déise AM. The highlight of the week was our event for volunteers held at Kilmurrin Cove. Volunteers registered to take part in our beach art, highlighting the theme of #CelebratingVolunteers. The event was a huge success with volunteers making new friends and sharing their stories. Waterford Volunteer Centre also celebrated one year since the official opening.



Volunteers enjoying sand art on Kilmurrin Cove.



Waterford Volunteer Centre celebrates its first birthday.



Centre Manager, Sharon, promoting volunteering on local radio.

Volunteer Recognition Event

To celebrate and recognise the large number of individuals who volunteered throughout the Covid pandemic, the Department of Rural & Community Development made funding available for an event to be held in each county. A flagship celebration would be held in Dublin Castle on May 19th with the idea being that other counties would hold similar events and stream the main event to its participants.

Waterford Volunteer Centre in collaboration with Waterford PPN and Waterford City & County Council held the event in The Greenway Manor Hotel, just outside the city. Over 150 volunteers from over 40 organisations and community groups across Waterford were in attendance, along with many local representatives and Mayor of Waterford City & County, Joe Kelly.

The event in Dublin Castle was live streamed to attendees across the country. Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development with special responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien, spoke of the huge contribution volunteers made throughout the pandemic "Volunteers fulfil an extraordinary role. They show us that when times are hardest, the best of us show up, ready to help".



Mayor Joe Kelly addressing attendees



All volunteers received a commemorative badge which was designed by Norah Doe, Sligo.

"Volunteers are the lifeblood of our communities and your energy and dedication to helping those most in need is truly appreciated. Thank you for all that you do"



A snapshot of some of the volunteers, organisations, and guests that attended the recognition event.



Event organisers; Catherine Power, Chairperson Waterford VC, Alison dePaor, Waterford PPN, Sinead Breathnach, Waterford City & County Council, Mayor of Waterford, Joe Kelly, Muriel Tobin, Waterford PPN, Sharon Higgins, Manager, Waterford VC.

Waterford Volunteer Centre Official Opening

May 9th, 2022

Monday, May 9th 2022, marked a milestone event for Waterford Volunteer Centre as Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development with special responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien, officially launched the centre in Waterford.

Minister O'Brien was instrumental in establishing the volunteer centre in Waterford and in the publication of The National Volunteering Strategy.

The Board and staff of the volunteer centre were joined on the day by the Mayor of Waterford City & County, Joe Kelly, who spoke about the importance of volunteers to our communities and how the centre would be instrumental in providing support to volunteerism.

Elected TD's and local Councillors were also there in support of the service as were volunteers and organisations who are the essence of the volunteer centre. Despite a packed itinerary Minister O'Brien took time to chat with attendees present and was impressed by the voluntary efforts of the people of Waterford.



Catherine Power, WVC Chairperson, Minister Joe O'Brien, Sharon Higgins, WVC Manager, , Caitríona Ní Mhaoldáin, WVC Support Coordinator, Paul Deegan, WVC Placement & Development Officer.



Derek Fanning, Tipperary Volunteer Centre, Deirdre Power, WVC Secretary, Catherine Power, WVC Chairperson, Minister Joe O'Brien, Karen McGrath, John Hawkes, May Doyle, WVC Directors, Pat Power, WVC Treasurer, Nina Arwitz, CEO, Volunteer Ireland.

Speaking at the official opening Catherine Power, Chairperson of Waterford Volunteer Centre, praised the Board for all their hard work, especially in setting up the organisation during the Covid-19 pandemic which was challenging as most meetings needed to be held online. She also thanked the Department of Rural and Community Development and Volunteer Ireland for their continued support in the development of Waterford Volunteer Centre.



Board members, colleagues from Tipperary Volunteer Centre, volunteers and guests joined in the official opening celebrations.

Community & Voluntary Awards 2022

Once again, Waterford Volunteer Centre collaborated with Waterford PPN to promote and host the 2022 Community & Voluntary Awards. We were fortunate to receive a bursary from DRCD allowing us to increase the number of awards we could sponsor. We decided to focus on Volunteer of the Year and we had a Junior, Age-Friendly and Board/Committee category. We were blown away by the response, with 32 nominations across the three categories. This was a large increase on the 14 nominations we had in 2021. These were anonymised then adjudicated by Kilkenny, Offaly and Laois Volunteer Centres.

A gala event was held in The Park Hotel, Dungarvan to which all nominees were invited and where the winners of all categories were announced.



Our Winners



Board Committee Volunteer of the Year: Michael Cox, Park Rangers AFC

The judges described this nominee as 'a volunteer who led from the front, who got stuck into all aspects of the organisation and inspired the whole community with their vision and leadership ability. This volunteer was obviously a pioneer, they had new and innovative ideas and brought the organisation to a new dimension with their focus on inclusivity, wellbeing, participation for all and sustainability.'



Junior Volunteer of the Year: Molly Flynn, Irish Red Cross, Waterford City Branch

There was no doubt that our judges were impressed by the winner of our Junior Volunteer of the Year: 'This volunteers leadership, compassion and kindness are really evident from the nomination, and they are a wonderful role model for other young volunteers.'



Age Friendly Volunteer of the Year: Pat Power, Ballymacarbry Tidy Towns

Our judges said 'This nomination was incredibly powerful, heartfelt and genuine and it really painted a wonderful picture of this person – a humble but charismatic and well-respected community leader who inspires and brings people together for the common good. In the words of the nominator "this volunteer gives their all to the village they were born and raised in" and that is plain as day to see. Amazing contribution to both the environment and sport with the resulting boost to community spirit and friendship/camaraderie.'

Welcome Ambassadors Programme

This year saw the beginning of the handover of the coordination of the Welcome Ambassador Programme in Waterford City from Waterford Area Partnership to Waterford Volunteer Centre. The programme was initiated by Waterford Area Partnership in 2011 to support The Tall Ships Races. The Welcome Ambassadors provide a warm welcome and local knowledge to visitors to Tramore and Waterford City over the summer months.



'We are delighted to work with Waterford Volunteer Centre and Waterford City & County Council to ensure the programme continues into the future and goes from strength to strength. To have Waterford Volunteer Centre in place is so positive for volunteering across our city and county and we are really pleased to be involved for this year. I wish all the ambassadors all the best for the summer programme in the years to come'

Catherine Power,
Waterford Area Partnership

This year, the Welcome Ambassadors completed several shifts in Dunmore East Harbour, welcoming visitors who travelled to the county on the many cruise ships. This was especially important for those travellers who had not pre booked tours. They were given information on how to travel to the City and what the local tourist hot-spots were. We are already looking forward to expanding the programme in 2023.



"Our thanks must go to all the volunteers who give their time to provide the service. Their pride in promoting Waterford should be an inspiration to us all."

Mayor of Waterford City & County,
Joe Kelly

18

Volunteers

96

Shifts

642

Hours

• Ensure the organisation is sustainable through good governance & management

Any organisation's sustainability, especially Charities, depends on good governance and management. The Board of Waterford Volunteer Centre are actively involved in ensuring all Companies Registration Office and Charities Regulator guidelines are followed. The organisation began working on achieving compliance with The Charities Regulator Governance Code in 2022 and it is hoped that we will achieve this standard in 2023.

Regrettably, WVC saw two of its trustees resign in 2022. Thanks to Sharon Doyle and Pat Wallace, who were both instrumental in the initial set up of the organisation. We wish them well in their future endeavours.

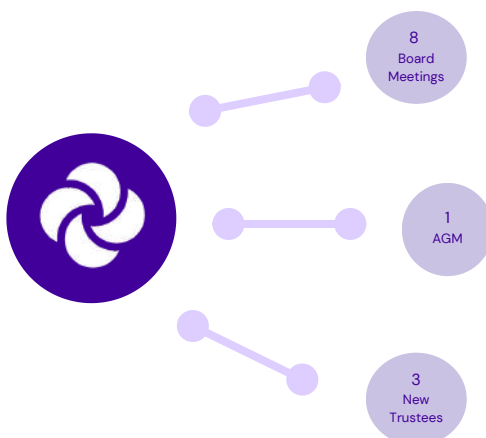
Recruitment began in the last quarter of 2022 for new trustees and when the board held their final meeting of the year, there were three new trustees chosen to join the team. We look forward to the fresh insights, as well as the knowledge and experience they will bring to the Board in 2023.

Meeting Dates 2022	23/02	09/03	27/04	24/05	21/06	30/08	27/09	25/10	05/12	%
Catherine Power	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	89%
Deirdre Power	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Pat Power	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	89%
May Doyle	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	56%
John Hawkes	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	67%
Karen McGrath	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	56%
John Power	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	67%
Pat Wallace	Y	N	Y*	-	-	-	-	-	-	67%

Board Meeting Attendance Record 2022

Attendance at Board meetings throughout the year was excellent and is evidence of the trustees commitment to Waterford Volunteer Centre.

*Resigned



Board Members: John Power, Deirdre Power, Pat Wallace, May Doyle, John Hawkes, Sharon Doyle, Pat Power, Catherine Power, with staff members Sharon Higgins and Paul Deegan.

Challenges 2022

While many of the challenges we faced in 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic became distant memories in 2022, little did we know what was just around the corner. Towards the end of February, the news was full of updates from Ukraine, where Russian forces had advanced and declared war. By mid-March the Irish Government were coordinating a humanitarian response as displaced Ukrainians began arriving in the country. Community Response Forums were relaunched to allow organisations to work together locally. The first displaced Ukrainians arrived in Waterford in early April, and WVC assisted in coordinating volunteers for the rest centres and donation centres. Volunteer translators were also recruited.



"I liked to pack the boxes with Christmas songs on the background. I felt myself relaxed and concentrated" – Inna Chumachenko

"I came nearly every evening to the packing point and it was real joy to be connected to the kind deeds for kids who really need it." – Hanna Voitenko

It soon became apparent that there wasn't a need for volunteers within the rest centres as new arrivals wished to maintain some control over their lives. As with the Community Call during the Covid pandemic there was some disappointment and frustration felt by those that had come forward to give their time. WVC did reach out to all these volunteers to thank them for their support and to highlight alternative volunteering opportunities in Waterford.



WVC continued to support the Ukraine Response by recruiting volunteers for partner organisations, processing Garda vetting invitations and helping Ukrainians set up activities. In August of 2022 DRCD made funding available specifically for the Ukraine Crisis. From this funding we recruited a Ukrainian Volunteer Outreach Worker on a 12 week contract. Alina did incredible work, promoting volunteering and highlighting the way it helps people to integrate into new communities.



Full Report on Ukraine Resoponse

Double click on the report to navigate the pages.



Future Plans

Our plans for 2023 will be to continue to promote WVC and to increase awareness of the benefits of volunteering. We will also endeavour to reach those in rural and isolated areas whose access to volunteering activities might be limited. Adapting to the changing landscape of volunteering will also be a priority as we explore how best to support the needs of volunteers and organisations.

Implementing the actions of the National Volunteering Strategy will play a key role in determining our activities, one of these will be to further explore the Community Volunteers Programme in Waterford. With rising costs we will need to budget carefully to ensure we provide a comprehensive range of services across the county. Outreach will continue but with greater focus on how it can be more impactful. We will also consider new ways of engaging organisations, as this was an area we had little success with for 2022. Measuring the impact of volunteering will also be a key element of our 2023 plans.

Our work with Ukrainian and migrant communities will hopefully continue to grow and we will look at initiatives to showcase the positive effects of volunteering for those who are new to our communities.



Develop our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan



Increase the reach of WVC in rural locations



Advance the Waterford Community Volunteers Programme



Continue to promote volunteering as a means of integration for migrants.