



# volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Maigh Eo

MAYO

## ANNUAL REPORT 2012

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## 1.1 Chairperson's report

Mar chathaoirleach don Ionad d'Obair Dheonach i Mhaigh Eo, is iontach an deis cur leis an tuairisc bliantiúil seo, go háirithe i bliana, blian a bhfuil an rath agus dul chun cinn feicthe again san Ionad.

2012 has been a phenomenal year for Mayo Volunteer Centre. We have seen major strides, changes, developments and marked achievements this year. A landmark development for Mayo Volunteer Centre in 2012 is the development of an outreach strategy and the implementation of an extensive outreach programme throughout the County of Mayo. This is a key priority for Mayo Volunteer Centre and the strategy is proving very successful in promoting volunteerism in a rural County the size of Mayo, which is reflected in the significant growth in volunteer registrations and individual placements during the year.

Other marked achievements during year include: Provision of a Garda Vetting service since Shauna, as Manager is now an Authorised Signatory; the establishing of the first Volunteer Managers Network in Mayo; 'Volunteer Corner' in local print media; and in September of this year, Mayo was reviewed under the Volunteer Ireland Peer Review Process and Quality Award.

National Volunteering Week, as always was a busy time for Mayo Volunteer Centre with many projects and initiatives organised including: a decorating and painting day, litter pick-ups, fishing lessons, photography competition. Yet again, Mayo Volunteer Centre reaching out to diverse groups in the community to celebrate and mark the achievements and contributions of volunteers across Mayo.

2012 was a year in which significant staff changes have taken place. We recruited a full time Manager, Shauna Jackson and a new P/T Placement Officer, Brenda Mc Nicholas, who together with Edel Gallagher and Mary Mc Dermott have shown great dedication, commitment and hard work throughout the year. Of course, it was sad to say goodbye to Marie Munnely, who left Mayo Volunteer Centre this year. Marie has played a key role as Manager, in the development of Mayo Volunteer Centre to date and we wish her the very best in her future career.

As Chairperson, I want to acknowledge my fellow Steering Group members who have put so much time and effort into making 2012 such a successful year for Mayo Volunteer Centre. Míle buíochas to our funding partners: Department of Environment, Community and Local Government; Mayo North East Leader Partnership and South West Mayo Development Company, whose support is greatly appreciated during these difficult financial times. Our thanks and appreciation also, to all the volunteers, community groups and organisations registered with the centre. Your energy, enthusiasm and efforts are really appreciated and together with Mayo Volunteer Centre, you play a big part in promoting volunteering throughout the County.

2012 has been a hugely successful year for Mayo Volunteer Centre. Ni neart go cur le chéile and with the dedicated team of staff, management and committed volunteers throughout the County, there lies a bright future for Mayo Volunteer Centre in the years ahead.

Thérèse Ruane  
Chairperson  
Mayo Volunteer Centre

## **2.0 Mayo Volunteer Centre**

### **2.1 What the Volunteer Centre's do**

Mayo Volunteer Centre is part of a network of Volunteer Centres around Ireland. They are a local agency that exists to improve the extent, range and quality of volunteering. They do this by providing guidance and support for anyone wishing to volunteer and to any not-for-profit organisation that involves volunteers in their work. Volunteer Centres are affiliated to Volunteer Ireland, the national volunteer development agency and a representative body for all local Volunteer Centres in Ireland and receive core funding via the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

The volunteer centres work revolves around 4 core principles:

- Core Principle I: A volunteer-centred placement and support service
- Core principle II: Providing support for not-for-profit organisations
- Core Principle III: Marketing and promoting volunteering
- Core Principle IV: Ensuring good practice within volunteer centres

### **2.2 About Mayo Volunteer Centre**

Mayo Volunteer Centre was established in 2007 under Moy Valley Resources IRD and at that time was known as the North Mayo volunteer bureaux. Funding from the Department was secured in 2008 and delivered through Moy Valley Resources IRD Ballina once the centre affiliated to Volunteer Centres Ireland. Offices were based in Ballina and were staffed by a part-time Manager and part-time Placement Officer.

In 2010, funding was received to facilitate a countywide service. A second part-time office opened in Castlebar staffed by a part-time Placement Officer. In order to support a greater countywide workplan, a representative Steering Committee was formed to assist in the delivery of the Mayo Volunteer Centre programme whilst still being managed and administered under Moy Valley resources IRD.

In March 2012, extra funding was secured to facilitate a full-time Manager. This has allowed for full implementation of an outreach programme and widespread county coverage.

### **2.3 How Mayo Volunteer Centre works with volunteers**

When a new volunteer registers with our service, by phone or via our website ([www.volunteermayo.ie](http://www.volunteermayo.ie)), they receive an email from us outlining how the service works and inviting them to make an appointment with us if they wish to. Volunteers also drop in and where possible they are accommodated with an appointment with one of our Placement Officers. During the appointment, the Placement Officer will discuss the volunteers' interests and inform the volunteer of the roles they may be interested in. Volunteers also register via our outreach service and avail of the same service remotely in their own community.

Once we have established what particular volunteer roles the volunteer wishes to pursue, we will contact the volunteer involving organisation on their behalf and pass on the details of the volunteer.

All volunteers receive a call or email from us within 4-6 weeks of registering to check out how things are progressing with the organisation. Should things have not progressed (for various reasons), we will then follow up on the volunteers behalf. Once the volunteer starts volunteering, we try to keep in touch by email in the form of monthly newsletters. Many volunteers will drop in to update us on their volunteer roles and let us know how they are doing. In 2012, 160 volunteers were repeat volunteers to the service, having registered in the previous years.

For many volunteers, the time between applying and starting can take a couple of months, due to applications, interviews, reference checks, Garda Vetting and induction training. We try to keep volunteers informed of 'once-off' roles that they may wish to get involved with whilst they are waiting. We do this by sending mass texts to volunteers. The volunteer then replies if they can help.

#### 2.4 How Mayo Volunteer Centre works with Volunteer Involving Organisations

Organisations can register online with the centre and post volunteer opportunities with their organisation online also. Organisations also drop into the centre and register or register via our outreach service when meeting one-to-one with a Placement Officer.

Mayo Volunteer Centre advises organisations in areas such as Garda Vetting, Volunteer Management and sourcing volunteers. Volunteer Managers in organisations are also invited to attend bi-annual Volunteer Manager Network Meetings, where the centre updates organisations in good practice, current volunteer news and gives organisations the opportunity to network with other Volunteer Managers.

#### 2.5 Volunteer demographics 2012

Volunteers registering with the centre in 2012 have shown similar demographics to those registering in 2011 in regards to age ranges, gender and whether they have volunteered previously to registering.

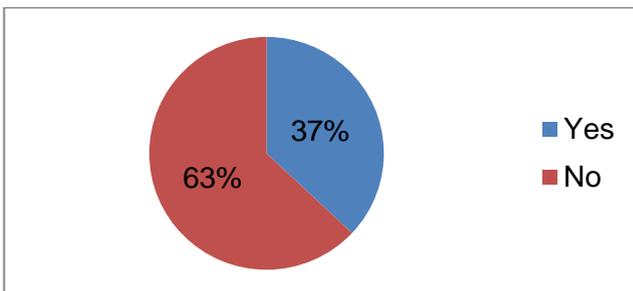


Figure 1: Volunteers that had volunteered previously registered in 2012

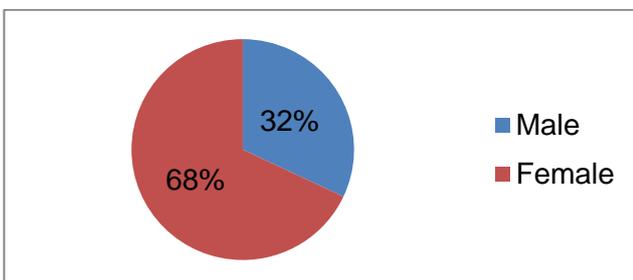


Figure 2: Volunteer gender registered in 2012

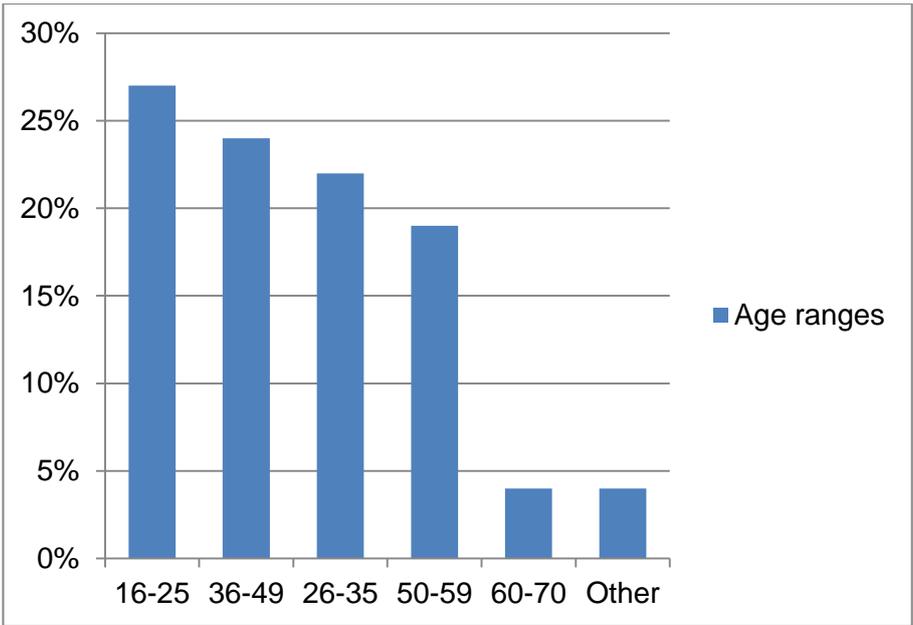


Figure 3: Volunteer age ranges 2012

2.6 Growth of volunteer registrations, placements and organisations 2008-2012

2012 saw significant growth of the Mayo Volunteer Centre programme, particularly in the area of volunteer registrations and individual placements. The implementation of the Outreach Strategy and the increase in overall staff hours have contributed to this significantly. In the past 2 years, annual volunteer registrations have more than doubled and individual placements have increased nearly fourfold with over a ten times increase since 2008.

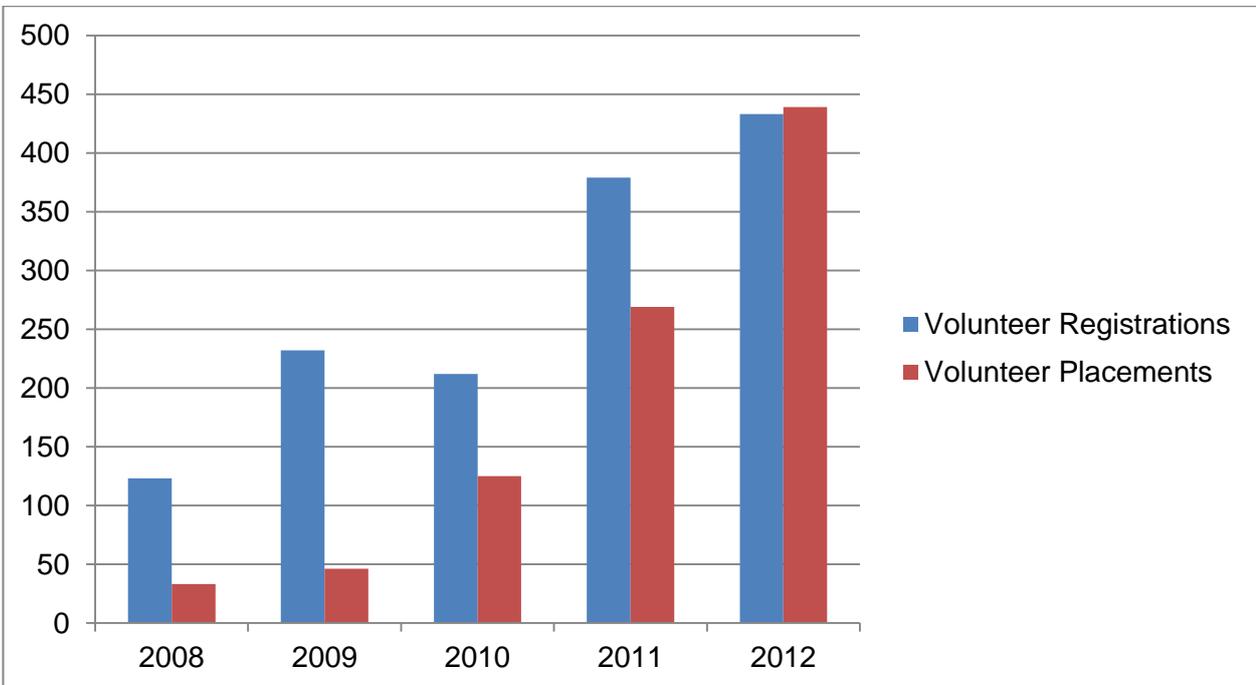


Figure 4: Volunteer registration and placement growth 2008-2012

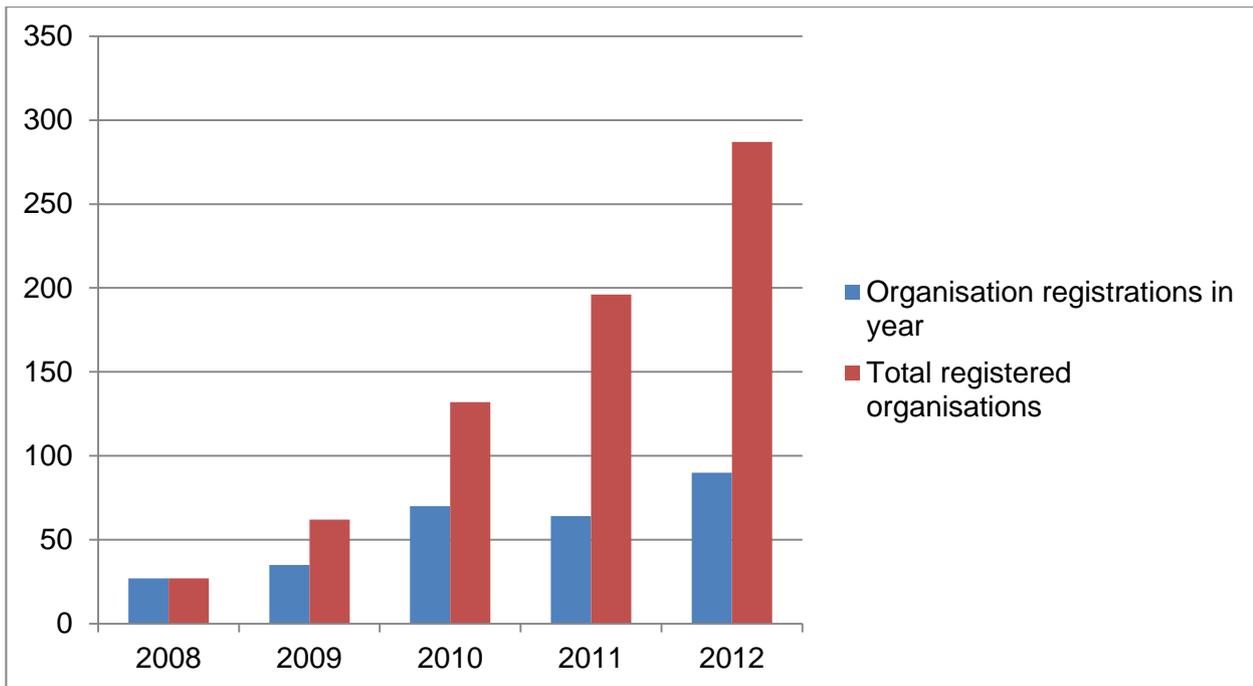


Figure 5: Organisational growth 2008-2012

### **3.0 Outreach Programme overview**

#### **3.1 Mayo Volunteer Centres Outreach Programme**

In early 2012, significant staff changes took place. In June 2012, staff numbers were back up to full quota, allowing for a recently developed Outreach Strategy to be implemented. Outreach days were advertised on the newly launched website, local press, through the community networks and posters were devised, printed and sent to the specific areas where the outreach days would be.

When an outreach day takes place, efforts are made to contact and meet with local community representatives/partners (librarians, town chamber staff) and find out what VIO's (Volunteer Involving Organisations) are in the area. If a meeting cannot take place on the day with a local VIO, in the weeks leading up to a return outreach day in the same area, investigations are made, followed up on and face-to-face meetings are booked for the planned return visit. If contacts are already made, new volunteer opportunities can be advertised and volunteers sought at the return visit and by mass emails and texts for that area.

From June 2012 to the end of 2012, 29 outreach days took place and volunteer registrations via the outreach programme were higher during this 7 month period than all of the outreach registrations in 2011. They have accounted for 30% of all volunteer registrations in 2012 (see figure 6 and 7). 2012 also saw better placement rates and though not as high as other recruitment method rates, they were higher than that of those registering via the internet (figure 8). By the end of 2012, 104 meetings with VIO's and community experts had taken place via the Outreach programme and staff were meeting with volunteers and organisations in areas of the county where there had not previously been a presence, including large geographic areas of the county such as the Belmullet and Erris areas (figure 9).

Mayo Volunteer Centre attended a number of outreach sessions aimed at supporting those job-seeking and looking for education opportunities. These were hosted by SWMDC, MNELP, Mayo County Council, Tacú Family Resource Centre Ballinrobe and the HOPE project Belmullet (figure 10).

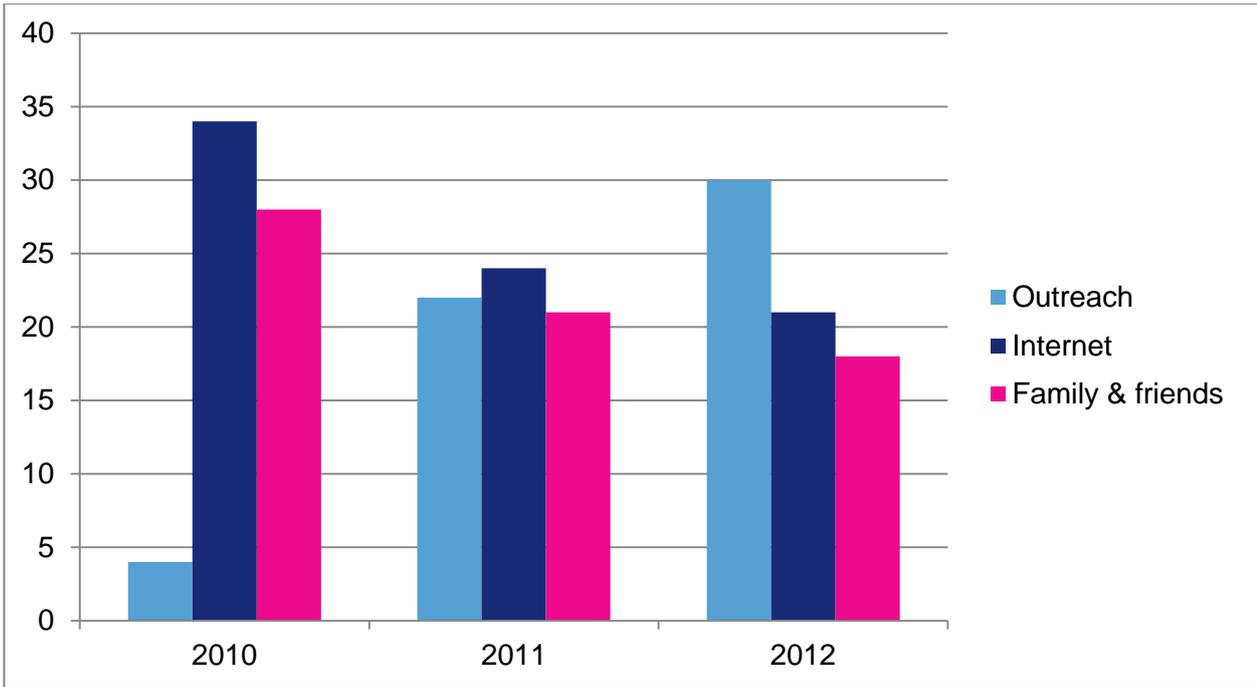


Figure 6: Volunteer Recruitment Method % 2010-2012 (since countywide service implemented)

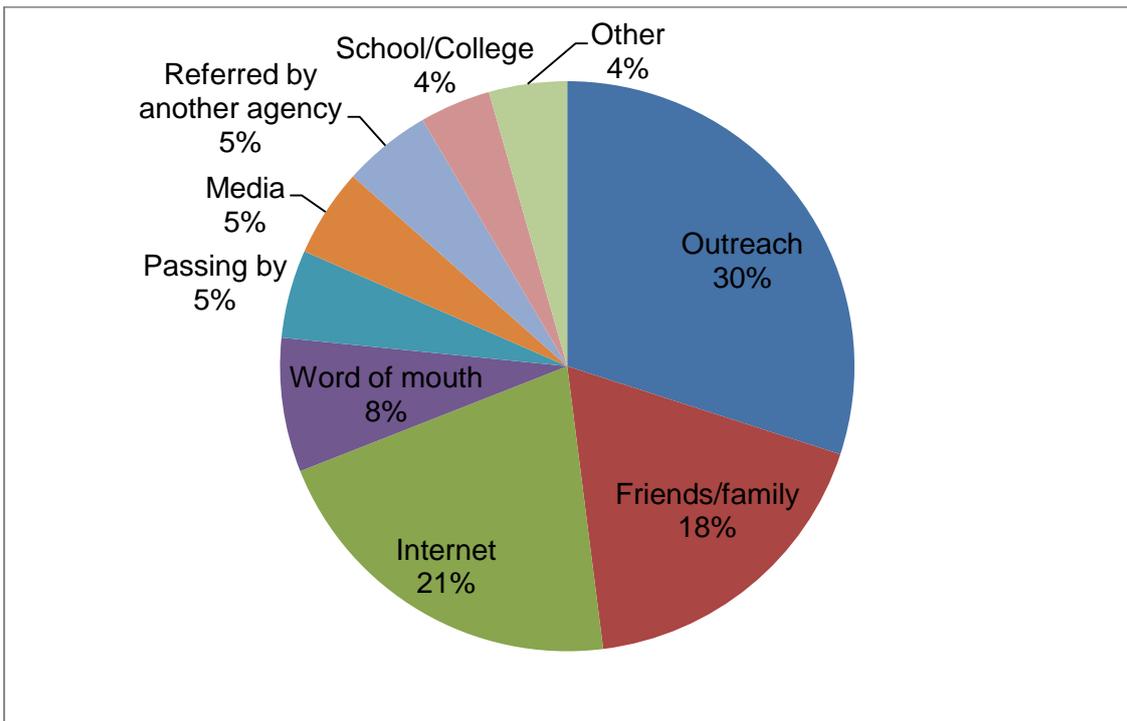


Figure 7: Recruitment methods 2012 (Total number of new volunteers registered in 2012 = 447)

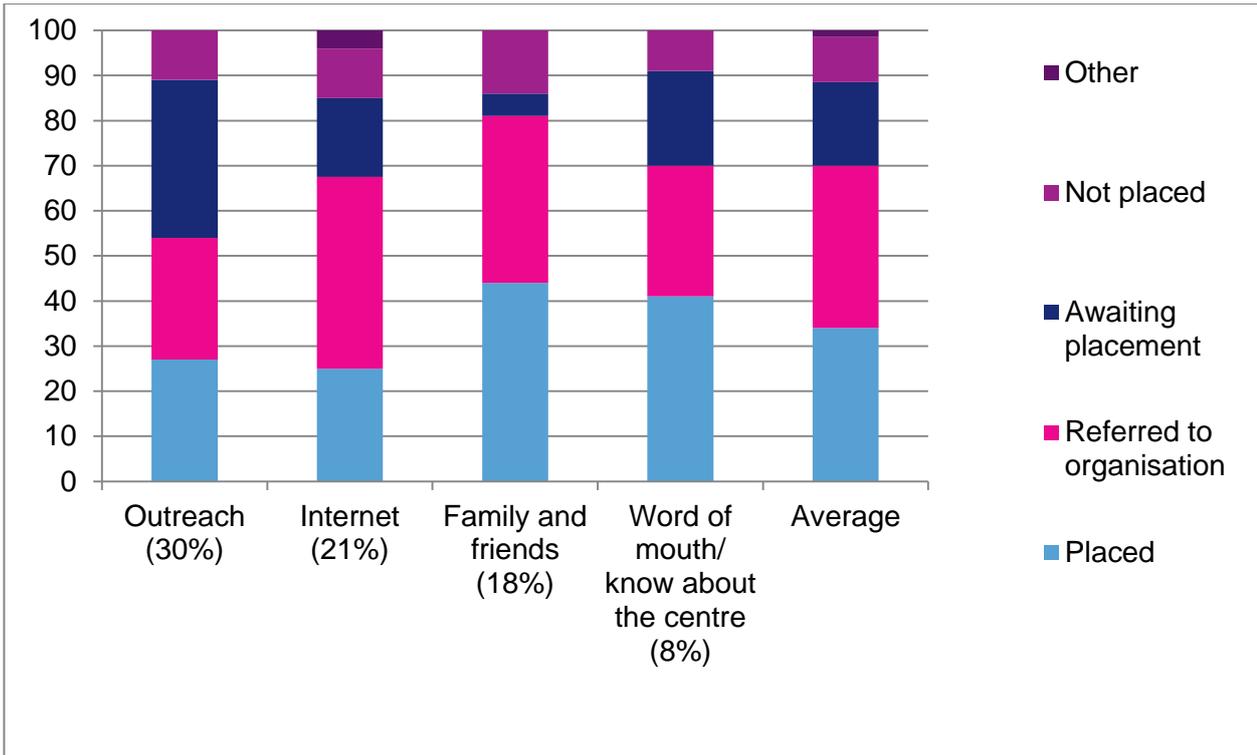


Figure 8: Volunteer placement rates via recruitment methods in 2012

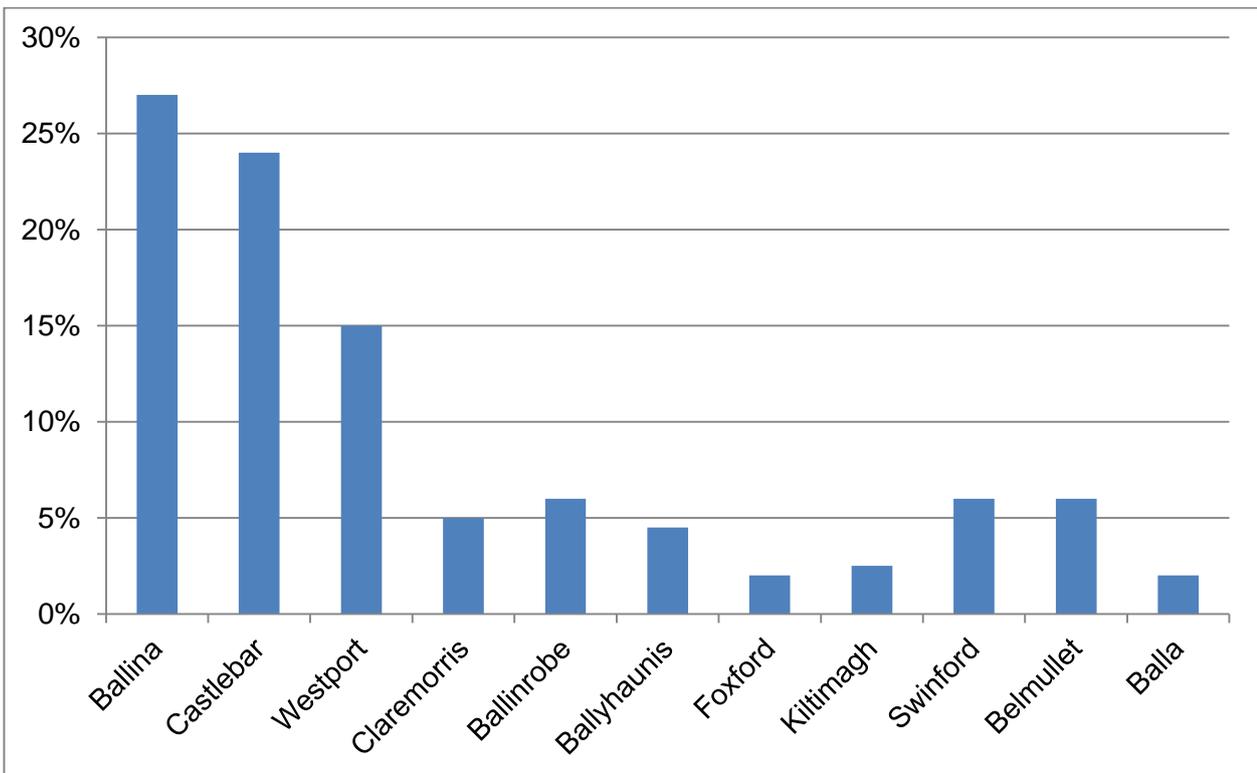


Figure 9: Volunteer registrations by area in 2012

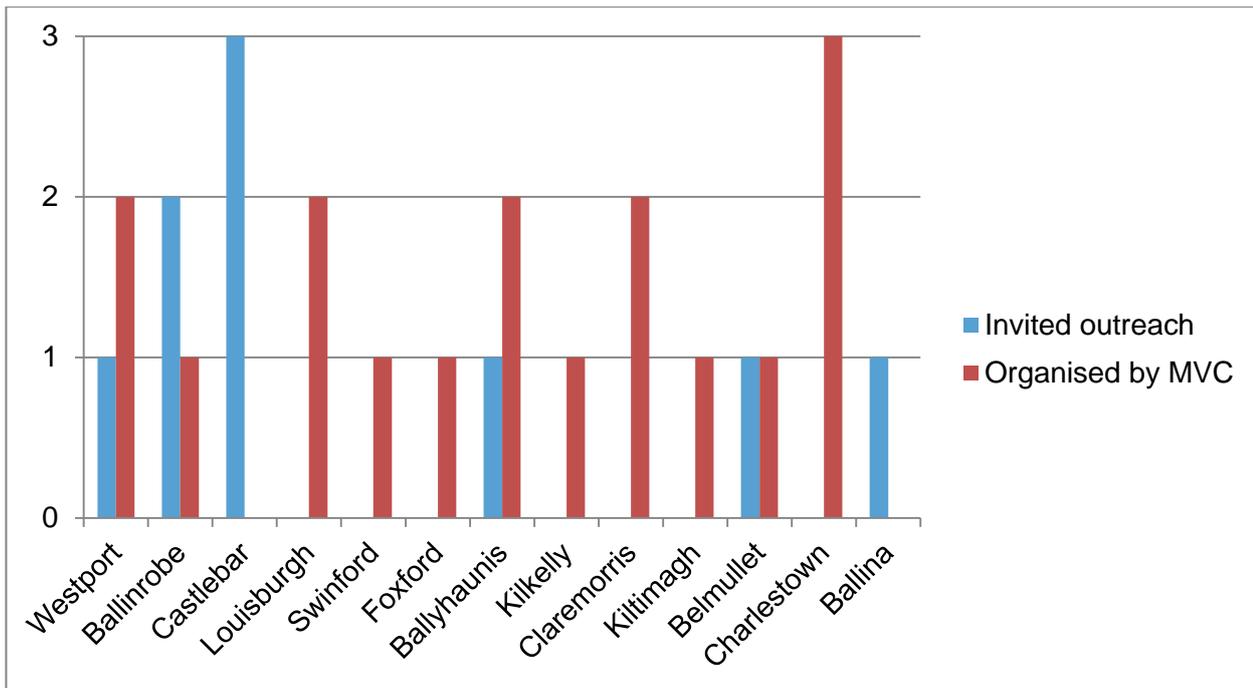


Figure 10: Outreach locations 2012

### 3.2 Other outreach figures 2012

- Repeat callers in 2012 (previously registered) via outreach = 11
- Total number of people receiving information about volunteering via the outreach service = 404
- Total number of Volunteer Involving Organisations receiving information via the outreach programme = 31
- Total number of meetings with organisations and community experts via the outreach service = 104
- Total number of new volunteers registered via outreach = 132 (30% of all registrations and the largest recruitment method)

## 4.0 On-going services overview

### 4.1 Garda Vetting

In May 2012, Mayo Volunteer Centres new Manager Shauna Jackson, undertook training with the Garda Central Vetting Unit in Thurles, Co. Tipperary to become an Authorised Signatory. Authorised Signatories in Volunteer Centres, act as a signatory for voluntary organisations that do not have access to an authorised signatory in their own organisation.

In 2012, 8 new organisations were trained and 5 organisations were retrained. Outstanding forms and 37 new Garda Vetting forms were processed.

### 4.2 Training delivered by Mayo Volunteer Centre

In 2012, Manager Shauna Jackson and Placement Officer Brenda McNicholas received training from Volunteer Ireland, allowing them to deliver the national Volunteer Management Training. This programme consists of 4 modules:

- Planning for Volunteer Involvement and Designing Volunteer Roles
- Recruiting, Selecting and Inducting Volunteers
- Supporting and Supervising Volunteers
- Designing a Policy for Volunteer Involvement

In November the training was delivered to 8 organisations from all over Mayo. An introductory session called 'Thinking of Involving Volunteers' was delivered to 7 individuals.

Other presentations were delivered throughout the year, at the request of Western Care Association and also to St. Josephs Secondary School Castlebar as part of the National Volunteering Week presentations.

Garda Vetting training was delivered to 8 new organisations and 5 organisations were retrained with the new Signatory.

#### 4.3 One-to-one meetings

In 2012, Mayo Volunteer Centre staff had over 100, one-to-one meetings with a number of individuals, including Volunteer Managers from a Volunteers Involving organisations, staff from local Partnership companies and Family Resource Centre co-ordinators as well as over 100 meetings with community contacts as part of the extensive Outreach programme.

These one-to-one meetings were to discuss among many things, upcoming volunteer programmes, advice on volunteer management issues and input into community projects. Meetings take place in the Castlebar or Ballina offices, during outreach sessions or at the premises of the organisation.

#### 4.4 Volunteer Managers Network

In 2012, Mayo Volunteer Centre founded the first Volunteer Managers Network in Co. Mayo. The group is co-ordinated by the centre and will meet twice a year. The network provides a place where Volunteer Managers can get together to discuss issues, network with other Volunteer Managers and be kept up to date with current best practice and volunteer news.

The group is made up of Volunteer Managers (paid and voluntary) working in both small and large Volunteer Involving Organisations in Mayo.

The inaugural meeting took place in August and was well attended. Managers from both small and large organisations were in attendance, allowing for a fruitful and productive meeting with good feedback from all attending. Requests for sessions on volunteer application paperwork and Garda Vetting, to be delivered by the centre at the next meeting in 2013 will be arranged.

#### 4.5 Wider communities and Partnerships

Mayo Volunteer Centre attended a number of forums, networks and groups over 2012. These have included the Ballina Network, Castlebar Network and the Ballina Youth Network.

The centre has also inputted/advised on a number of new community projects such as:

- Community Action on Dementia in Mayo
- Joint HSE/DCU project 'Living Links to Recovery'
- Mayo General Hospital volunteer 'meet and greet' programme

#### 4.6 National Work

In 2012, staff attended both Placement Officers Forums and Volunteer Centre Managers' Meetings.

Specifically, Placement Officer Brenda McNicholas has sat on a working group that arranges agendas for upcoming Placement Officer Forums and the Manager Shauna Jackson has been part of a Mental Health Working Group, that have put together 'Guidelines for Volunteer Centres on the Placement of Volunteers with Mental Health Difficulties', that have been implemented Nationally.

### **5.0 Specific projects/focus 2012**

#### 5.1 Volunteer Centre Quality Award

The Volunteer Ireland Peer Review Process and Quality Award was developed by Volunteer Centres in Ireland. In September 2012, Mayo Volunteer Centre was reviewed.

The Purpose of the Peer Review process is:

- To help Volunteer Centres deliver a quality service
- To create a base level of service to be provided by all Volunteer Centres
- To provide a framework for quality review and auditing of activities
- To achieve both learning and accountability

As part of the work towards the review, the centre staff and Steering Committee undertook a review of the current practices. This involved implementing a number of new policies and procedures that allowed the centre to apply a number of good practice changes. Mayo Volunteer Centre is awaiting the award, which should be awarded in early 2013.

#### 5.2 Website launched

In June 2012, Mayo Volunteer Centre launched its new website, which can be found at [www.volunteermayo.ie](http://www.volunteermayo.ie)

By logging on, potential volunteer can view the many opportunities listed all over Mayo. They can also look up information on volunteering, such as steps to take if you are thinking of volunteering, helpful hints and tips on volunteering and what to expect as a volunteer.

Organisations that involve volunteers in their work can also register and advertise opportunities through the website. They can view the information on the services that the centre can offer organisations, such as Volunteer Management Training and a Garda Vetting service.

#### 5.3 National Volunteering Week 2012

A number of organisations around Mayo registered projects with Mayo Volunteer Centre and hosted events as part of the celebrations.

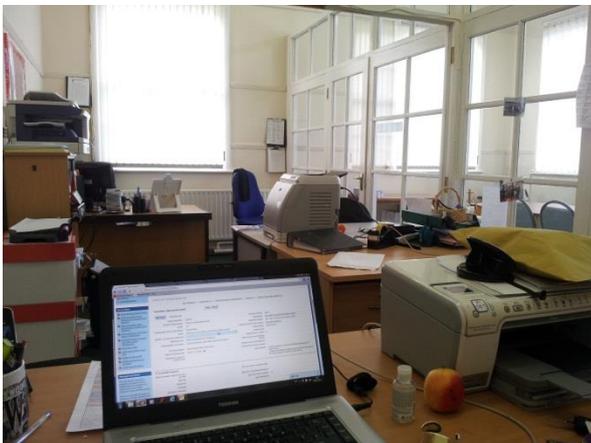
There was a decorating and painting day in Claremorris Community Radio, litter pick-ups with the Curious Minds Pre-school and Le Cheile Family Resource Centre Castlebar, fishing lessons to Ballina Over 55's Club with the Inland Fisheries Ireland-Ballina Branch.

Mayo Volunteer Centre hosted a photography competition for National School children in Ballina. This was co-ordinated by Placement Officer Edel Gallagher, with funding received from Ballina Beverages. The photos were displayed in the Arts Centre Ballina for the period of National Volunteering Week.



#### 5.4 Office move

With the support of Moy Valley Resources and the Mayo Volunteer Centre Steering Committee, Mayo Volunteer Centre moved into new offices in Cathedral Road. Previously staff worked in small separate offices and visitors had to share the space. The move has allowed staff to all work in one space and meetings, training and visitors can all co-exist.



#### 5.5 Advertising

In May 2012, a regular feature in the Western People was launched. A 'Volunteer Corner' highlights what is going on in volunteering in Mayo and where the outreach sessions are planned as well as a brief listing of volunteer roles.

A number of radio interviews were conducted over the year. Community Radio stations interviews included Claremorris Community Radio, Castlebar Community Radio and Westport Community Radio. There was also one interview with commercial Radio station MidWest Radio FM during National Volunteering Week.

We were invited to take part in a recording in partnership with Claremorris Community Radio. The Manager of the centre was interviewed and clips of the interview used throughout the promotional piece. This can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA0qDrFWvcM>

A specific Marketing Strategy will be implemented in 2013.

## **6.0 Staff and supports 2012**

### **6.1 Staff changes**

2012 saw a number of staff changes. In January, funding was secured for a full-time Manager. This position was taken up by Shauna Jackson in April 2012. Shauna worked as the Placement Officer based in Castlebar. The Castlebar Placement Officer position was filled by Brenda McNicholas in June.

Current staff:

- Shauna Jackson, Manager, full-time
- Edel Gallagher, Placement Office, Ballina, part-time (20hrs)
- Brenda McNicholas, Placement Officer, Castlebar, part-time (25hrs)
- Mary McDermott, Administrator/Placement Officer, CE scheme (19.5hrs) Ballina

### **6.2 Staff training and national meetings**

In preparation for the Quality Standard Review, staff all received many hours of in-house training in areas such as Salesforce (the database used by staff), policies and procedures and specific Quality Standards training. Staff also undertook additional training throughout the year.

Edel Gallagher, Placement Officer undertook a two day Occupational 1<sup>st</sup> Aid course in May.

Mary McDermott, Administrator/Placement Officer (CE scheme), undertook the Occupational 1<sup>st</sup> Aid update in August.

Brenda McNicholas, Placement Officer undertook training in Cork Volunteer Centre as part of the Quality Standards Review, how to deliver 'Volunteer Management Training' in October and an Equality seminar in November.

Shauna Jackson, Manager completed Authorised Signatory training with the Garda Central Vetting Unit in April, how to deliver 'Volunteer Management Training' in November, how to deliver 'Thinking of Involving Volunteers' presentation in April, a Volunteer Management Seminar in Galway in May, Governance and Strategy seminar in May and a visit to Cork Volunteer Centre as part of the Quality Standards Review.

### **6.3 Steering Committee**

Since 2010, when Mayo Volunteer Centre received funding for the delivery of a countywide service, the centre has had a Steering Committee in place to input into the programme. In 2012 the committee met on 6 occasions for scheduled meetings as well as a number of additional meetings required for the recruitment of new staff.

Steering Committee Members:

Thérèse Ruane (Chair)	Mayo Community Platform
Kevin Corrigan	Moy Valley Resources
Rita Hopkins	Mayo North East LEADER Partnership
Norita Clesham	South West Mayo Development Company
Noreen McGarry	Western Care Association
Johnny Groden	Mayo County Community Forum

Work began in February 2012 (by way of a facilitated review and planning session) to discuss changes around the management of Mayo Volunteer Centre, however, due to recent developments and possible changes in the administration of the programme, these are on-hold.

#### 6.4 Funders and supporters

Core funding for Mayo Volunteer Centre is received from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. We also receive ring-fenced funding from Mayo North East Leader Partnership and South West Mayo Development Company. This funding is used to support our outreach programme.

#### 6.5 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals whose financial support and/or time, has ensured that 2012 has been a resounding success for Mayo Volunteer Centre.

Department of Environment, Community and Local Government  
 Mayo North East Leader Partnership  
 South West Mayo Development Company  
 Moy Valley Resources IRD  
 Volunteer Ireland  
 Western Care Association  
 Ballina Beverages  
 Claremorris Community Radio  
 Galway Mayo Institute of Technology  
 Mayo County Council

We would also like to thank the many volunteers and organisations registered with Mayo Volunteer Centre. Their support and belief in the programme and promotion of the services, has allowed us to keep volunteering very much alive in County Mayo.

#### Other reports attached

- 1) Audited Accounts Summary & Expenditure
- 2) Overview of Outreach service 2010-2012
- 3) Outreach report 2012
- 4) Outreach strategy 2013