



**County Louth  
Volunteer Centre  
Annual Report 2017**

## 1. Introduction

This report outlines the work and highlights the achievements of Louth Volunteer Centre (LVC) in 2017. We offer support and guidance to individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to reach their individual and collective goals while making a significant contribution to their local community and society.



### 1.1 Our Vision

Our vision is to make volunteering part of the way of life in Louth.

### 1.2 Our Mission

To help individuals find meaningful opportunities to volunteer and to support not-for-profit organisations to involve volunteers in their work.

### 1.3 Our Values

Our key values are:

- **Equality.** We believe all people should be valued and respected equally. We are also committed to removing barriers that exclude vulnerable groups from participating fully in society.
- **Sense of Community.** Volunteering is ultimately about people helping others and feeling connected with their community
- **Professionalism.** We work in an environment where honesty and integrity is paramount and where people are encouraged to bring their ideas to life while remaining accountable to ourselves and others.

# Our Services

## Volunteers

The opportunity to meet with a member of staff to discuss volunteering opportunities.

Access to a database of volunteering opportunities so that the volunteer can choose the opportunity that best suits them.

Information on the how, why and where of volunteering

The volunteers rights and obligations and best practice in volunteering.

On-going support for the volunteer through regular contact.

## VIOs

We offer a free volunteer placement and referral service.

Guidance and support in developing volunteer roles.

Post Volunteer Opportunities

Guidance and support on policy issues.

Guidance and support developing new projects involving volunteers.

Training, guidance and support around best practice issues when involving volunteers

Garda Vetting Service to organisations who do not have access to their own Liaison Person.

## 2. Our Activities

### 2.1 With Volunteers



We supported

**1,291**

Volunteers

From

**52**

Countries

Who contributed

**44,216**

Hours

## Jobseekers



- 26 Outreach Workshops to 365 Jobseekers
- Delivered presentations in Jobs Clubs, Seetec, and Job Focus
- Hosted stand at DSP Jobs Week events
- 165 jobseekers registered with LVC in 2017 - 40% Placed in volunteering

## People with Disabilities



- Referrals from Employability Louth, National Learning Network, Community Mental Health Team
- Volunteering Workshop delivered in Malta Services
- 30 Senior Students of St. Ita's Special School Drogheda participated in volunteering project

## New Communities



- 3 Outreach sessions to residents of Mosney Accommodation Centre & East Coast Catering (Asylum Seekers)
- 32% of all new volunteers in 2017 originally from outside Ireland
- 34% placement rate for international volunteers (slightly above national average)

## Young People

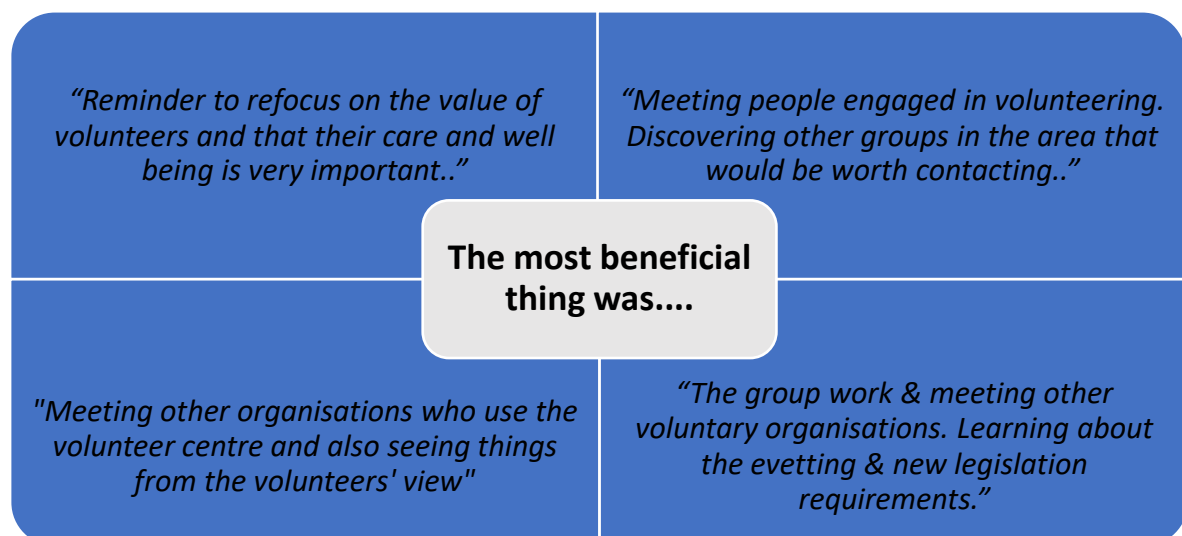
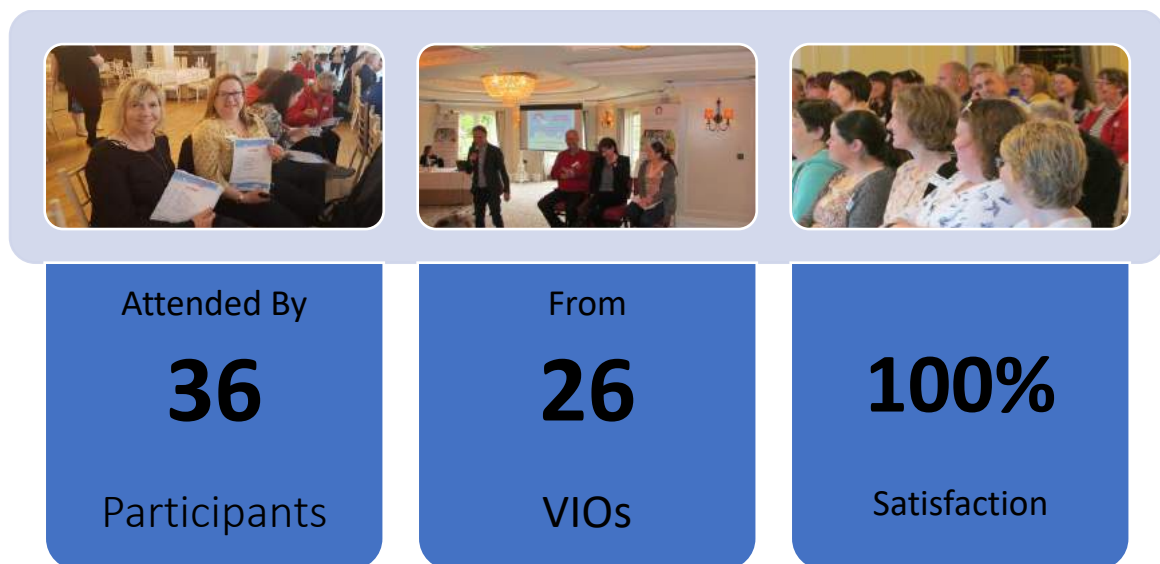


- Volunteering workshops delivered to 350+ TY students across County
- 161 DkIT students registered with LVC at 2 x outreach sessions
- Hosted stand at Louth Youth Council Conference

## 2.2 With VIOs



## Do Good Feel Good Volunteer Leadership Seminar – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017



## Volunteer Leaders' Networks

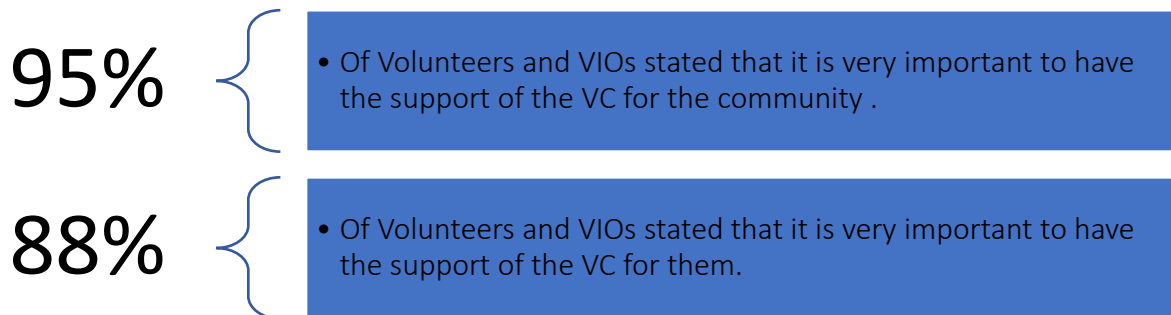
Biannual meetings established June 2017.

# 35 VIOs attended LVC seminar and networking events

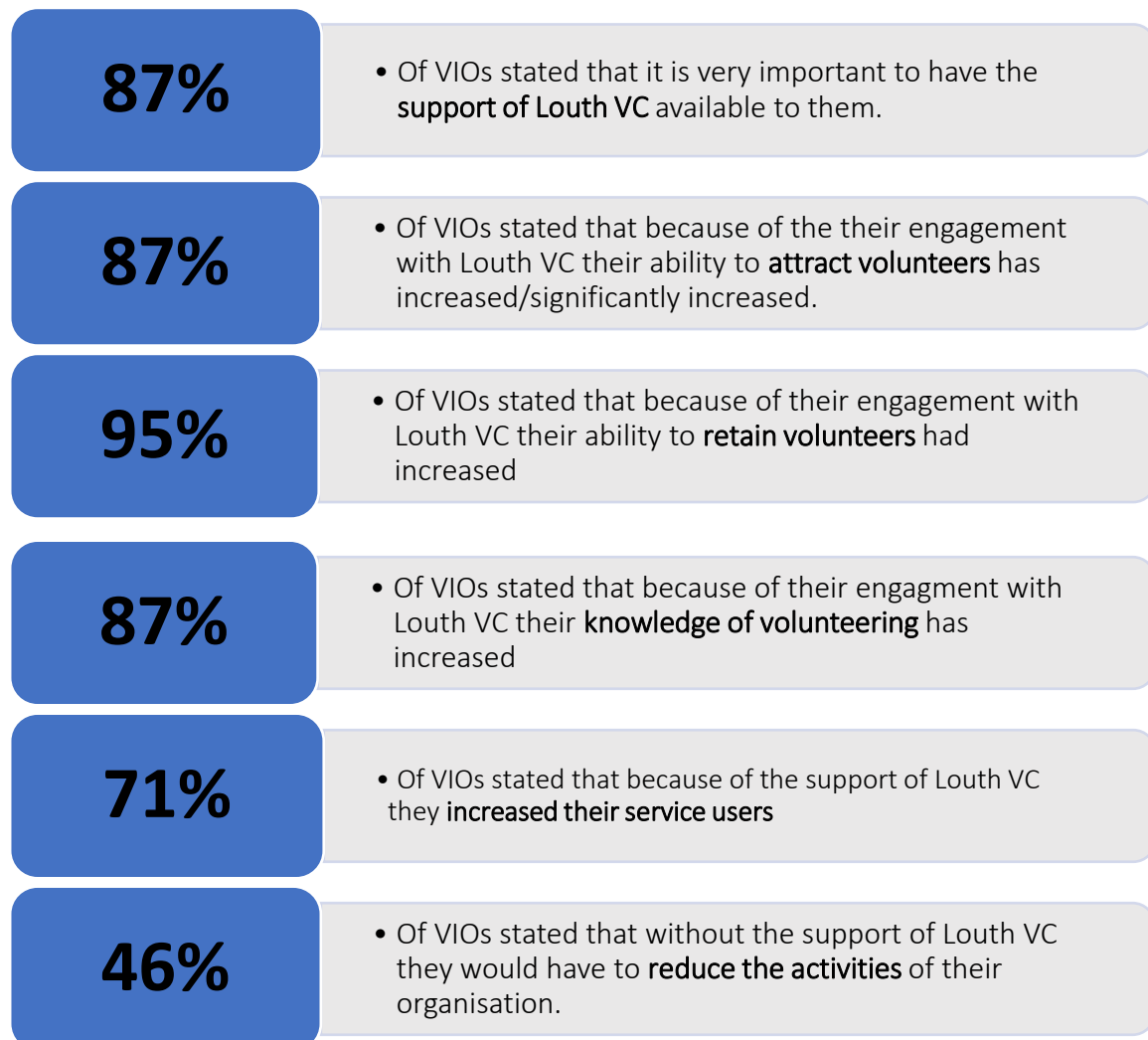
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*<b>Louth Public Participation Network</b> - County Wide</li><li>*<b>North East Cancer Research &amp; Education Trust (NECRET)</b> - County Wide</li><li>*<b>SOSAD</b>, Suicide prevention and Support - County Wide</li><li>*<b>MS Louth Voluntary Branch</b> - County Wide</li><li>*<b>Foróige Louth</b> - Countywide</li><li>*<b>Ardee Active Retirement</b>- Ardee</li><li>*<b>Ardee Day Care Centre</b> - Ardee</li><li>*<b>Ardee Youth Prayer Group</b> - Ardee</li><li>*<b>Ardee Girl Guides</b> - Ardee</li><li>*<b>Ardee Boxing Club</b> - Ardee</li><li>*<b>Irish Wheelchair Association</b> - Ardee</li><li>*<b>Dee Hub</b>, Community resource Centre - Ardee</li><li>*<b>St Joseph's Hospital</b> - Ardee</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*<b>Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Highlanes Gallery</b> , Municipal Art Space - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Culture Connect</b>, Cultural Diversity platform - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Red Door Project</b>, Addiction Rehabilitation - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Drogheda Community Drug &amp; Alcohol Forum</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Drogheda Hospice Homecare Foundation</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Connect Family Resource Centre</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Moneymore Afterschool Club</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Southside Community Youth Project</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>St Vincent de Paul</b> - Drogheda</li><li>*<b>Nurture</b>, pregnancy &amp; childbirth mental health counselling service - National</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* <b>Cara Cancer Support</b> - Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Carlingford Cooley Tourism Association</b>- Carlingford</li><li>*<b>North Louth Community First Responders</b> - Dundalk to Carlingford</li><li>*<b>Family Addiction Support Network</b> - Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Dundalk Business Improvement District</b> - Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Turas Counselling</b>, Addiction rehabilitation, Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Dundalk Social Services Council</b>, Meals on Wheels service - Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Make a Wish Foundation</b> - Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Mega Hearts</b>, Youth group for people with autism - Dundalk</li><li>*<b>Louth Agricultural Show</b> - North Louth</li><li>*<b>ISPCC</b> - North East Region</li></ul>
--	---	--

### 3. Our Impact

According to our volunteers and VIOs our work has a significant impact on them and the community and it is very important that they have the support we offer.



#### 3.1 On VIOs



Source: VIO Survey

### 3.2 On Volunteers.

**73%**

- Reported an increase in their **sense of belonging** to their community as a result of volunteering.

**59%**

- Reported an increase in their **mental health and wellbeing**.

**80%**

- Reported an increase in their **self-esteem** .

**80%**

- Reported that their interest in **doing more volunteering** had increased.

**72%**

- Reported an increase in their **interpersonal skills** e.g. communication, working with others etc.

Source: Volunteer Survey

### 3.3 Volunteer Stories

**84%** of Volunteers reported increased feeling of **making a useful contribution** to their community

“It's as true as I'm sitting here writing this. We can spend a lifetime working for money (of which there is never enough) and then magically, when we hit 65 we can work for no money and lots of job satisfaction instead.

I am volunteering with a number of organisations. All very enjoyable and as much rewarding for me as the recipients of my "efforts".

Indeed I think I am the real winner...”

*Peter*



**74%** Reported an increased **confidence in their own abilities** as a result of volunteering

"I found it very difficult to meet people at first and was staying in the house all the time. Volunteering built my confidence and made me very happy, coming back home after volunteering I was very happy.

It improved my self-confidence. My children were very happy that I was going out and meeting people. It improved my knowledge of life in Ireland.

It also improved my chances of gaining employment as employers could see I was prepared to go out and work. It looks very good on my C.V.

My last volunteering position was with The Soup Kitchen in Drogheda. I met so many people who were homeless. It was so good to talk with them and know I was helping"

*Antonia*

#### 4. Geographic Reach

Louth County Council provided additional funding in 2017 to expand our activities in North County Louth, particularly the Cooley Peninsula.



#### Carlingford/Cooley

- Hosted stand at Carlingford Volunteer Fair January 2017
- Conducted on-street research into volunteering awareness
- Recruited volunteers for 5 x community events in area
- 49% increase in volunteering opportunities on IVOL database



#### County Breakdown

- 48% volunteers from North Louth (Dundalk & Cooley Peninsula)
- 44% from South Louth (Drogheda, Tullyallen, Termonfeckin)
- 8% from Mid Louth (Ardee, Dunleer, Clogherhead, Castlebellingham, Kilsaran, Dromiskin)