

PRESS RELEASE:

Fingal Data Hub re-Launches

Improved internet-based data information service for the public

On Friday 22nd October 2010, the Fingal Development Board re-launched the internet- based data service called the Fingal Data Hub. Members of the public may view official statistics and other types of data all about their local areas in Fingal.

The Hub is a project of the Fingal Development Board. Cllr Tom Kelleher, who chairs the Board. Councillor Kelleher is eager to emphasise the innovative nature of the hub: *"I first heard of the idea for a data hub at the Board meetings several years ago. There was, literally no good data available for Fingal other than the Census every five years and whatever the Council could publish in its annual report. The people involved in this initiative are from state agencies, Government Departments and other social partner organisations. The Hub is a success of the various organisations working together, thinking outside their usual boxes and solving a common problem about the lack of local data. We live in troubled times economically, yet the way that this project was carried out shows exactly the spirit and dynamism needed to solve problems that nobody felt could be solved. I am very proud to be involved in the body that set up the project.*

The hub has been available as a public resource for almost two years located at www.fdb.ie/fingaldatahub . According to the chairperson Ann Brophy a member of the Fingal Community and Voluntary Forum there was more than one reason for re-launching it:

- "The Hub now has almost 400 users, we don't know everything about who they are and what they use it for, but they range from local businesses, schools projects, community groups, and resource managers in public sector organisations. We need to start creating the opportunities for all these users to interact with one another"
- "The hub is now sitting on new technology that gives multiple options to a user in terms of taking the map view they have created and printing it or exporting it into simple document types"
- "The Hub has evolved to show three new geography types which are used by the HSE, the Gardai, and the Local Electoral Areas that are the basis by which the Councillors are elected by the public"
- "There are now over 60 datasets of various types available for Fingal. Each data set tells a story and reflects a reality about the county and the local parts of the county. There are

now some interesting data sets relating to road accidents, live register claims, childcare facilities, among many more.”

Ann Brophy continues: *“I am very proud to have led the project team behind the hub and chaired their meetings. Every one of the partners in this have gone above and beyond the call of duty over the last 5 years to have their data published on the hub and have it out in the public area for all users to see and use. We have achieved a lot without the necessity for a large budget, the only costs arose because of small investment in technology where all the maps are published.”*

Ann also highlights that changes in technology and people using maps to analyse things about their local area is an emerging worldwide trend. In other countries there is a movement to routinely publish this type of data. Ann explains: *“We are very aware of the open source data movement going on in the English speaking world and elsewhere. This movement is coming to Ireland, just as the technology that enables it is already here. It is an exciting time for the Fingal Data Hub as we were discussing these concepts 5 years ago.”*

To register to use the redesigned Fingal Data Hub, visit <http://www.fdb.ie/fingaldatahub/Register.asp> and then register with your name and a password. This will allow you to browse various maps and charts for the small areas of Fingal. Suggestions for additional data from members of the public are welcome at fingaldatahub@fingalcoco.ie

For further information on Fingal Data Hub, or this event, please contact:
Ann Murphy, Asst. Communications Officer, Fingal County Council at
T: 01-870 4453/ 01-890 5998 or M: 087 990 8470 or ann.murphy@fingalcoco.ie

ENDS 22/10/10

Notes for Editors:

- The Fingal Development Board is composed of State agencies, Local Government representatives and the Community and Voluntary Forum of Fingal.

Fingal Data Hub – Stated Objectives:

- That all state agencies operating in Fingal adopt standard small area geography that reports on a Fingal basis and then a small area basis
- That all state agencies share certain datasets to improve their co-ordination and understanding of challenges and needs arising in particular neighbourhoods/districts

- That data is used to support more decisions than it is presently and that we monitor the effects of decisions by looking at this data

The agencies/organisations involved are:

Fingal County Council, Health Service Executive, County Dublin VEC, Blanchardstown and Fingal Leader partnerships, The County Childcare Committee, FÁS, The Department of Social & Family Affairs, Department of Education and Science.