

# Fingal Public Participation Network (Fingal PPN)



**What is it?**  
**How do you get  
involved?**



Fingal  
Public  
Participation  
Network

Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council



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## DID YOU KNOW?

We run training programmes on a regular basis. Any of our members can attend, and you can also suggest what kind of training we should do.

# What is the PPN and what does it do?

Public Participation Networks (PPN) were set up in 2014 as a result of local government reform. There is a PPN in every county council area.

## **Fingal Public Participation Network**

The Fingal Public Participation Network is a network of community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental organisations, and we are active in the Fingal County area. Fingal County is located north of Dublin City and Lucan. It covers the north of County Dublin, including areas such as Castleknock, Howth, Swords, Balbriggan, Blanchardstown, Rush and Lusk. Our members are people like you who work in the community. Our members' involvement in our activities makes us strong and effective.



The Fingal PPN has more than 500 members and includes community-based:

groups	organisations	associations
clubs	societies	charities

**This booklet tells you more about Fingal PPN and how we benefit our members.**




## **What is the aim of Fingal PPN?**

Our aim is to co-ordinate how the community in Fingal is represented. We also aim to:

-  make our members stronger; and
-  keep our members informed about local developments.

## **We help the community be represented**

We work with the community so its representatives can take part in a fair and open way on a wide range of decision-making bodies. This includes the:

-  Fingal County Council;
-  local development companies; and
-  other local bodies.

We empower community groups to influence policy makers, like those mentioned above.

# What is the PPN and what does it do?

## **We make our members stronger**

We help our members to be better able to contribute positively to the community and engage with the county council and other local bodies. We provide a space for policy development on issues of community concern.

## **We keep our members informed**

We provide information to our members and we receive information.

The activities of the Fingal PPN enable our members to contribute to the wellbeing of the Fingal County area.

## **Who are PPN members?**

Our 500 member groups are all based in, or have a base in, the Fingal County area. Some of our current members include:

- 89th Bremore Scout Group
- Donabate Portrane Tennis Club
- Dublin 15 Community Council
- Hampton Cove Residents Association
- Howth Yacht Club
- Mountview Family Resource Centre
- Skerries Theatre Group
- Swords Tidy Towns

These groups have become members of the PPN since 2014.

## **Who can become a member of the Fingal PPN?**

A group can become a member of the Fingal PPN if it satisfies the following criteria. It must:

- ☞ be active and with a postal address in Fingal County;
- ☞ be in existence for at least six months;
- ☞ be non-party political and non-sectarian;
- ☞ be volunteer-led (groups can have paid staff, but they must be under voluntary control);
- ☞ operate on a not-for profit basis;
- ☞ have at least three members;
- ☞ have an appropriate governance structure like a constitution or set of rules;
- ☞ meet regularly and communicate with their members.

# What is the PPN and what does it do?

Your group cannot become a PPN member if it is already represented on the County Council or other decision-making bodies.

If your group is not eligible to become a full PPN member, you can apply to be an associate member.

## Associate membership

Associate members of the PPN enjoy some of the same rights as regular members. However, they cannot make nominations or cast votes. Associate membership is open to groups who:

1. do not yet meet the criteria for membership, but they are working towards them; or
2. have representational rights on the County Council and/or other decision making bodies through other social partnerships like trade unions and business organisations.

### **DID YOU KNOW**

We organise information evenings on topical issues such as the Fingal Development Plan, which is a plan for how the county should grow.



# How is Fingal PPN relevant to my area of interest?

**There are three 'pillars'**

Every PPN member belongs to one of these three pillars.



When an organisation registers with the PPN, they select the pillar that most closely resembles the activity of their organisation.

## **Pillar 1: Community and voluntary**

The main aim or activity of community and voluntary members is to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of their community. The community and voluntary pillar is the largest and most diverse of the three PPN pillars.

Volunteers are essential to the sustainability of community and voluntary member groups. The types of groups in this pillar may include:

active citizenship	arts	community safety
drama	emergency services	festivals
leisure	residents' associations	sports
	youth	

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

An Garda Síochána changed how it reported to the Joint Policing Committee based on feedback that our Fingal PPN Representatives gave them.

# How is Fingal PPN relevant to my area of interest?

## Pillar 2: Environment

The main aim of environment members is to protect or sustain the environment. The national environmental pillar decides what type of groups can be members of the Fingal environmental pillar.

Environment members work on building sustainable communities and achieving a sustainable future. Their work can include:

developing organic horticulture	environmental education	preventing the spread of invasive species
protecting wildlife	recycling	resource efficiency
	sustainable planning	

## Pillar 3: Social inclusion

The main aim or activity of our social inclusion members is to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are:

- 🔗 marginalised in society;
- 🔗 living in poverty; or
- 🔗 living with unemployment.

Social inclusion members work to develop and build sustainable communities. They aim to build communities that promote the values of equality and inclusion and that have respect for human rights.




They focus on working with the most marginalised, including but not limited to:

disadvantaged young people	ethnic minorities	homeless people
older adults	Travellers	people with disabilities
	substance misusers	women

# How is Fingal PPN relevant to my area of interest?

## We have 'linkage groups' working in different areas

'Linkage groups' are subgroups of the PPN – each group has its own theme. Any member group of the PPN can be a member of any linkage group. Linkage groups work to highlight issues that affect communities across Fingal. They make policy recommendations and elect representatives to:

-  Fingal County Council committees;
-  other local agency boards; and
-  advisory groups.

This means linkage groups have a direct link with policy and decision makers. Currently, the Fingal PPN has eight linkage groups on the following topics.

<b>Arts, Community and Sport</b>	<b>Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Arts,</li> <li>● community,</li> <li>● culture,</li> <li>● Gaeilge,</li> <li>● heritage,</li> <li>● libraries,</li> <li>● sport, and</li> <li>● youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Health,</li> <li>● local community development,</li> <li>● rural development,</li> <li>● social inclusion, and</li> <li>● wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>Economy</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Economic development,</li> <li>● enterprise, and</li> <li>● tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Climate change,</li> <li>● environment, and</li> <li>● water.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Planning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Homelessness, and</li> <li>● Housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● planning, and</li> <li>● strategic infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Security</b>	<b>Transport</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community safety,</li> <li>● crime, and</li> <li>● policing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Air transport,</li> <li>● public transport, and</li> <li>● rural transport.</li> </ul>

Each linkage group meets at least three times each year and generates policy positions on local, regional and national issues for us to pursue.



# Why should my organisation be involved in Fingal PPN?

## Networking

When you are a member of Fingal PPN, you can:

- 🔗 meet similar groups from across the county;
- 🔗 collaborate on projects;
- 🔗 exchange skills and knowledge;
- 🔗 learn from one another; and
- 🔗 share your experiences.

## Information

We keep informed about community supports and we act as an information hub for our members. We:

- 🔗 publish a monthly newsletter;
- 🔗 maintain a website; and
- 🔗 have active social media channels.

Our website has a funding opportunities page and a community resources page. We gather information on Government and agency programmes that may be of use to you.

## Representation

We have more than 20 representatives on various county council committees, with this number rising all the time. We also have representation on other local agency boards and committees. This gives members eyes, ears and a voice in local decision making.

## Training

We organise free training, workshops and information evenings on issues that our members select. These typically run during the autumn and spring. Previous training was run on topics such as:

- 🔗 committee skills;
- 🔗 social media;
- 🔗 communication;
- 🔗 County Development Plan; and
- 🔗 lobbying.

## Funding

We keep members up to date with the latest funding supports available to your organisation.

## Publicity

Our website has a directory of members accessible to the public. Members can advertise their events for free on our website and include news in our monthly newsletter. We also highlight the work of our members through our 'Member Spotlight' initiative. Each month, we publish a short biography of one of our member groups on our website and in our newsletter.

## Consultation

Members can take part in and be consulted on issues, strategies and programmes that are relevant to you, such as the:

- 🔗 County Development Plan;
- 🔗 climate change strategy;
- 🔗 developments in Dublin Airport; and
- 🔗 developments in housing.





# How do members take part in Fingal PPN?

## PPN Representatives

PPN Representatives (or PPN Reps) are PPN members who have been elected by a linkage group to represent the PPN on a committee, board, or advisory group.

PPN Reps can submit motions, highlight issues and raise questions on behalf of the linkage group at broader meetings. The PPN Rep reports to and from the Linkage Group that elects them.

The role of the representative is to:

-  listen,
-  discuss,
-  represent, and
-  feedback.

## Our Linkage Groups support our PPN Reps

Linkage Groups are subgroups of the PPN. PPN members can get involved in any of our Linkage Groups. Each Linkage Group works with their elected PPN Representative to highlight community issues and influence relevant policy. For more information on Linkage Groups, see page 6.

## We hold Plenary meetings open to members

A gathering of our members is called a Plenary. We hold Plenary meetings at a county level twice a year, usually in November and April. They are open meetings for our members. At our Plenary meetings, our members decide on our strategy and on the procedures we should follow.

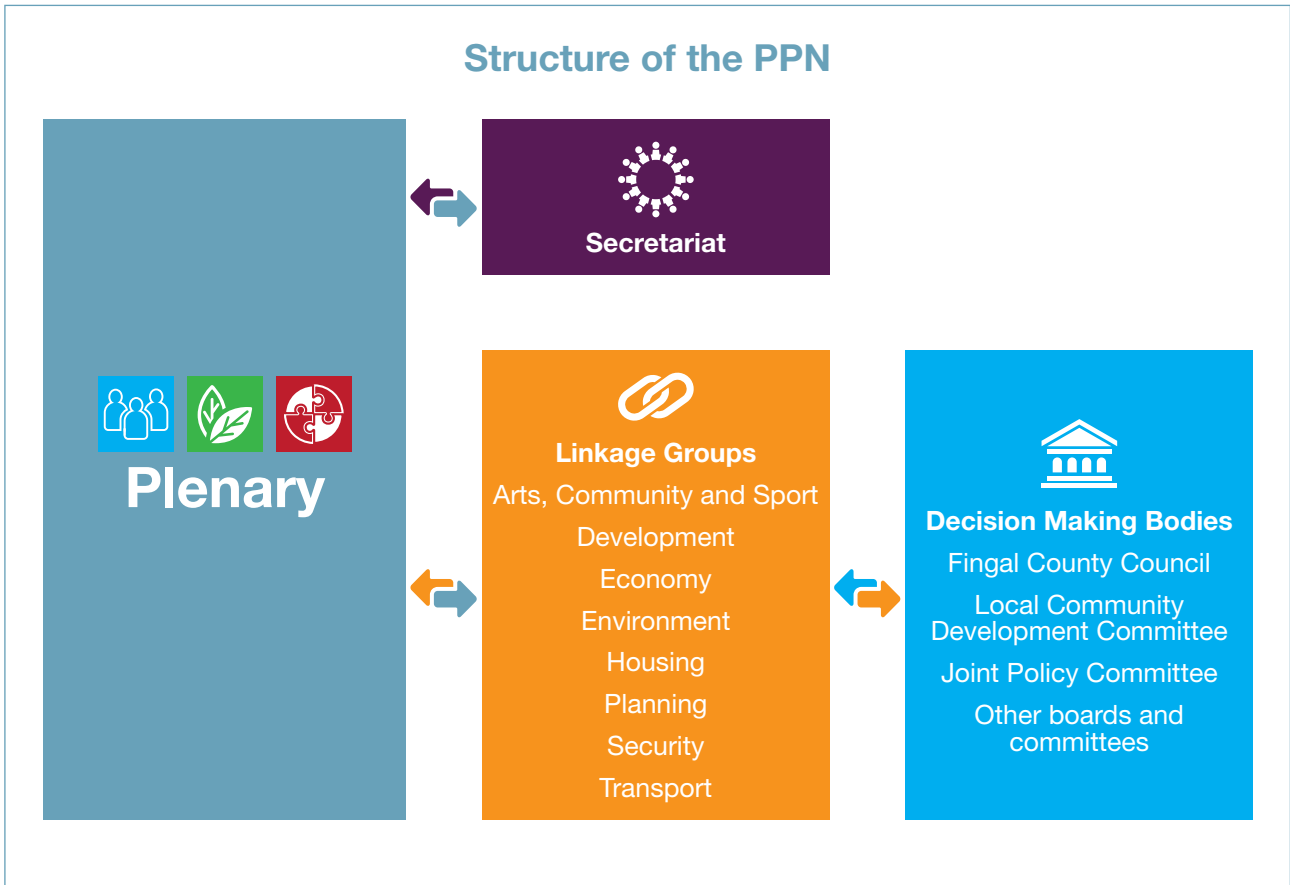
Each PPN member organisation has one vote at the Plenary meeting. At the Plenary meetings, PPN members can raise local issues at a county level for discussion.

## Our Secretariat oversees the Fingal PPN

The Secretariat is a board made up of 12 members elected by the Plenary. Each year, three members of the Secretariat step down and three members are elected at the April Plenary meeting.

The Secretariat meets each month and is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the PPN. They manage the staff, budget and operations, and report back to the plenary meeting.

# How do members take part in Fingal PPN?










## **PPN Resource Worker**

The resource worker is a full-time employee of the PPN. The PPN Resource Worker, under the direction of the Secretariat, develops and co-ordinates the activity of the PPN.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Our Fingal PPN representatives identified the lack of schools planned for Fingal compared to its population needs. As a result, the Fingal Development Plan includes plans for new schools.

# How do I influence change through Fingal PPN?

<p><b>1</b> Have you an idea to improve Fingal or a community issue you want to highlight?</p>	
<p><b>2</b> Join the linkage groups that you are interested in</p>	 <p>Environment Culture You Housing Transport</p>
<p><b>3</b> Attend your linkage group meetings and discuss ideas, issues and opinions</p>	
<p><b>4</b> Elect representatives from your linkage group (this could be you)</p>	
<p><b>5</b> Your elected Fingal PPN representatives now have a formal link with the Council and other decision-making bodies</p>	<p>They can raise motions and ask questions on behalf of their linkage group.</p> 
<p><b>6</b> Your ideas will inform local policy and influence decisions</p>	
<p><b>7</b> The representatives fill out PPN reports after each meeting they attend</p>	<p>They feed back to you at your next linkage group meeting.</p> 

## We need you!

We are at our best when you, our members:

- attend meetings,
- raise issues, and
- give feedback.

Our linkage groups can only function if we have community issues to talk about and solutions to bring to decision makers. Our PPN Reps need your local knowledge and expertise to fully represent your concerns.

Your active membership will help make the PPN for the Fingal area strong and representative!

**Get involved in Fingal PPN today.**

# How we approach our work

## **Inclusive**

We accept all volunteer-led organisations in Fingal. We actively seek to include groups who may feel that they are not usually welcomed or listened to.

## **Participatory**

We encourage our members to get involved in all aspects of the operation of the PPN. We welcome all feedback and ideas about how we can do better.

## **Independent**

We are independent of Fingal County Council and any vested interests. We have our own Resource Worker (ppn@fingal.ie). We manage our own budget, and our opinions are not influenced by anyone other than our members.

## **Value diversity**

We know that the Fingal PPN is made up of groups with many different opinions. We do not expect that all our members will agree on everything. But we will always feedback the diverse range of views our members have.

## **Transparent**

We are open about everything we do. We try to have fair and clear policies and procedures. We communicate our activity with all our members on a regular basis.

## **Accountable**

We report to you, our members. We will answer any and all questions you have. We have a good governance structure, good policies and procedures.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Agencies approach us for feedback. Age-Friendly County and the Library Service have sat down with our members to ask for their opinions.

# Key stakeholders

## Fingal County Council

Fingal County Council funds the Fingal PPN. It provides support, office space, and ensures the PPN is involved in forming Council policy.

The Fingal PPN is independent of the Council but receives significant support from the Community Development Office. The PPN is also supported across all council departments.

## Strategic Policy Committees

The purpose of Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) is to develop, monitor and review policies which relate to the functions of Fingal County Council and to advise the Council accordingly. The SPCs bring together members of the local authority, officials, the Fingal PPN representatives and other stakeholders. They have no role in relation to operational services such as social housing waiting lists and grass cutting.

Fingal County Council has six SPCs that cover various issues. These are:

1. Arts, culture, heritage and community
2. Economic development, enterprise and tourism
3. Environment and water
4. Housing
5. Planning and strategic infrastructure
6. Transportation

The Fingal PPN has two seats on each SPC.

## The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

### Multi-agency

The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is an inter-agency structure. This means it is a group of agencies who work together.

### Funding

The LCDC is responsible for co-ordinating planning and overseeing local and community development funding.

### Links agencies

When putting in place local and community development programmes, the LCDC links the different agencies and the work being done.



# Key stakeholders

## **Promotes engagement**

The LCDC promotes active public participation and community engagement in local and community development programmes.

## **Planning for the future**

The LCDC prepares the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), which focuses on enhancing the quality of life and well-being of communities.

## **Groups come together**

The LCDC brings together representatives from the following organisations:

- Fingal County Council (FCC);
- Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB);
- Fingal Public Participation Network (PPN);
- Fingal Leader Partnership (FLP);
- Blanchardstown Area Partnership (BAP);
- Health Service Executive (HSE);
- Department of Social Protection (DSP);
- North Dublin Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force;
- The Irish Farmers Association (IFA);
- Chambers Ireland; and
- Tusla, Child and Family Agency.

The Fingal PPN has five seats out of 19 on the LCDC.

## **Joint Policing Committee**

The Joint Policing Committee (JPC) offers an opportunity to develop greater consultation, co-operation and accountability between:

- An Garda Síochána;
- Fingal County Council;
- elected representatives; and
- community representatives.

They work together to manage policing and crime issues across the Fingal area. The Fingal PPN has seven seats on the JPC.

## **Department of Rural and Community Development**

The Department of Rural and Community Development is responsible for the development and funding of PPNs at Government level.

## Key stakeholders

### National PPN Advisory Group

The National PPN Advisory Group advises the Department of Rural and Community Development on the development and monitoring of PPNs. The membership of the advisory group includes local and national stakeholders including:

- local PPN volunteers;
- PPN workers; and
- local government officials.

It also includes national community, voluntary, environment and social inclusion sector nominees.

Fingal PPN is represented on the National PPN Advisory Group by our resource worker.

### National PPN Workers Network

The National PPN Workers Network exists to support PPN Resource Workers to:

- share best practice;
- work collectively on projects and highlight issues;
- nominate representatives onto the National PPN Advisory Group; and
- engage with PPN stakeholders at a national level.

Every PPN Resource Worker takes part in this network.

### Social Justice Ireland

Social Justice Ireland (SJI) is an independent body. SJI supports the development of PPNs by:

- organising regional meetings for PPNs to share information;
- delivering training to PPNs and county councils about Public Participation; and
- advising PPN Secretariats, Representatives and Resource Workers.

SJI are also a member of the National PPN Advisory Group as a representative of the Community and Voluntary sector.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

You must be a Fingal PPN member to qualify for some funding schemes.

# Fingal PPN

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How is the Fingal PPN funded?**

Fingal PPN is co-funded by Fingal County Council and the Department of Rural and Community Development.

### **Where is the Fingal PPN office based?**

Our main office is in the Civic Offices, Blanchardstown. We have a smaller office in County Hall, Swords.

### **Do I need to be an expert on a topic to attend meetings?**

No. Always feel free to come along and find out more about the topic you are interested in and share opinions you have.

### **I am a Fingal PPN member but have never attended a meeting; is it too late to get involved?**

It is never too late to get involved. Come along to any of our meetings, workshops or consultation sessions. View our event calendar on our website: [www.fingalppn.ie](http://www.fingalppn.ie).

### **I have an issue I want to raise through the Fingal PPN, how do I do this?**

We advise you to come along to the most relevant linkage group where we can advise you on your issue. You can also email us or call into the Fingal PPN office.

### **I don't get correspondence from the Fingal PPN, what should I do?**

Get in touch with the office of the Fingal PPN immediately.

### **Can more than one member of my group be involved in Fingal PPN activities?**

Yes. Anyone who is a member of an organisation registered with the PPN can come along to any of our meetings, workshops or consultation sessions.

# Contact details for Fingal PPN

## Address

Fingal PPN  
Fingal County Council Civic Offices  
Grove Road  
Blanchardstown  
Dublin 15

## Email

[ppn@fingal.ie](mailto:ppn@fingal.ie)

## Phone

01 – 890 6235  
Or you can text us through  
Whatsapp or Viber on 086 418 3355.

## Website

[www.fingalppn.ie](http://www.fingalppn.ie)

## Facebook

[www.fb.com/fingalppn](http://www.fb.com/fingalppn)

## Twitter

[www.twitter.com/fingalppn](http://www.twitter.com/fingalppn)





[www.fingalppn.ie](http://www.fingalppn.ie)



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