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MEITHEAMH 2020



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# GAAELIC GAMES RETURN TO PLAY AMENDMENTS

## RECENT GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS ON AN EXPEDITION IN THE EASING OF RESTRICTIONS HAVE ALLOWED THE GAAELIC GAMES' ASSOCIATIONS TO DO LIKEWISE AND ADVANCE SAFE RETURN TO PLAY PLANS EARLIER THAN ANTICIPATED.

From Wednesday, June 24th, Club Pitches will open for Adult training only. Pitches for the minor grade and below will open from Saturday, June 27th.

These changes are dependent on the following requirements being met –

- Training occurs on non-contact basis
- All participants complete the eLearning module
- All control measures are followed, e.g. the Health Questionnaire
- Max. of 15 players in a designated area of field (26 counties)
- Max. of 10 players in designated area of field (6 counties) (As of now)
- Coaching numbers for underage teams must comply with the Code of Behaviour

Other changes are due to come into effect from Monday, June 29th –

- Contact training and challenge games for all from Monday, 29 June (26 Counties)
- Guidance pending from NI Executive in relation to the 6 Counties – non-contact training as per numbers outlined will remain in the interim.

There are some other general updates for Clubs to be aware of –

- Dressing rooms will remain closed until 20 July
- The Gaelic Games associations are waiting on clarification from the Government on what constitutes a close contact vs. casual contact.
- The restriction on only participants attending training sessions will be relaxed from June 29 – subject to max. of 200 people in Club grounds.
- All control measures, e.g. Health Questionnaire and eLearning module, will remain in place until advised otherwise.

Club Games will commence from Friday, July 17th.

Inter-County Games will commence from October 17th. Training will resume as planned on September 14th.

The advisory group will issue guidance before June 29th on the use of Club Facilities such as bars that serve food, gyms, handball alleys etc.

### Health Questionnaire

- The Health Questionnaire is now available at <https://returntoplay.gaa.ie>
- It must be completed before returning to Club activity.
- Each participant must declare that their Health Status has

not changed on each subsequent occasion they participate.

- Parents/Guardians can submit Forms on behalf of their dependents.
- Covid Supervisors can check that members of their teams have submitted Forms but cannot view specific information.
- Personal information is stored for a max. of 3 weeks.
- Hard-copy versions available - <https://learning.gaa.ie/sites/default/files/Health%20Questionnaire.pdf>

### eLearning Module

- The eLearning module is now available at <https://courses.gaa.ie/Covid19ClubEd/>
- The main aim is to educate and support Club members and volunteers.
- It must be completed by anyone entering Club facilities, especially those actively involved in training sessions/games.
- Clubs must seek proof of completion before the initial return to training/games.
- Parents/Guardians should complete on behalf of underage players, especially children and youths under 16.

### Latest on GAA Injury Benefit Fund Cover/ Liability Insurance Cover

- Wednesday, 24 June – cover for Adult team training.



- Saturday, 27 June – cover for Minor teams and below training
- No GAA Injury Benefit Fund claims will be considered for the lockdown period since 13 March.
- Property and Liability insurance premiums must be paid to County Committees before Club facilities reopen.
- Subject to compliance with the Safe Return Guidelines

### Latest on Spectators

#### 26 Counties

- From 29 June, spectators can attend training sessions subject to a maximum of 200 people in a Club ground at any given time.
- From 17 July, spectators will be limited to 500 in a Club ground in any given time, subject to sufficient space for physical distancing.

Further Government clarification is expected.

# RETURN TO PLAY – HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRES

**THE FOLLOWING IS INTENDED TO SUPPORT CLUB OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE COMPLETION OF THE COVID HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRES REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN GAELIC GAMES ACTIVITIES.**

Each person participating in Gaelic Games must complete a Health Questionnaire, answering some basic health related questions, prior to the first occasion that they return to their club.

They must also re-confirm that their Health Status hasn't changed on each subsequent occasion that they participate. Parents / Guardians can submit forms on behalf of their dependents and forms can also be submitted on behalf of person's who may struggle with completing the electronic form themselves.

Covid Supervisors in clubs can verify that individual members of their teams / panels have submitted forms and are permitted to participate. They do not have access to view information provided on forms, simply that it has been submitted.

Forms can be accessed by visiting the URL <https://returntoplay.gaa.ie> or by browsing to the gaa.ie website and clicking the link on the homepage.

**FOR PLAYERS, GUARDIANS, COACHES, VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITY**

## Access

The Health Questionnaire is available on a mobile responsive webpage at the URL <https://returntoplay.gaa.ie>. It may be worth bookmarking this on your browser or adding a shortcut to it on your desktop.

## Profile

The first step in completing your return to play is to create your profile. This will allow submission of your initial Health Questionnaire and subsequent resubmission in a streamlined manner.

## Register

Go to the URL <https://returntoplay.gaa.ie> and click on the register link.

Enter the relevant information and click Continue.

## Verify your email address

You will be asked to verify your email address prior to completing your profile.

Click on the link with the email received.



If the email doesn't appear in your inbox, please check spam or junk mail folders.

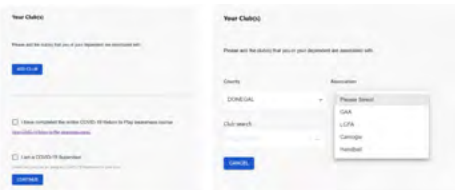
*Please Note: the validity period for the email verification has been extended as some users experienced delays in receiving the verification emails.*

## Complete your profile

Some additional contact information is required.

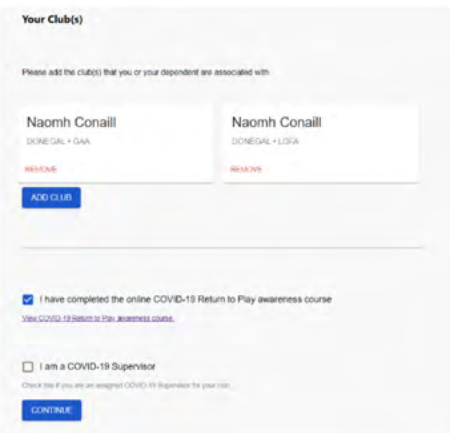
**Select your club(s)**

You will be asked to select your County, relevant Association and Club from the drop down options.



Please note that it is possible to add more than one club (e.g. GAA & LGFA / Camogie clubs) where dual players or children who play different codes are involved.

Independent Teams ('amalgamations'), can also be added in addition to a member's home club.



You will be asked to confirm whether or not you have completed the mandatory Return To Play awareness course.

You will also be asked to indicate that you have been assigned the role of Covid Supervisor in your club, if this is the case.

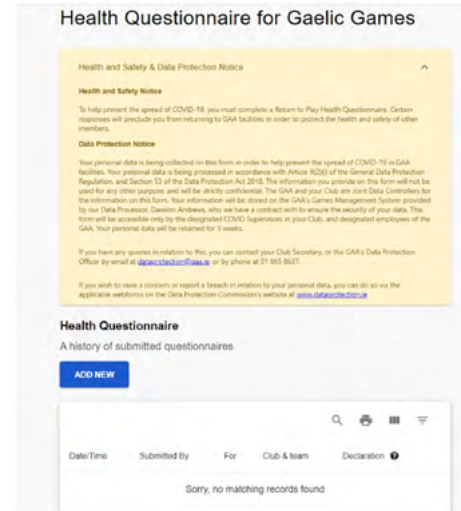
Please note that your club must also confirm its relevant Supervisors (in a separate process) before access is granted. Ensure that you select this option if you are a supervisor, otherwise your teams forms will not be visible.

**HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRES**

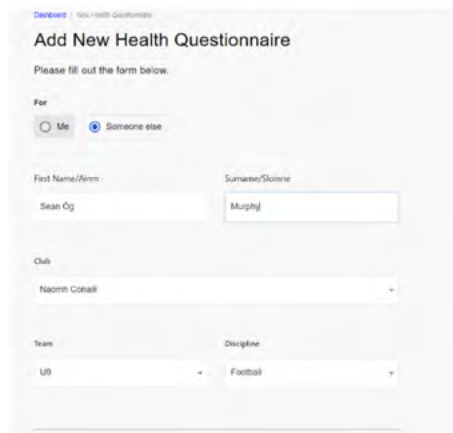
The Health Questionnaire has been defined by the CoVID-19 Advisory Group and requires that certain information is provided prior to returning to play Gaelic Games.

**Add a new Health Questionnaire**

Once your profile has been completed, you will be presented with some Health and Safety and Data Protection information, this should be read carefully. To complete your questionnaire, select the 'Add New' button.



Forms can be completed for yourself or for 'someone else', in the example below a dependent child. The relevant Club, Team and Discipline can be added from the drop down menus.



You will then be requested to answer five specific questions relating to your health, and submit.



Once completed, your Health Questionnaire will be visible on your list. In the example below, a parent (John Murphy) has submitted his own form (for the Seniors) and a form for his son (Sean Óg) who plays with the U9s.



**Reconfirming Health Status**

Prior to each subsequent session, you will be asked to reconfirm that your health status has not changed. This can be done by accessing the list of forms on your profile and selecting 'Reconfirm This'. In the example below, the parent (John Murphy) can reconfirm either his own, or his child's (Sean Óg) form.



Once completed, the reconfirmed Health Questionnaire appears on your list.



**FOR COVID SUPERVISORS****CoVID Supervisors**

Clubs are required to nominate CoVID Supervisors to coordinate the activities required to return to play. One of these activities is verifying that participants have completed the Health Questionnaire and have subsequently reconfirmed that their Health Status hasn't changed on each subsequent occasion that they take part in Gaelic Games.

**Access to systems**

The Health Questionnaire system has the ability to present CoVID Supervisors with a summary view of all of the questionnaires and subsequent reconfirmations submitted for teams in their clubs. There are three steps required to authorise individuals to perform the Supervisor roles on the system.

1. **The Club Secretary provides the email addresses of all CoVID Supervisors in their club**
2. **The individual registers on the [returntoplay.gaa.ie](http://returntoplay.gaa.ie) website**
3. **The individual ticks the 'I am a CoVid Supervisor' option in their profile**

I am a COVID-19 Supervisor  
Check this if you are an assigned COVID-19 Supervisor for your club.

**CONTINUE**

Individuals who have all three of these steps completed will be authorised to view information relating to their teams.

Note: Supervisors do not have access to sensitive personal information relating to the members of their clubs. All that is provided is the ability to view that a Health Questionnaire has been submitted.

**Supervisor View**

When a CoVid Supervisor accesses the

Health Questionnaire system they will have the ability to view forms submitted within their club. They will also be able to view forms that they themselves have submitted and confirm that their own health status has not changed by hitting reconfirm this.

Date	Submitted By	Age	Team & Club	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	SH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm

The information displayed can be sorted by clicking on any of the headings.

Date	Submitted By	Age	Team & Club	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	SH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm

Forms can be filtered using the filters option (highlighted below) to display individual Teams and are sorted by date, making it easy to verify who on a squad has provided the appropriate information.

Date	Submitted By	Age	Team & Club	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	SH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm

Individual teams can be filtered by selecting the relevant option.

Date	Submitted By	Age	Team & Club	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	SH2 (19-24)	L19 Hurling - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm
11/08/2020	John McQuillan	PH2 (19-24)	Teal Football - Teal Club - GAA	Reconfirm

**FOR CLUB OFFICERS**

Nominating CoVID Supervisors to have access to Health Questionnaires  
In order to nominate a CoVID Supervisors, clubs need to submit the email address of their Covid Supervisors using the MS Form available [here](#).

Please note that only Club Officers using their @gaa.ie email address (or @camogie.ie or lgfa.ie if relevant) can submit details of their clubs Supervisors. Please also ensure that only valid email addresses are submitted. It generally takes 4-6 hours after the club has submitted its form for changes to take effect.

# PLANS FOR 2020 KELLOGG'S GAA CÚL CAMPS UNVEILED

**THE GAA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH KELLOGG'S AND TG4, ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE NEW PLANS FOR THE STAGING OF THE 2020 KELLOGG'S GAA CÚL CAMPS. THE CAMPS THEMSELVES WILL START ON JULY 20TH WITH AN EXCITING NEW GAA CÚL CAMP TV PROGRAMME AIRING ON TG4 GETTING KIDS WARMED UP FROM JUNE 29TH.**

This first phase of camp activity will be broadcast Monday to Friday from 10.25 to 11.00am and repeated at 5.15pm from June 29th to July 17th. It will also be available on the TG4 player making the return to camp activity, both live and on demand, available to everyone at home and abroad.

The GAA Cúl Camps series will be produced by Waterford based Nemeton TV, and presented by Gráinne Bleasdale. Gráinne has had many roles on stage and television, as a puppeteer and as a presenter, including Operation Transformation - 10@10 (RTÉ), Ros na Rún (TG4), Déan É! (TG4), Dig In Saol Faoi Shráid (TG4).

The series will include skills, drills, games, nutrition, and wellness segments that will appeal to all the family from multiple All-Ireland winning Cork Camogie and Football star, Rena Buckley, Dublin hurler Liam Rushe and former Donegal footballer star Kevin Cassidy.

Recent developments with the Government and GAA roadmaps, and extensive planning relating to health and safety, mean details for this year's camps can now be confirmed. In line with the

Safe Return to Gaelic Games Document, children will be welcomed back to club venues around the country from July 20th.

A list of all venues will be confirmed on the cúl camp website [gaa.ie/kelloggsculcamps](http://gaa.ie/kelloggsculcamps) on June 22nd when bookings reopen.

Prices are as follows;

**First child €65.00/€55.00**

**Second child €60.00 / €50.00**

**Third+ children €50.00 /€45.00**

Camp times may be altered in selected venues due to the current circumstances.

**Morning: (09.30 to 13.30)**

**Mid-morning: (10.00 to 14.00)**

**Afternoon: (14.30 to 18.30)**

These options will be clearly outlined on the camps website and details on specific camps safety protocols will be shared with all those registering for camps.

The Kellogg's GAA Cúl Camps kit is a huge part of our camps with mass appeal among primary school children all around the country and beyond. Given current circumstances, camps schedules may be reduced in certain counties which has prompted the GAA to pursue the option of making kit available for sale for children who may not get the option to participate in the 2020 camp programme. Kit will be available for sale online at [gaa.ie/kelloggsculcamps](http://gaa.ie/kelloggsculcamps).



For the over 4,000 people who had pre-registered for 2020 camps, they have been contacted with three options; 1) a full refund 2) a delivery of kit and a refund of the remaining amount or 3) priority for a place on one of our re-scheduled camps.

To allow for all health and safety measures, capacity at certain camp locations and venues may be reduced this year and in some instances demand for places will outstrip availability. Early booking is strongly advised.

Since 2006, 1,389,539 children have participated in the cúl camps programme including over 156,000 children and nearly 6,000 coaches in 2019. We are committed to providing children with the opportunity to play Gaelic games this summer and look forward to a new season of both broadcast and live Kellogg's GAA Cúl Camps.

GAA President John Horan welcomed confirmation of details for the 2020 camps.

He said: "I am delighted that we are in a position to confirm plans around arrangements for our 2020 Kellogg's GAA Cúl Camps and acknowledge all of the work that has taken place in recent weeks in an effort to get us to this point.

"2020 has been a very challenging year for everyone and we have had to revisit what are the most successful underage camps run by any organisation, anywhere.

"We were determined to run the camps this year and while they have to be organised differently, I hope the essence of what they represent will still shine through.

"I'd also like to acknowledge the support of long-term partners Kelloggs for their ongoing support and also TG4, who will play a central role in the first phase."

Ruth Hughes, Kellogg Market Head Ireland said: "We are delighted the Kellogg's GAA Cúl Camps are going ahead this year with the exciting addition of bringing it to people's homes on the small screen. The GAA have strict health and safety guidelines in place and I look forward to sending my own kids to our local camp. The whole team at Kellogg is proud to help fuel children from breakfast table to pitch now more so than ever."

TG4's Head of Sport, Ronán Ó Coisdealbha said: "We are very excited to be working with the GAA and Kellogg's on this initiative and to be giving the next generation of children the opportunity to improve their GAA skills from home.

The GAA Cúl Camps television series, along with our Campa Cúla4 programme will form a one-hour block of television each morning which will entertain and educate children with action-packed activities during the Summer."



# OVER 10,000 COACHES AND COUNTING COMPLETE GAELIC GAMES SURVEY

BY JOHN HARRINGTON

Over 10,000 Gaelic Games coaches have already completed the biggest ever coaching survey conducted in Irish sport.

The Gaelic Games Coach Survey 2020 is an initiative by the GAA, LGFA, and Camogie Association to help shape the future development of Gaelic Games and it has now been extended for another week.

“We’re well over 10,000 responses now which was the overall target that we were looking for,” GAA Coach Education Officer, Dr. Peter Horgan, told GAA.ie.

“We’ve looked at some of the response so far and we’re very happy that we’ve gotten a good spread across all counties and codes.

“What we’re going to do is leave the survey open for another week, until the end of next week, just for those people who haven’t had a chance to engage with it yet or for anyone who would like to.”

The lockdown has been a challenging time for coaches, but as Limerick GDA James Ryan told GAA.ie, they’ve also used it as an opportunity to upskill.

Coaching webinars run by the GAA and individual county boards have been hugely successful, and Dr. Peter Horgan believes that coaches will now be more creative going forward.

“The engagement that we’ve gotten across both this survey and some of the webinars that we’ve been running and all

the counties have been running has been enormous.

“Around 48,000 people have engaged with webinars during the months of April and May. The engagement numbers have been enormous. A number of the speakers that we would have had on the various webinars would have emphasised that very point, that this is an opportunity to think about what it is you do and maybe try things you weren’t able to do in the past, different communication methods and so on.

“The various lockdown activities that we’ve had has forced people to be a bit creative and I think a lot of coaches have responded to that.

“It’s been a challenging time, but at the same time some little bit of good might come out of it in the broader sense if we become a bit more reflective on what we do and how we do it.

“And maybe there might be some ways we can operate better in to the future that might be a little bit more friendly for our time. For example, we mightn’t have to travel as much if we use video conferencing and video session and all of that.”

## How do I access the survey?

The survey is available online, so you can access the survey through GAA.ie, Camogie.ie and LGFA.ie as well as the GAA Learning site – [learning.gaa.ie](https://learning.gaa.ie). The survey will also be sent to each club secretary for circulation amongst the coaches within

the club. If you have attended a coaching course previously, we will email the survey to you. If any coach wishes to receive the survey directly, they can do so by emailing [gamesdevelopment@gaa.ie](mailto:gamesdevelopment@gaa.ie)

Details for the survey are available from

Take Gaelic Games Coach Survey 2020

Alternatively, you can visit the GAA Learning website - <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachsurvey> or email [gamesdevelopment@gaa.ie](mailto:gamesdevelopment@gaa.ie)





## CLUBS WARNED OVER WATER SYSTEMS TO AVOID BACTERIA – NEED FOR A LEGIONELLA PREVENTION PLAN

**ACCORDING TO THE CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL, 'LEGIONELLA IS A TYPE OF BACTERIUM FOUND NATURALLY IN FRESHWATER ENVIRONMENTS, LIKE LAKES AND STREAMS. IT CAN BECOME A HEALTH CONCERN WHEN IT GROWS AND SPREADS IN HUMAN-MADE BUILDING WATER SYSTEMS LIKE SHOWERHEADS AND SINK FAUCETS.'**

Clubs should implement simple, proportionate and appropriate control measures to ensure the risk of Legionella remains low.

For hot and cold water systems, temperature is the most reliable way of ensuring the risk of exposure to Legionella bacteria is minimised i.e. keep the hot water hot, cold water cold and keep it moving. Other simple control measures to help control the risk of exposure to Legionella include:

- Flushing out the system on a regular basis
- Avoiding debris getting into the system (e.g. ensure the cold water tanks, where fitted, have a tight fitting lid)
- Setting control parameters (e.g. setting the temperature of the hot water cylinder (calorifier) to ensure water is stored at 60°C)
- Make sure any redundant pipework identified is removed.

It is important that water is not allowed to stagnate within the water system and so there should be careful management of properties left vacant for extended periods. As a general principle, outlets on hot and cold water systems should be used at least once a week to maintain a degree of water flow and minimise the chances of stagnation. To manage the risks during non-occupancy, consideration should be given to implementing a suitable flushing regime or other measures such as draining the system if it is to remain vacant for long periods.



# ZERO TOLERANCE FOR RACISM IN GAELIC GAMES

BY JOHN HARRINGTON

Recently, **Franz Sauerland**, **Stefan Okunbor** and **Lara Dahunsi** have given powerful and affecting testimonies of the racism they have suffered on GAA pitches.

It is important that their voices are heard because it is only by shining a light on such discrimination when it occurs that it can be exposed and rooted out.

The Association is anti-sectarian, anti-racist, and committed to the principles of inclusion and diversity at all levels. These values are enshrined in the GAA's Official Guide.

Last year the GAA launched a manifesto which was summed up by the statement 'GAA – Where We All Belong'.

That manifesto wasn't a self-serving pat on the back, it was a call to arms, and one the Association is determined to live up to.

The racist slurs suffered by Franz, Stefan, and Lara proves there is a journey still to travel, but the GAA has worked hard and continues to work hard to ensure that inclusivity is a byword for Gaelic Games.

Ger McTavish is the Association's Diversity and Inclusion Officer and, among many other initiatives, is responsible for considerable and ongoing efforts to address racism on behalf of the GAA, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, and the Camogie Association.

"The GAA is made up of one race with

many ethnicities that we support in our community awareness campaigns and all educational sport programmes," McTavish told GAA.ie

"The Diversity and Inclusion work in the GAA takes many forms and we endeavour to develop policy and practice of using the family of Gaelic games for cultural integration and social inclusion of people from our diverse ethnic population in Irish society, along with making sure that all the games in the Gaelic basket are adapted for people with different abilities."

Most recently, in collaboration with Sports Against Racism Ireland (SARI), McTavish developed the Association's Responding to Racism (R2R) educational and awareness campaign which includes both education and procedures to follow should any incidents arise in GAA clubs.

After a pilot phase last year, the first Responding to Racism workshop took place in Mayo last March. Ballaghaderreen club-man and All-Ireland winning Mayo U-21 footballer, Shairoze Akram, took part in it and believes such workshops can be a very important education tool.

"I think those sorts of workshops are very important going forward. It's about educating not just players, but coaches as well," Akram told GAA.ie

"Because coaches will then go back to their own clubs and counties and the message will be reiterated to all the players from a young age.

"Everybody needs to be educated on that



Mayo footballer Shairoze Akram (far left) and the GAA's Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Ger McTavish (far right) pictured at the Responding to Racism Workshop that took place last March.

what you say and what you do can have consequences and a negative effect on an individual.

"The education side of it is very important because some kids might say things without knowing exactly what it actually means and others mightn't realise what they're saying is offensive.

"Even the older generation might ask you, 'Where are you from?'

"I wasn't born in Ireland, I was born in Pakistan, but I've been living in

Ballaghaderreen since I was very young.

"But some of my friends were born here and people will ask them where they're from and they'll say, 'I'm from Mayo'. But then the person will say to them, 'No, where are you actually from?'

"They don't mean any harm and they mightn't think that's being racist, but it can come across kind of racist.

"It's all about educating people on how what they say and how they say it can affect others."

Thankfully, it is some time since it has last happened, but in the past Akram has been the victim of racial abuse while playing Gaelic Football.

“When I was younger, yeah, I would have experienced it and not just on the pitch but off it too,” he says.

“When my family moved to Ballaghaderreen people weren’t used to foreign nationals coming in. But I think people have gotten more used to it now and that has helped.

“But when we first come over you could be walking down the street with your friends and somebody would say something to you. I would have gotten a bit of it too on the GAA pitch when I was younger, until the age of 15 or so.

“But once I started playing up to minor and U21s and started playing with Mayo people would get to know you as a person and they wouldn’t feel the need to say stuff like that.

“I don’t think we have the same level of racism in Ireland that you would in a country like the USA, but you would be foolish to say there is none or that it isn’t an issue at all.”

Despite the racism that Akram occasionally had to endure, he still regards his experience in Gaelic Games as hugely positive overall and believes the Association’s policy of inclusivity is a win-win one.

“It’s beneficial for both parties,” he says. “The GAA is a great social outlet for new people moving into Ireland.

“When my parents first moved over they knew no one in the town, but from bringing me to football they got to know other parents. And it was great for me too obviously in terms of developing friendships.

“The other side of it is that it can be a great benefit for clubs to welcome new people in,

especially clubs that might be struggling for numbers.

“Sport is a great way to break down barriers and it means so much to people to be welcomed into a town by the local GAA club.

“And, as I’ve found, being involved in the GAA has been a great help to me outside of sport too. I’ve made friendships and contacts that I’ll have for life.”

The GAA is as much a community organisation as a sporting one which is why it is so important that social inclusion should be at the core of its ethos.

The Irish population is an increasingly diverse one and migrants from many different countries are making a significant contribution to their local GAA clubs since moving to Ireland.

Longford Slashers are a good example of a club who have welcomed the migrant community with open arms and are now reaping the rewards.

They’ve been very successful at underage level in recent years thanks in no small part to the influx of new families into the area and the club’s proactive approach in getting them involved.

More important than the silverware won is the manner in which the club’s inclusive policy has made newcomers to the town quickly feel part of the community.

Longford Councillor, Uruemu Adejinmi, is the Slashers’ Integration Officer, and has experienced first-hand the positive impact it makes when the hand of friendship is willingly extended.

“Getting involved in the GAA is an easy win as far as I’m concerned as a migrant because you’re sharing the love that the

Irish people have for their sport,” she told GAA.ie.

“The GAA is an opportunity for migrants to get involved, to blend in, to understand the Irish culture in terms of sport.

“And it’s an opportunity as well to embrace more of the new community and get them to see the welcome, the céad míle fáilte that the Irish are known for.

“That’s why I love getting involved, that’s why I became the integration officer, to get more people into the club, to experience the embrace I have received here, to experience the greatness of Gaelic Football and to join the Longford Slashers GAA family.”

The founding fathers of the GAA hoped the Association would help consolidate Irish identity through the playing of our native sports at a time when they were close to dying out altogether.

Gaelic Games are thriving now and the time for consolidation is long past. Now there is far more to be gained from sharing our sporting culture with others.

Proof of that is vividly illustrated by the rapid growth of our international GAA units which now number over 400. Once traditionally a home from home for Irish ex-pats, GAA clubs outside of Ireland are now bastions of multi-culturalism and a great advertisement for the GAA’s embrace of diversity.

Our own Irish identity is something that is constantly evolving. It is enriched by those who come here from other countries and bring the best of their own culture with them.

The act of opening their arms in welcome to new members in their community has been a mutually enriching experience for both GAA clubs and those they’ve brought into the fold.



In attendance at an Ecumenical Service celebrating contribution to the GAA of all faiths at St Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin, are, from left, Archbishop of Dublin Michael Jackson, Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael John Horan, and Rev Charles Mullen, Dean’s Vicar of St Patrick’s Cathedral.

All genders, creeds, and ethnicities are welcome in the GAA because diversity makes us stronger.

There is simply no place in the GAA for discrimination, a fact that GAA President John Horan made very clear last year when he spoke at an ecumenical service in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

"I look forward to the day when another man or woman of mixed ethnic background emulates Sean Óg Ó hAilpín to collect one of our famed trophies on the steps of the Hogan Stand in our own hallowed cathedral, Croke Park," said Horan.

"When we cross the threshold of a GAA club or dressing room, the only thing that should matter for the time that we are there is the colour of the jersey that we pull over our heads.

"It's those colours and the crest which the jersey bears that should be the only distinction between everyone involved on a given day.

"Race, gender, creed or absence thereof, gender preference, profession or political persuasion are all issues from our personal lives that bear no relevance to the playing of our games."

Further information on the GAA's commitment to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination.

### **1: What steps has the GAA taken in recent years to promote equality and eliminate discrimination?**

In the GAA official guide, the Association is Anti-Sectarian, Anti-Racist and committed to the principles of inclusion and diversity at all levels. Any conduct by deed, word, or gesture of sectarian or racist nature or which is contrary to the principles of inclusion and diversity

against a player, official, spectator or anyone else, in the course of activities organised by the Association, shall be deemed to have discredited the Association.

The GAA had in place since 2010 an integration and inclusion officer, Tony Watene, who carried the flame of inclusion and integration for nine years. Tony now fills the role of wheelchair hurling and camogie coordinator. The New Zealand native drove the Give respect, Get respect campaign along with the GAA for ALL Committee. The GAA for ALL committee oversees the Wheelchair hurling and camogie, football for all.

The current Diversity and Inclusion officer, Ger McTavish, employed in 2019, is determined to further develop the policy and practice of using the family of Gaelic games for cultural integration and social inclusion engaging people from our diverse ethnic population in Irish society, along with making sure that all the games in the Gaelic family are adapted for people with different abilities.

### **Responding to Racism**

In March 2020 in line with the INAR Human Rights week, Ger McTavish launched the first GAA Responding To Racism (R2R) educational and awareness campaign. The campaign, which includes education elements and procedures to follow should any incidents arise at any level of the GAA, has been developed in collaboration with Sports Against Racism Ireland (SARI).

The GAA aims to offer an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. Inclusion essentially means people having a sense of belonging, of being comfortable in being part of something they value. Inclusion is a choice. Diversity means being aware of accommodating and celebrating difference. Inclusion and Diversity in many ways go together. Real

inclusion reflects diversity, i.e. it aims to offer that sense of belonging to everyone, irrespective of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, race or minority community and/or disability.

The GAA's Manifesto is summed up by the statement "GAA- Where We All Belong" / "CLG - Tá Áit Dúinn Uilig Ann".

We're proud of and celebrate our Irishness; a celebration of our GAA, our shared values and of every person who helps make the GAA what it is - in every corner of the globe; that we focus on Gaelic Games and activities; that we're community-based; and that we cherish our amateur ethos and volunteer base. We remain and are proud of what we are but in doing so and in remaining true to all that, we are open and welcoming to others.

### **2: In what aspects of the Association's activities have these steps had the greatest impact?**

Many aspects of the Association have been positively impacted by such activities to date, from our clubs and schools, to our communities and our volunteers.

GAA for All is a family of initiatives in the GAA encompassing Wheelchair hurling and Camogie, football for all, Fun and Run, "All Star" Inclusive clubs and intercultural activities, amongst others. Wheelchair Hurling and Camogie is an inclusive indoor game involving 6-a-side teams which is suitable for all ages, genders and abilities. The rules have been modified to suit individuals involved and their capabilities. The four provinces compete in the M. Donnelly All-Ireland series every year, with the cup currently residing with Munster, the 2019 champions.

M. Donnelly GAA Football for ALL

Interprovincial Finals are held in Croke Park each September and are delivered in partnership with Irish Special Schools Sports Council.

The ISSSC is a voluntary organisation that provides sporting and cultural activities in special schools, as designated by the Department of Education and Science. Children with mild-general learning disabilities compete in this 9-a-side Gaelic Football tournament.

The players represent the regions of Connacht, Dublin, Munster, North Leinster, South Leinster and Ulster and are drawn from 15 different special schools. Each squad comprises 12 boys and 12 girls who have been selected from regional trials to play on the hallowed turf of Croke Park.

The GAA's support for the M. Donnelly GAA Football for ALL Interprovincial Finals reflects the Association's ongoing commitment to engaging with special schools, as set out in the new GAA Strategic Plan, Fís Shoiléir 2018-2021.

GAA Fun & Run is an inclusive activity involving a team of batters/kickers and fielders which is suitable for all ages, genders, and abilities. The game encompasses a range of fundamental skills that exist in Gaelic Football, Hurling, Rounders and Handball. The rules have been modified to adapt these skills to suit individuals involved and their capabilities. As a game it aims to ensure everyone can enjoy participation in Gaelic Games, the club, and therefore their community.

Cúl 4 All / Cúl Eile Camps are camps for children with additional needs that usually happen during the Easter and summer holidays (but many clubs now run adapted games programmes on a weekly basis). The camps are based on the hugely successful Kellogg's GAA Cúl Camps, which provide boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 13 with an action-packed and fun-filled week

of activity during the summer holidays. Like Kellogg's Cul Camps, these adapted camps revolve around maximizing enjoyment and facilitating participant involvement in Gaelic Games, regardless of perceived abilities or additional needs. Activities are player-centred with a games-based approach with a strong emphasis being placed on personal and social development and well-being. Activities are also organised in an age-appropriate manner with a view to optimizing learning, enhancing friendships, improving physical & psychological wellbeing, while promoting school and club links.

There has also been a rise in the delivery of intercultural programmes across the GAA, including Coaching programmes for residents in Direct Provision centres or cultural days at club and county level, often coinciding with the popular Lá na gClubanna.

A recent Embracing Diversity Seminar was held in Ballyhaunis, where the community welcomed 75 nationalities to the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence for an exchange of knowledge and cultures. It included a discussion on projects in the community to promote diversity and equality, featuring contributions from residents of the direct provision system, community groups, the GAA, and An Garda Síochána.

The seminar delivered was in collaboration with the Department of Rural and Community Affairs and Dept. of Justice.

A GAA Gender Diversity working group is also currently active, helping to further align the GAA's culture with its values and actions. The GAA is committed to providing an inclusive and diverse environment in which all members of the GAA community should expect to be able to thrive and be respected and

valued for their unique perspectives and contributions, so that they can achieve their fullest potential.

This is in line with the strategic goal at the heart of our Strategic Plan 2017-2021, which is to value and develop our GAA community.

**3: How is the GAA educating our younger members that discrimination in any form is not tolerated by the Association?**

#### **Code of Behaviour (Underage)**

Since it was adopted in 2010 the Code of Behaviour has highlighted in simple language, understood by children and young people, that expressions and actions of a racist nature are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. In addition to our Association rule 1.12 in which conduct of a racist nature will be deemed to have discredited the Association we also have Rule 7.2 (e) an on the field of play rule that addresses racism while the above Code has also been enshrined in Rule.

Incidents of alleged racism can now be dealt with at club, county or national level by select Code of Behaviour Committees appointed and trained for that purpose.

#### **Child Safeguarding Training**

The GAA is the first NGB in Ireland to include a case study on racism amongst young people, as part of our child safeguarding (protection) training. Participants address this case study as a form of child abuse and are asked how to address any racism and how to be proactive in addressing such matters. 22,800 GAA coaches attended this training in 2019.

#### **GAA Tackling Bullying Programme**

As the only Sports NGB with an anti

bullying training programme regular workshops are delivered at Club level in response to incidents of bullying which at times may also include interventions as a result of racist actions.

#### **Referee Training**

In October 2019, as part of a new child safeguarding section, the content of referee's training programme was amended to include a case study on incidents of a racist nature calling at or during games. Whereas a referee may take immediate action during a game if they are aware or witness racism referees are now obliged to report any allegations of racism during or after a game to their relevant GAA County Board.

#### **Restorative Practice**

With the assistance of Consensus NI and the National College of Ireland a five week (weekend) training programme was agreed to upskill 20 tutors as part of the introduction of a Restorative Practice services in the GAA. This new form of support and alternative intervention has been specifically chosen to deal with disputes not traditionally dealt with under Rules, including issues of racism or bullying and personal conflicts. The training will commence as soon as is practically possible.

#### **4. Looking to the future**

On a broader front the inclusion and equity measures in the extant European commission white paper on sport will be fully implemented in a systematic way starting with the Club to Community programme where local clubs will engage. There is the template being used to guarantee a social compact with people with different abilities that will provide physical access in stadiums and other club facilities. There are many areas of human rights and promotion of equality that is

coming into the organisation through the Diversity and Inclusion officer Ger McTavish.

There will also be an adaptive sport strategy that will expand the work already achieved by the GAA. Ger is currently working with UNESCO Tralee, Council of Europe and European commission on a human rights programme. The Rights Understanding in Sport Toolkit (TRUST). This project will develop a programme for sports practitioners in educational institutions and the wider community on providing human rights education and raise awareness of the potential role sport can play in human rights promotion. A second project that we are involved in is Responsibility Sport with Erasmus plus, Solidarity and Responsible Sports Euro leaders Training in collaboration with University College Cork.

The project aims to introduce in sports academies and sports clubs, procedures that can combat social problems that today's sport faces (violence, racism, intolerance, discrimination, gender inequality, inequality of access to sports, language stereotypes and others). For this, we will want to create a social responsibility stamp and a recognition process adapted to sport and we will want to develop a European course training to sports directors (and consultants) in these issues. We want to make these actions recognized at national and a European level through a common recognition.

We continue to work closely on many collaborations with Sport Against Racism Ireland and many other stakeholders.

For videos and more see [www.gaa.ie/stories/zero-tolerance-for-racism-in-the-gaa/](http://www.gaa.ie/stories/zero-tolerance-for-racism-in-the-gaa/)

# LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN GAELIC GAMES

BY JOHN HARRINGTON

The Digital Dublin Pride Festival is taking place this week so it's timely to shine a light on the significant work being done to make Gaelic Games more inclusive sports for the LGBTQI+ community.

GAA President, John Horan, said in his address to Congress 2019 that protection and respect for members of the LGBTQ community involved in Gaelic Games should be a priority for the Association, and since then the GAA has strived to live up to those words.

The GAA, the LGFA, and the Camogie

Association were officially represented at last year's Dublin Pride Parade, and since then have become the first sporting organisations to set up a Gender Diversity Working Group.

"The Gender Diversity Working Group was established last year to look at the promotion of gender diversity and includes members of each of our Gaelic Games Associations and indeed external people that we've invited in as well," says the Working Group's Chairperson, Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl, who is also the GAA's National Children's Officer.

"There would be four maybe five pillars.



Members of the GAA, LGFA, and Camogie Association pictured taking part in the 2019 Dublin Pride Parade in Dublin.

And the first pillar just completed and now gone for consultation among each of our Associations is called or titled the participation of the LGBTQI+ community in Gaelic Games.

"It's a big breakthrough for us to get this far. We've had widespread consultation, we're happy with the document and, as I say, following consultation we will now see if it requires major changes in the Association.

"For example, we may have to look at some of our rule wording, we may have to be

more proactive in creating a welcoming Association for everybody and we will continue then at the same time with the other pillars which include inclusion, disability, employment et cetera. So they go on parallel while we're trying to complete the first pillar.

"It's a been a good experience. I think it's going to add tremendously to our Associations. It was an eye-opener for some people that we hadn't been as participative or welcoming as we thought we were and that was a good piece of research that we carried out.



Inter county GAA referee David Gough, his dad Eugene, left, former Ladies Football All Star Valerie Mulcahy, singer-songwriter and author Brian Kennedy, and comedian Katherine Lynch among the GAA group during the Dublin Pride Parade 2019 at O'Connell Street in Dublin.

“We also consulted with our Youth Forum while we were doing it as well so it’s been good, it’s been welcomed, there have been no obstacles and I’m really looking forward to the next step where we broaden our horizons.

“For example, working closely with DCU, and we’re also working with other organisations where they are promoting greater inclusion. We’ve a seminar coming up next week that we will participate in so we have started the first steps, at least started the first steps.

“The word is out, people know that we’re actually serious about, I suppose, promoting a greater participation and being more welcoming and understanding as well as we do it.”

That welcome and understanding has been warmly received by leading members of the LGBTQI+ community.

Gordon Grehan is Operations Manager at TENI (Transgender Equality Network Ireland) and an enthusiastic member of the GAA’s Gender Diversity Working Group.

“A lot of the work that we (TENI) do is around breaking down barriers to access to social inclusion for transgender people,” Grehan told GAA.ie

“And one of the really important areas that trans people face barriers in is sport. So I was delighted to be part of the Gender Diversity Working Group and to be asked to represent the transgender community as part of that group. It’s an incredible

step I think for the GAA to be so forward-thinking and so progressive and to really put the inclusion and participation of LGBTQI+ people at the forefront of their work. So I’ve been delighted to be part of the group and I think it’s really positive.

“We know from our work that trans people miss out on all the benefits of participating in sports.

“They often don’t enjoy the mental health benefits, the physical health benefits, the sense of community that can come from being part of their local sports group and that’s something we really want to work on to change so we are really happy at TENI to working with the GAA on this and it’s a great thing to be able to talk about for Pride.”

The formation of the Gender Diversity Working Group is just one example of the proactive work the GAA, LGFA, and Camogie Association are currently doing in the area of inclusion.

Ger McTavish works as a full-time Diversity and Inclusion Officer for all three organisations, and her brief is a wide-ranging one.

“The aim of the GAA is to offer an inclusive, diverse, and welcoming environment for everyone,” says McTavish.

“Over the last 10 years the GAA have been working very hard in the area of inclusion and integration.

“There have been many developments and many programmes implemented. The GAA For All Committee is a committee that oversees a lot of the inclusion and integration policies and also all of the initiatives.

“The GAA For All Committee is made up of the GAA, the LGFA, the Camogie Association, the Handball Association and

the Rounders Association along with many other stakeholders.

“This committee engages in the awareness campaigns and also development and guidelines around GAA For All.

“Some of the GAA For All initiatives are inter-cultural activities, wheelchair hurling and camogie, football for all with the Irish Special Schools.

“We also have inclusive Cúl Camps and All-Star programmes which are club programmes that give everyone in the community the opportunity to come and experience the GAA club.

“A lot of other programmes are underway through different training and different workshops and also an awareness campaign.

“In March we also launched a **responding to racism workshop** which is a two-hour workshop that gives training to our volunteers and members of GAA clubs.”

For further information on GAA For All, go [here](#).

# HURLING WEBINARS PROVE A MAJOR HIT



The inspirational Slaughterneil club in Derry

BY MARTIN FOGARTY

The series of Hurling Specific Webinars has continued into June with three further events to date. Nursery Hurling Values and Guidelines Part 2 and Coaching & Managing a Youth or Adult Team Part 2 proved very popular with great numbers from at home and abroad logging in each night and an equal amount viewing the workshops online afterwards.

Both workshops contained a huge amount of valuable advice and practical examples for those just starting out on their coaching careers or for those coaching at the elite level of club or county. Due to the current training restrictions the aim of the webinars was to try to bring the pitch to the sitting rooms and this was well achieved through the use of top class video recordings already produced by Connacht GAA and the National Games Development Department. The foresight

to record these sessions has really paid dividends in a way never imagined due to the current crisis.

The third webinar of the month was a little bit different and proved to be unbelievably popular with huge numbers attending on the night and over one thousand viewing it online since. This workshop took a look at Slaughterneil GAA in Derry and got an insight into what makes that little club tick. It took the form of an interview with fifteen people involved at the same time from all over the country which was an operational challenge in itself. Hurling manager Michael McShane and his Camogie counterpart Dominic “Woody” McKinley along with star players Aoife Cassidy and Brendan Rogers were the guests on the night. However, if that was not enough to whet the appetites of the audience another plethora of stars were revealed mid-way from behind the curtain to

further add to the evening – These were Niamh Kilkenny, Jamesie Ó’Connor, Colm Callanan, Fergal Hartley, Michael Rice and last but not least – 18 time All Ireland winner Rena Buckley. The conversation went on for over two hours and for a further hour “backstage” when the live event ended.

There were a few surprises also – the first one unwelcome- fifteen minutes into the show the system crashed and with nothing resolved after twenty minutes the “game” had to be officially abandoned and re-fixed for the following week (in typical GAA fashion) Luckily punters were not too far from home. Various reasons were given for the crash from -too many trying to get in- to Slaughterneil reluctant to give away their secrets – to Microsoft workers being on a Bank Holiday but at the end of the day it looks like it was near neighbours Kevin Lynch’s of Dungiven that pulled the plug in an effort to get one over on their admired and deadly rivals. Like all replays, tickets were even harder to get for refixture! The first surprise of the evening was a nice birthday greeting to Club Stalwarth Patsy Cassidy on reaching his 94th. Birthday. Patsy has never missed a Slaughterneil game. His “best wishes” were at the beginning of the event so he got two cakes! One at the original fixture and another for the replay. Aoife Cassidy also surprised her Camogie manager Woody Mckinley on reaching his 60th. Birthday. She had an apple tart with candles for him and even sung “Happy Birthday” for him as Gaeilge. She had to eat the cake herself as it wouldn’t hold until training resumes.

The tables were turned on Aoife herself with the best surprise of the evening. She got what appeared to be a best wishes text message from her sister Eilís in New Zealand only to discover that Eilís was actually behind the curtain and made a personal appearance. The Cassidy sisters, Niamh Kilkenny and Rena Buckley then treated viewers to a lovely “caint agus comhrá” as Gaeilge to wrap up the evening.

## Lester Ryan R.I.P.

*At the end of the Nursery Hurling webinar a glowing tribute with some nice imagery was paid to recently deceased Lester Ryan from Kilkenny who tragically lost his life recently in an accident.*

*Lester worked for the Leinster council and was one of the first full time coaches to be appointed by the GAA. His contribution to the development of Gaelic Games in Leinster and further afield will never fully be appreciated as was indicated by the many tributes paid to him through the Q & A. It was in equal measures ironic and not surprising how the three presenters on the night knew Lester and had fond memories of him.*

*Martin Fogarty from Kilkenny “got to know” him as a club opponent from under 14 right through to adult hurling. They later became good friends spreading the coaching gospel.*

*Damien Coleman from Galway got to know him in their respective coaching roles in Connacht and Leinster and also as team mentors in the Hurling/Shinty games with Scotland.*

*Niall Williams from Westmeath had probably the fondest memories of Lester and that was as a young boy hurling for Westmeath and invited down to Kilkenny to take part in the D.J. Carey School of Hurling organized most brilliantly by Lester. An entire column could be dedicated to that experience and the huge amount of time, effort and interest put into it by Lester.*

*Ar Dheis Dé go Raibh a Anam.*

### [Webinar 5: Nursery Hurling Values & Guidelines Part 2](#)

### [Webinar 6: Hurling Webinar: Coaching & Managing a Hurling Team Part 2](#)

### [Webinar 7: Developing a coaching Eye for Hurling](#)



# GIVING A VOICE TO THE NEXT GENERATION - YOUTHREPS REPORT

**THE YOUTHREPS ARE COMMITTED TO WORKING TO ENSURE THAT OUR PEERS FEEL VALUED, RESPECTED AND LISTENED TO AT CLUB, COUNTY AND NATIONAL LEVEL. EVERY YEAR WE ARE LEARNING NEW APPROACHES AND PILOTING IDEAS TO SEE HOW BEST TO MAXIMISE ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE.**

The 2019 #GAAYouth Forum took place on Saturday 26th October in Croke Park with over 400 young people from across Ireland attending a fun-filled and educational day with a range of consultations, workshops and insights with top players and experts. As part of the Youth Forum a Consultation Workshop around the topic of drop-off and a Youth Congress were held to gather the thoughts and feelings of the delegates, ensuring that they have their voice heard.

## Consultation Workshop

A consultation focusing on drop-off was held with 150 young players aged 14/15. The objectives of the Consultation were:

- to establish the factors that would lead a young person to stop playing Gaelic Games.
- to identify practical recommendations/suggestions that a teammate, coach and Club could adopt to discourage young people from dropping out of Gaelic Games.

The many reasons for a young person dropping off can be seen in the word cloud.



In addition to investigating why a young player would stop playing. The YouthReps facilitated discussions at each table and encouraged the participants to share and debate their ideas. Recommendations were sought for how to keep young players involved, including

- What young players can do.
- What coaches can do.
- What clubs can do.

## What can young players do to keep young players from dropping off?

- Invite/include those at risk into your friendship group;
- Make sure to talk to people at training;
- Tell them that they are good;
- Practice with them to improve their skills.

## What can Coaches do to keep young players from dropping off?

- Increased game time;
- Variety in training;
- Equality – equal game time and no favouritism;
- Talk more to the players - constructive feedback and listen to the players' views.

## What can Clubs do to keep young players from dropping off?

- ✓ Provide more playing opportunities;
- Show young players the Pathway for involvement;
- Provide equal opportunities – particularly between genders;
- Actively engage with young players and listen to them.



### Youth Congress

The objectives of the Youth Congress were:

- To allow for discussion and voting in relation to topical items within Gaelic Games;
- To gather the feedback on items through table facilitators and through voting devices.

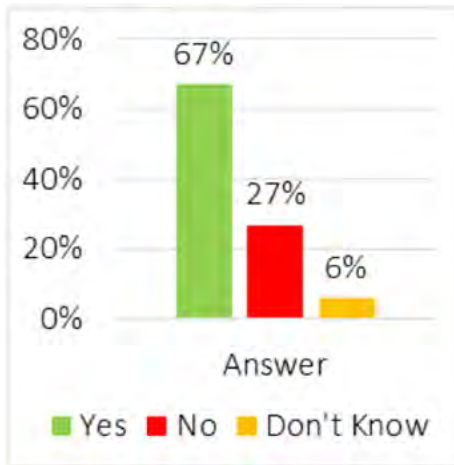
The Youth Congress was chaired by Diarmuid Cahill (Chairperson, GAA Youth Committee) and attended by John Horan (Uachtarán CLG), Kathleen Woods (Uachtarán, An Cumann Camógaíochta) and Marie Hickey (Uachtarán, Cumann Peile na mBan).

Items to be discussed fell into 3 categories:

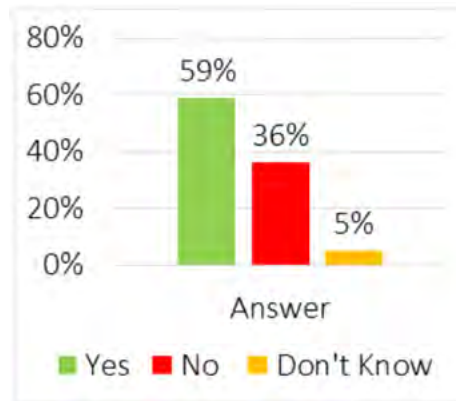
- Games Programmes
- Communication
- Substance Use

### Games Programme

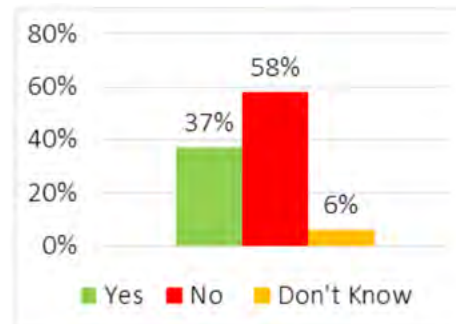
Do you think there should be a tiered Championship Competition for Inter-County Minor Football?



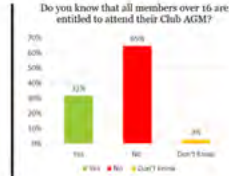
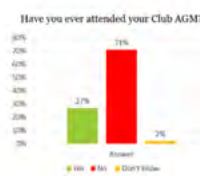
Do you think that an 'Interchange' (unlimited and rolling substitutions) system should be introduced for all age-grades up to U17?



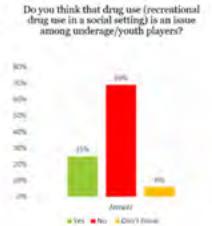
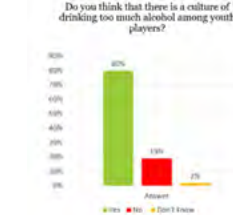
Do you think that the first Inter-County age-grade should be increased from U17 to U19 for Gaelic Football and Hurling?




### Communication



### Substance Abuse




Based on the results and findings from the #GAAyouth Forum 2019 the YouthReps prepared a number of recommendations for consideration by An Coiste Bainistíochta.




**Recommendation #1: Improved Communication**

- The Report be circulated to every County for consideration and discussion at a meeting of the County Management Committee.
- The YouthReps present the report and relevant findings to the Central Committees and to LGFA and Camogie Management Committees respectively.
- That a number YouthReps be invited as observers to GAA Congress 2020 so that they can report on this subsequently at the #GAAyouth Forum 2020.



**Recommendation #2: Improved Consultation**

- That the YouthReps work together with Counties and Provinces to deliver Roadshows throughout the year which educate and empower young people and ensure that they have their say on GAA issues that matter to them.
- That the proposals for an online depository be reviewed and discussed by the relevant stakeholders, with a view to finalising them in 2020, so that we can increase the number of ways in which YouthReps, Counties, Provinces and Central Committees consult with young people.

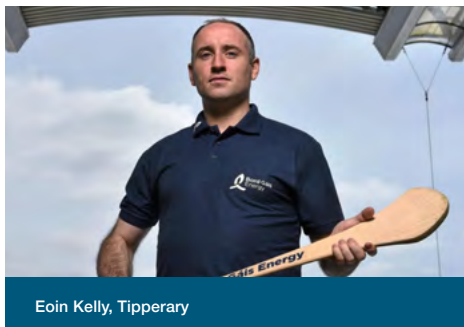


**Recommendation #3: Improved Engagement**

- That the proposals for Gradam na nÓg are revised and discussed with a view to finalising them in early 2020.
- The YouthReps along with the Youth Consultation Committee identify steps that Counties/Clubs can take to raise awareness amongst young members of opportunities to volunteer/upskill as a volunteer.
- That young people be included and involved in the planning, preparation and possibly delivery of the Association's next Strategic Plan.

The full report can be found at [www.gaa.ie/news/gaa-youth/](http://www.gaa.ie/news/gaa-youth/)

# BORD GÁIS ENERGY GAA LEGENDS VIRTUAL TOURS LAUNCHED



Eoin Kelly, Tipperary

**TIPPERARY STAR EOIN KELLY AND KERRY HERO DARA Ó CINNÉIDE WILL BE AMONGST THE GREATS GIVING THE PUBLIC A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THEIR HURLING AND FOOTBALL CAREERS WHEN THEY TAKE PART IN THIS YEAR'S BORD GÁIS ENERGY GAA LEGENDS VIRTUAL TOUR SERIES. OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS THEY WILL BE JOINED BY A HOST OF OTHER GAELIC GAMES LEGENDS WHO WILL BE RELIVING SOME OF THEIR PROUDEST SPORTING MOMENTS IN CONVERSATION WITH THE TEAM AT THE GAA MUSEUM.**

With the GAA Museum remaining closed until June 29th and restrictions on gatherings still in place, the hugely popular Bord Gáis Energy GAA Legends Tour Series is going online and will continue to give fans a fascinating insight into these players' careers and ongoing relationships with Gaelic Games. Similar to the traditional tours, the players will be interviewed by a GAA Museum tour guide about their career, giving people a tour through their earliest memories of playing Gaelic Games, lining out for club and

county, their heroes and their Croke Park memories, with the public able to watch online.

As well as Kelly and Ó Cinnéide, GAA legends including Terence McNaughton (Antrim), Jamesie O'Connor (Clare), Steven McDonnell (Armagh), Joe Connolly (Galway), Rena Buckley (Cork) and Stefan White (Louth) will reflect on their lives lived immersed in Gaelic Games. The virtual tour series begins on Wednesday, June 17th with Jamesie O'Connor with a new tour being released each Wednesday thereafter.

Each of these special tours will offer GAA fans an unforgettable opportunity to get an exclusive glimpse into the making of a legend.

### Confirmed Legends 2020

- **Hurling** – Terence McNaughton (Antrim), Jamesie O'Connor (Clare), Eoin Kelly (Tipperary) and Joe Connolly (Galway)
- **Football** – Steven McDonnell (Armagh), Dara Ó Cinnéide (Kerry), Stefan White (Louth)
- **Camogie and Football** – Rena Buckley (Cork)

Bord Gáis Energy Retail Director Colin Bebbington said; "We're proud of our 12-year partnership with the GAA and delighted to launch the 2020 Bord Gáis Energy GAA Legends Tour series in a new online format. During these unprecedented times we hope that with these special tours, GAA fans will enjoy



Former Kerry footballer, Dara Ó Cinnéide, pictured hosting a Bord Gáis Energy Legends Tour of Croke Park in 2014

the opportunity to go behind-the-scenes as the Legends reflect on their career and share personal memories and anecdotes of playing big match days with club and county in Croke Park.

"With GAA fans having to do without the games they love so much for the past few months we really think that our legends tours will whet the appetite of all those supporters who are anxiously waiting for the return of the Championship."

Niamh McCoy, Director at the GAA Museum added; "The Bord Gáis Energy GAA Legends Tours are always a highlight of our summer season at the GAA Museum. Our visitors get a chance to really get under the skin of GAA greats and hear about life behind-the-scenes on big match days at Croke Park. This year, by moving the tours online we're bringing this unique experience to a wider audience and we hope the magic of these player memories will be felt by GAA fans around the country and beyond. The GAA Museum team constantly work to bring a living history of Gaelic Games to our visitors, and this partnership with Bord Gáis Energy has allowed us to continue to do that, even during these challenging times. We'd like to thank all the wonderful players for taking the time to tell us their stories.

Eoin Kelly captained Tipperary to the Liam MacCarthy Cup in 2010, the day the Premier County famously ended Kilkenny's hopes of five All-Ireland titles in-a-row.

Dara Ó Cinnéide is a three-time All-Ireland winner with Kerry and he lifted Sam Maguire as captain in 2004.

The forthcoming 2020 Bord Gáis Energy GAA Legends Virtual Tours at Croke Park are as follows:

- **Wednesday 17th June Jamesie O'Connor (Clare)**
- **Wednesday 24th June Steven McDonnell (Armagh)**
- **Wednesday 1st July Terence McNaughton (Antrim)**
- **Wednesday 8th July Dara Ó Cinnéide (Kerry)**
- **Wednesday 15th July Eoin Kelly (Tipperary)**
- **Wednesday 22nd July Stefan White (Louth)**
- **Wednesday 29th July Joe Connolly (Galway)**
- **Wednesday 5th August Rena Buckley (Cork)**

The Bord Gáis Energy Legends Virtual Tour series can be viewed on Bord Gáis Energy's Rewards Club webpage [bordgaisenergy.ie/my-rewards](https://www.bordgaisenergy.ie/my-rewards) and the official GAA website [gaa.ie](https://www.gaa.ie) and on [crokepark.ie/legends](https://www.crokepark.ie/legends)

# JAMES RYAN SAYS GAA COACHES HAVE UPSKILLED DURING LOCKDOWN

BY JOHN HARRINGTON

Like ever other full-time GAA coach around the country, James Ryan has remained very busy during the lockdown, albeit in a different way.

The Limerick GDA and former county hurling star hasn't been able to work with players in a normal pitch setting, so he's had to get creative.

"It's a different job at the moment alright," he says. "We're doing up session plans that incorporate social distancing, we're trying to figure out ways of getting lads to train at home on their own, we're doing Tabata type sessions where you have to do something like 30 seconds of jab-lifting and roll-lifting with a fundamental movement in between. 30 seconds on, 10 seconds off, that kind of thing.

"We're thinking up of all sorts of ideas of different things that you can do. All of Munster GDAs are looking at our whole programmes and coaching courses and trying to make everything a little bit better and easier so when we go back we can implement it all.

"But it's definitely a different job at the moment. I can't even remember the last time I held a hurley as a player or a coach. Hopefully we'll be back soon."

By the time he's back on a pitch interacting with players again, Ryan hopes he'll be an even better coach than he was before the lockdown.

Like so many others he has put a lot of



Former Limerick hurler, James Ryan, is a Games Development Admin with Limerick GAA.

effort into upskilling himself in recent weeks, and believes that has given him a fresh perspective on his job and how best to do it.

"Croke Park, the Munster Council, and the Limerick County Board have all done coaching webinars and being a coach is a bit like being a teacher in so far as you have to keep upskilling yourself, you have to keep learning," says Ryan.

"Even Brian Cody has said that the day you stop learning is the day you stop being a better manager, coach, or player.

"There's no doubt that good things will come out of this if you're a coach who is willing to learn. I think I'll be a lot more organised after this.

"All of us as coaches, and it's all of society really, are taking a step back and going, 'are we doing too much, too often?' We're trying to bring that into our coaching.



James Ryan pictured taking a hurling coaching session with pupils of Herbertstown NS.

"For example, instead of trying to get an U6 hitting the ball 20 yards out of their hand, it's probably more important to make sure they're holding the hurley right and enjoying themselves.

"I'm sure plenty of people in other jobs can relate to that - sometimes we're just trying to do too much.

"I think there will be a lot of changes. And even from an inter-county point of view it's going to be very interesting to see which teams it suits.

"A lot of GAA teams are over-trained and I think a load of them have realised that now. This is definitely going to bring freshness to some teams and it'll be interesting to see how it plays out."

Limerick GAA are determined to hit the ground running when players and coaches are allowed to return to training pitches on June 29th.

They're currently working on a coaching and games booklet for Limerick players from U6 right up to minor that will include sample worksheets and simple coaching pointers.

"It's for coaches in Limerick so that when they go back training they'll have sample sessions and there'll be games in it as well," explains Limerick GAA Games Development Administrator and former Limerick hurling star, James Ryan.

"The other new thing we've brought to it is that when you see a drill or game in it, if you download it online you can see a graphic that moves so you can understand it fully.

"The idea is that if you pull out your smartphone you can press play, look at it for a minute, understand the drill or the game and then put it into practice."

# ULSTER GAA WEBINARS ASSISTING TEACHERS

BY CIAN O'CONNELL

These deeply uncertain times ensure adaptability has become critical so Ulster GAA opted to try to upskill teachers in schools.

During the past month a series of webinars have been organised by Ulster GAA's Provincial Club Coaching and Games Development Officer Garreth Thornton.

The response has been extremely positive with the fifth session focusing on promoting wellness and resilience in children being facilitated by Barbara Mellon.

"Barbara is a primary school teacher and she is also a Relax Kids coach, that is a company she is a practitioner for too, she goes around to schools doing workshops for kids and schools," Thornton explains.

"It is about giving tips and tricks for children becoming more resilient and giving them the tools to deal with emotional, health wellbeing in a fun way."

So far Thornton has been delighted with the response and engagement of those who have signed up for the courses.

"This is our fifth session that we have provided for teachers, for anybody really, but we have sort of targeted teachers," Thornton admits.

"We felt that there was a lot of stuff going on for club coaches and kids. We thought about how we can upskill teachers for when they do go back to school there may

not be any GPOs or coaches going into schools in Term 1 and potentially further on.

"We thought about giving teachers some skills in how they can conduct effective PE lessons. We ran four modules on four consecutive Wednesdays. This was brought up last week, we know Barbara, she has done bits before so we contacted her to see if she could come in to run this workshop.

"All of our own staff delivered on the first four workshops, that is the angle we took, just trying to upskill the teachers a bit."

That teachers can implement the initiatives and ideas being provided is vital to the process according to Thornton.

"We had an introduction to games in week one, we just brought them through different games they can use in PE," Thornton states.

"Probably the main thing we focused on was how they coach the games, more than just setting up an activity for the kids, that there would be some learning taking place.

"Week two was about how to effectively plan a PE lesson, different tips and tricks on how to get the best out of that 35 or 40 minutes, how to vary between games and drill activities within the session, to cater for all different abilities.

"Week three - tricks of the trade - was the title of the workshop, it was more organisational tips, how to group kids more effectively, how to set out your

equipment so you're not handing the ball out of a bag.

"Just small tips coaches would be mindful about, that a teacher wouldn't be. In the last Wednesday it was about how to develop a theme in PE - how do they link the classroom to the PE hall. Then this week is obviously with Barbara is about how to build wellness and resilience skills in kids."

The manner in which the Ulster GAA coaching staff has dealt with the different circumstances is a source of encouragement for Thornton.

"We've had about 450 teachers across the first four sessions," Thornton reveals. "We had to run two sessions on the first one through Teams. I set up a meeting and we weren't really au fait on how to do the live webinar or the live event. We set up Teams and the demand was huge, I was apprehensive.

"I know Teams can cater for up to 250 through a meeting, what if we had more than this? We ended up just having two sessions, 1.15-2.30 so we set up two of them.

"From week two onwards we just ran it as a live webinar, you can get up to 10,000 on that system. We've had more than 100 on each session.

"This is all new to us in terms of delivering webinars and workshops through Microsoft Teams and the live webinar thing. We've had to adapt.

"Any of our games webinars are all animated now using up to date technology and talking through the activities that way instead of practically out on the grass how we would usually do it. I think it is going to stay this way for a while."

Click [here](#) for further details on the Ulster GAA webinar series.



# MINSTER SIMON HARRIS LAUDS GAA CLUBS FOR THEIR HELP FIGHTING COVID-19

BY JOHN HARRINGTON

The former Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD, recently visited the COVID-19 Community Testing Centre in Croke Park. While there, he spoke to GAA about the hugely positive role that GAA clubs have taken on in the fight against COVID-19.

**Q: Minister, you've been here in Croke Park today to see the testing facilities. What have been your impressions?**

A: It's peculiar being here in Croke Park for a testing facility rather than a game but my impression here is that such amazing work has been done in such a short space of time and our Health Service has had to build up an entire new testing infrastructure from nothing for a virus that is new to the world in relative terms.

And I think what you have here is a real good example of partnership of the GAA working with the Health Service to meet the needs of the Irish people. And I'm conscious of course that the GAA's involvement doesn't stop here in Croke Park. Right across the country so many clubs in all communities are involved in looking after each other.

That Irish 'Meitheal', if you like, where people come together at a time of difficulty. People doing the groceries and checking in on in a socially distant way on an older neighbour and walking the dog of somebody who's self isolating and coming together which I suppose is the very ethos of the GAA. So, while it's a weird feeling to be here in a Croke Park like this I think it's a testament to the principles of the GAA

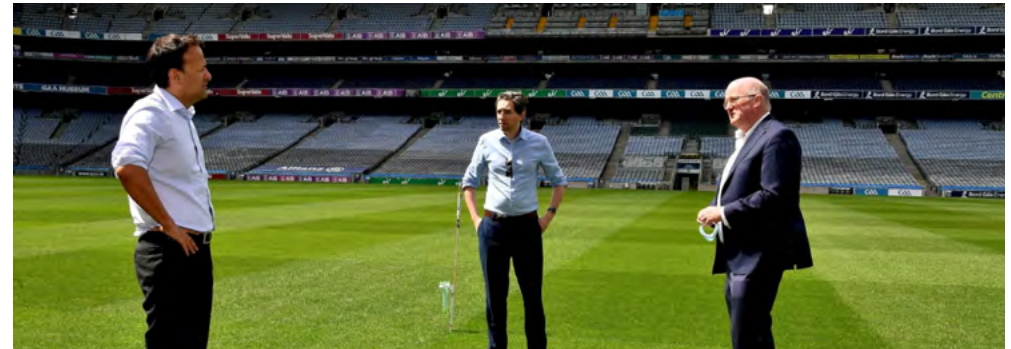
that the organisation has really stepped up and played such a major role in our national effort to beat this virus.

**Q: That 'Meitheal' you speak of, helping the most vulnerable in our communities, the work the clubs are doing, has that been particularly helpful for the HSE in terms of maybe taking the burden away in certain non-emergency cases?**

A: Yeah, I mean, what we need to do here is make sure we can use our healthcare professionals to do what they're trained to do what they want to do what they're really skilled at doing. But we also know that there are non-health things that need to be done. There's dogs that need to be walked, there's grass that needs to be cut, there's messages and prescriptions that need to be picked up and there's older people who may not have a support network who need a friendly phone call to check in on them.

And the fact that the GAA has stepped up in that regard with other community organisations right across the country makes me very proud to be Irish. I think it should make every member of the GAA very proud of their organisation. It's really expanded to the Health Service, if you like. It's grown the health family and it's been key to our success. I mean when I think of COVID-19 I really do think of Team Ireland and everybody coming together, everybody playing their part, nothing being too much for anybody.

That has definitely been key to our success so far in suppressing the virus but it's also been key to try to keep us all going at what



An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., Minister for Health, Simon Harris T.D., and GAA President, John Horan, during a visit to the HSE COVID-19 community testing centre at Croke Park in Dublin.

is a very difficult time for people but trying to motivate us and encouraging each other when you see those acts of kindness happening in towns and villages right across the country.

**Q: In terms of keeping a positive mental attitude, I'm sure you'd love to be back here again in Croke Park soon under different circumstances?**

A: Yeah, look, we're all looking forward to the resumption of sport. There's so many great days out here every year but also at pitches up and down the length and breadth of the country. Of course we have to do it in a way that's safe, so we want to see the gradual return to sport. We don't want to see the restrictions in place for one moment longer than they need to be. But we have to follow the evidence, we have to listen to the public health doctors because at the end of the day it's about saving lives.

But we want people back playing sports as quickly as possible and as soon as it's safe to do something.

**Q: How helpful has it been that that message that you're speaking about has been echoed by the GAA and clubs around the country to the members?**

A: Oh it's been so helpful. I mean the GAA has such a reach into every town, every village, every parish across the country. It can do what we can't do. It can very easily mobilise an army of volunteers and also a network of information. I'm sure those WhatsApp groups in clubs right across the country ping with messages of what the needs of the people in their local town and villages are and I've seen this and I've heard of these examples as well. So to be able to tap into the network that is the GAA and to really mobilise that GAA army for the good of Team Ireland has been invaluable.

## ÁR GCLUICHÍ, ÁR LAOCHRA #14 – DARACH Ó CATHASAIGH

**IS É DARACH Ó CATHASAIGH, CLG NA RINNE AGUS PHORT LÁIRGE, AN DUINE IS DEIREANAÍ LE PÁIRT A GHLACADH SA TSRAITH 'ÁR GCLUICHÍ, ÁR LAOCHRA'. D'IMIR DARACH A CHÉAD CHLUICHE SRAITHE LE PEILEADÓIRÍ PHORT LÁIRGE AG UIMHIR 3, IN AGHAIDH LUIMNIGH, I MÍ EANÁIR AGUS TÁ SÉ AG GABHÁIL Ó NEART GO NEART Ó SHIN I LEITH.**

Ní hamháin gur peileadóir an-tábhachtach é an fear Gaeltachta seo dá chlub agus dá chontae agus is an-íománaí é, freisin, agus go leor buaite aige leis an Rinn.

“Is Déiseach mé agus táim an-bhródúil gur tógadh i nGaeltacht na nDéise mé, ceantar álainn. Tá an Ghaolainn agus an spórt, CLG ach go háirithe, fite fuaite i mo shaol agus i saoil mhuintir na Rinne.”

(Darach Ó Cathasaigh, Bealtaine 2020)

Is mar seo a leanas a d'fhreagair Darach ár gcuid ceisteanna!

**Ainm:** Darach Ó Cathasaigh

**Aois:** 23

**Slí bheatha:** Mac Léinn

**Club:** An Rinn

**Contae:** Port Láirge

**Club nó contae?** Club

**An scannán is fearr leat?** The Dark Knight

**An banna ceoil is fearr leat?** Gerry Cinnamon

**An áit is fearr leat?** An Coinigéar sa Rinn

**An bia is fearr leat?** Sícín and fataí rósta

**An clár teilifíse is fearr leat?** It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia

**An chéad chuimhne CLG atá agat:** Ag imirt leis an gclub i bPáirc Uí Shíothcháin

**An t-imreoir ab fhearr leat nuair a bhí tú óg:** Ken McGrath



**An chéad uair ar imir tú le do chontae:** Fé 21 peil in aghaidh Chiarraí

**An t-imreoir is fearr a d'imir leat:** Liam Ó Lionáin

**An t-imreoir is fearr a d'imir i do aghaidh:** Seán Ó Sé

**An cluiche is fearr a d'imir tú riamh:** Sa tsraith in aghaidh Shligigh i mblíana.

**Buaicphointe do shaoil imeartha le do chontae:** Bua sa tsraith in aghaidh Shligigh, i Sligeach, i 2020.

**Buaicphointe do shaoil imeartha le do chlub go dtí seo:** Ag buachaint Chraobh Iomána Idirmheánach an Chontae i 2017 leis an Rinn.

### Gluais / Glossary

**ó neart go neart** – from strength to strength  
**ó shin i leith** – since then  
**ní hamháin** – not only  
**an-tábhachtach** – very important  
**Déiseach** – a person from Waterford  
**an-bhródúil** – very proud  
**ach go háirithe** – especially  
**fite fuaite** – interwoven  
**muintir na Rinne** – the people of An Rinn  
**dúshlán rómhór** – too big a challenge  
**iascaireacht** – fishing

# AIMSIGH NA FOCAIL A BHAINNEANN LE SCÓR!



Aimsigh na focail seo a leanas:

**Aithriseoireacht**

**Amhránaíocht Aonair**

**Bailéad-Ghrúpa**

**Bean an Tí**

**Ceol Uirlise**

**Club**

**Contae**

**Fear an Tí**

**Máistir na gCeisteanna**

**Moltóir**

**Nuachleas**

**Rince Foirne**

**Rince Seit**

**Scéalaíocht**

**Stáitse**

**Tráth na gCeist**

M	Á	I	S	T	I	R	N	A	G	C	E	I	S	T	E	A	N	N	A
O	A	L	C	Ú	D	F	U	M	H	I	L	L	C	Í	G	D	F	M	I
L	É	R	É	S	Á	B	E	H	T	Á	D	G	A	E	L	G	B	Ú	T
T	P	F	A	É	F	E	A	R	A	N	T	Í	I	N	Ó	U	G	A	H
Ó	D	A	L	Ó	T	A	F	Á	G	Ó	D	N	H	E	Í	F	É	I	R
I	P	L	A	U	M	N	E	N	Í	T	N	U	Ó	H	C	L	C	Ú	I
R	M	R	Í	B	F	A	Ú	A	M	D	B	A	O	Ú	E	H	G	Í	S
C	R	B	O	M	S	N	T	Í	R	I	N	C	E	F	O	I	R	N	E
I	N	I	C	T	N	T	C	O	F	A	Í	H	M	G	L	É	I	M	O
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B	L	R	Ú	H	A	Í	S	O	I	P	I	Á	T	O	I	Á	E	M	C
Í	A	C	T	E	F	H	Á	N	G	É	D	B	R	P	S	I	I	U	H
D	G	I	M	S	L	P	H	A	N	L	S	H	Í	F	E	T	T	N	T
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D	L	F	H	O	É	G	T	R	Á	T	H	N	A	G	C	E	I	S	T
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# CLUB FOLDER STRUCTURE

## ***What is the Club Folder Structure?***

The Club Folder Structure (CFS) is a One Drive structure in place for Club Officers filled with templates, userguides and documents to assist them in their role. Key features of the CFS are:

- **Blank templates for Clubs to use**
- **User guides on important procedures within the GAA**
- **Official policies and documents on various GAA affairs**

## ***Why is it useful for Club Officers?***

The Club Folder Structure is useful for Club Officers as it gives them access to a set of sample documents and folders specific to each role. Official GAA policies and templates are ready for use that Club Officers can refer to for guidance.

## ***How can a Club Officer access it?***

To access the Club Folder Structure, please visit: <https://learning.gaa.ie/clubfolderstructure> and follow the relevant steps.

# COVID 19 CLUB EDUCATION

**THE GAA, LGFA AND CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION HAVE PARTNERED TO PROVIDE A COVID-19 CLUB EDUCATION PROGRAMME TO HELP THOSE INVOLVED IN CLUBS RETURN SAFELY TO GAELIC GAMES ACTIVITIES.**

The programme aims to protect the health and welfare of all those involved in Gaelic Games and minimise the risk of transmission of Covid-19 in local communities.

It is especially aimed at:

- Covid Supervisors and Club Officers
- Players and Parents/Guardians of Underage Players
- Team Personnel such as Managers, Coaches and Medical Personnel

Please visit: <https://learning.gaa.ie/covid19>

## Online Learning

**Key Information - Club Briefing Webinar**  
A series of Club Briefings will take place in the coming weeks. The first webinar on 16 June explained the main sections in the safe return Guidelines and common queries addressed by the Advisory Group since the publication of the first version on 5 June.

To watch the Covid-19 Club Education Webinar #1 – Safe Return to Gaelic Games Guidelines please go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shgo-TWDiHo>

## Key Information - eLearning Module

A certified eLearning module has been developed for Gaelic Games. It contains basic information for Players, Parents/Guardians and Team Personnel on their responsibilities and enables participants to get a Certificate to verify completion to their Club.

This module must be completed by anyone entering Club facilities for training sessions/games especially Players, Team Personnel and Parents/Guardians. The module will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

For more information on the Online Learning and access to the eLearning module please visit: <https://learning.gaa.ie/covid19learning>

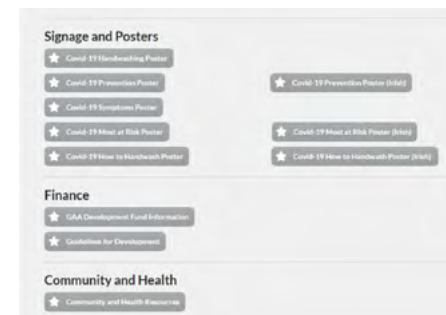
## Educational resources

There are a number of educational resources available on the GAA Learning Portal. These resources include general resources such as:

- **Guidelines on the Safe Return to Gaelic Games**
- **Guidance on Covid-19 Equipment and Supplies for GAA Clubs**
- **Covid-19 Club Facilities Checklist**
- **Child Safeguarding Guidelines**
- **Additional Medical Information on Covid-19**
- **Role of the Covid Supervisor**

And much more.

There are also several resources available through different departments as per the image below:



Due to the rapid changing nature of the public health advice, all resources will be labelled with the date of last update and amended as quickly as possible after the Gaelic Games organisations approve changes.

For more information and access to all of the resources please visit: <https://learning.gaa.ie/covid19resources>

## COvid-19 faqs

There are a number of FAQs around the Return to Gaelic Games activity available on the GAA Learning Portal. To access them please visit: <https://learning.gaa.ie/covid19faqs>

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING SERVICES DURING COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS

**WHILE MUCH FOCUS HAS BEEN ON THE RESTRICTIONS RELATING TO GAMES AND TRAINING THAT HAVE ARISEN DUE TO THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC MANY SAFEGUARDING SERVICES, INCLUDING FACE TO FACE SAFEGUARDING WORKSHOPS, HAVE ALSO BEEN SEVERELY IMPACTED UPON DURING THIS TIME.**

Some modifications have been made to the delivery of Gaelic Games Associations Child Safeguarding Training and these changes, outlined below in a Q & A format, remain in place until 31 December 2020, or until face to face workshops resume. We are asking all Club and County Officers to make themselves and their child safeguarding personnel aware of these temporary changes and of the clarifications below.

## **Safeguarding Training**

The Child Safeguarding 1 Programme (Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop) is perhaps the most attended of programmes for those who work with children in the GAA with over 22,000 attending this programme last year. Recognition of this programme continues for a 3-year period when the coach or mentor is then obliged to re-attend the face to face workshop, if they are still working at underage level, or undertake an online refresher training programme. Clubs will be aware all face to face workshops are now indefinitely postponed and the Child Safeguarding 1 workshop has been replaced by a new virtual and interactive workshop.

However, due to the current exceptional

circumstances this 3-year recognition period for safeguarding training has now been extended to 5 years until 31 December 2020. For example, if a person attended a Child Safeguarding 1 workshop anytime in 2015, they may now complete the Online Safeguarding Refresher programme up to the end of this year.

The new Child Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop is now up and running and we also intend launching a virtual Children's Officer programme and a virtual Designated Liaison Person's programme in the next few weeks. The priority however in the immediate future is delivering the Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop for Club and Camp personnel on a 32 County basis, which should be coordinated at local level by Club and County Children's Officers.

## **What is the Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop?**

- **The new Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop is a live interactive programme, delivered by a Tutor via a virtual classroom platform and replaces the face to face workshops until the end of the year or until the face to face workshops return. Safeguarding 1 training fulfils one of the requirements that an underage coach or a person working with children must undertake, the other two being vetting and a coaching qualification.**
- **The virtual workshop consists of two sessions of 1.5 hrs each and holds the same recognition as the face to**

**face workshops that we previously delivered. It is not a video and it is not a one-way webinar. It is an interactive live virtual workshop delivered by a trained Tutor to a maximum of 20 participants.**

- **Participants will receive instructions on how to create a GAA Elearning Account, which will permit them access to join the Virtual Safeguarding 1 Workshop. When both consecutive sessions are completed a certificate of attendance is issued to the participant.**
- **Preference on the virtual workshop will in the first instance be given to coaches who are working at Camps for children in the initial rolling out of the virtual workshops with other Club personnel to follow.**

**Can you book a place on the new Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop?**

- **Clubs are asked to draw up a list of those who require Child Safeguarding 1 training and particularly new coaches. The Club Children's Officer should then liaise with the County Children's Officer who is coordinating safeguarding training within the County. The County Children's Officer will contact Michelle Harte to agree on available time slots and dates for delivering the workshop. All queries should be forwarded to [safeguardingonline@gaa.ie](mailto:safeguardingonline@gaa.ie)**
- **County Children's Officers are also asked to liaise with their County Games Manager or other games personnel and draw up a priority list of those who may require Child**



**Safeguarding 1 Training.** This would include underage coaches who have yet to attend the training, Cúl Camps coaches and those who have recently undertaken Foundation Level coaching training and who are required to complete the safeguarding training before they receive their coaching certificate.

Remember, new coaches who are working on Cúl/Club Camps will be given priority when delivering the new Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop but as we increase the number of Tutors we hope to satisfy the obvious demand that is emerging from other quarters.

***Do we still have the Gaelic Games Child online Safeguarding Refresher programme, and if so, who should attend this?***

The online Safeguarding Refresher programme is always available as an online programme and may be accessed at <https://learning.gaa.ie/safeguarding> Applicants click in and complete the programme on their own at any time and once completed it has a 3-year recognition period.

The online Safeguarding Refresher is targeted at:

- **Any person who completed the Gaelic Games Safeguarding 1 face to face workshop in the last 5 years i.e. since 2015. They may now complete the online Safeguarding Refresher to enable them to continue in their role for the next 3 years or may defer the training until the new year. If a person can defer until the new year, we ask that they consider this.**
- **Any person who attended an LSP or other Sports NGB's Safeguarding 1 workshops can 'top up' their training by availing of our Child Safeguarding**

**Refresher and this fulfils their child safeguarding training requirements so that they may work with children in our Gaelic Games Associations.**

- **Any person who attends the new Sport Ireland or Sport Northern Ireland Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop online (soon to be launched) may also undertake the Gaelic Games online Safeguarding Refresher to fulfil their child safeguarding training requirements.**
- **A reminder that a person receives a certificate of attendance when they complete the online Safeguarding Refresher programme and a record is kept by the National Children's Office who can export a list of same for Clubs when required.**

The link to the Gaelic Games Child online Safeguarding Refresher programme is <https://learning.gaa.ie/safeguarding>

***Is the Child Safeguarding Refresher the same as the Safeguarding 1 online virtual workshop?***

No, they are not the same programme. The Safeguarding 1 virtual workshop is the recognised Safeguarding 1 programme that coaches and others must attend in the first instance to enable them work with children. The Refresher is a programme that a person normally undertakes after the 3-year period of recognition has expired (now extended to 5 years until end of 2020).

***When will we be able to attend Children's Officer training and the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) training through an online workshop?***

Following the commencement of the Safeguarding 1 programme we are now



amending both the Children's Officer training programme (Safeguarding 2) and the Designated Liaison Person's Programme (Safeguarding 3) and we hope to have these available online in the next few weeks. The online availability of these programmes will continue at least until face to face workshops return.

May I remind you again that we are hosting a special one-hour Children's Officers Information Webinar on Friday 26 June 2020 at 7.00 pm. If you have any questions for discussion during the webinar please forward them to [nationalchildrensoffice@gaa.ie](mailto:nationalchildrensoffice@gaa.ie)

The link to the webinar will follow early next week.

Children's Office open for business Please note that the GAA National Children's Office continues to provide our full range of services and advice remotely including the coordination of training, advice on local child safeguarding matters, vetting coordination, dealing with any cases

involving the abuse of children and other daily requests or advisory services.

Should you wish to contact any of our Child Safeguarding staff, please do so by email or telephone.

*Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl, Child Safeguarding Manager*

[nationalchildrensoffice@gaa.ie](mailto:nationalchildrensoffice@gaa.ie)

or at 087 2301420

Michelle Harte, Child Safeguarding Officer

[michelle.harte@gaa.ie](mailto:michelle.harte@gaa.ie) or at 085 8864449

**REMINDER DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON**

*Coiste Bainistíochta has directed that all Clubs must inform their County Secretary with the name and contact details of their Club Designated Liaison Person by 30 June 2020. Following collation of this information a list of all DLPs shall be published on gaa.ie along with their contact details.*

## OFFICIAL GUIDES

The GAA official Guide updated 2020 edition is available.

They're live in the downloads section now: <https://www.gaa.ie/downloads/>

Individual doc links on the site:

**[Part 1](#)**

**[Part 2](#)**

## MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to this month's edition of the GAA Club Newsletter. Your feedback is welcome and any comments, suggestions or queries should be directed to [clubnewsletter@gaa.ie](mailto:clubnewsletter@gaa.ie).

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