

APRIL 2021  
AIBREÁN 2021  
NUACHTLITIR



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## COVID-19 UPDATE FOR CLUBS: NEARLY THERE



### **AFTER THE LONGEST OF WINTERS, WE ARE NEARLY THERE.**

In the coming weeks activity will return to GAA pitches all over the country. They are but the first tentative steps in Ireland's easing of restrictions north and south, and they are dependent on virus numbers being manageable, but for the first time in a long time, there is hope again.

Inter-county training will be allowed to resume north and south from April 19. A revised fixture schedule for the GAA season with inter-county competitions followed by a clear slot for club championship will be released on the weekend of April 9.

In the 26 Counties juvenile training in non-contact pods will be allowed from April 26. There is no fixed date on when adult club training can resume but it is hoped that this might follow soon after some time in May if Government permits.

In the Six Counties, club training will resume from April 12.

In advance of all of this activity there will be advice issued on how clubs can reopen and host players safely.

However, vigilance remains absolutely vital. So too, does compliance with public health guidance.

Breaches at club and county level in recent weeks have brought the spotlight on our Association and

threaten to undermine the significant work done by the majority of members in the face of the Pandemic.

As the Uachtarán and Ard Stiúrthóir wrote in their letter to clubs on March 30:

“These are hugely welcome developments and allow us finally to begin planning on-field activity for the remainder of 2021. However, it should also be noted that these dates are conditional and will very much depend on what happens in terms of the overall COVID-19 picture in the coming weeks. For that reason, it is more important than ever that no collective training sessions are held between now and the Government indicated return dates. Breaches in this context will not only be dealt with under our own Rules but would likely put the broader plan to return to activity in serious jeopardy.”

Seeing our clubs with their gates open and people playing, and especially young people back out in the open air with their friends will be worth the wait.

The end is hopefully in sight. Please hold firm.



## 2020 INJURY FUND EXTENSION TO 31 MAY 2021

### 2020 INJURY FUND EXTENSION TO 31 MAY 2021

Given that no activity has been possible for January to March 2021 a further two-month extension of Injury Fund cover has been ratified by Coiste Bainistíochta. This will now take the 2020 cover term up until 31 May 2021.

This means that the GAA Injury Benefit Fund cover remains in place based on existing 2020 team registrations. Units do not need to register or pay for their 2021 teams until reinvited to do so. Details with regards to registering and payment for the 2021 GAA Injury Benefit Fund will issue once we have more clarity from Government as to what the coming months may look like.

It is a condition of the extended 2020 Injury Fund cover to 31 May 2021 that in advance of any permitted return to train or play in either April or May, "All players will still be required to be individually registered for the 2021 season on the new "Foireann" membership system." 2020 player registrations will "NOT" carry over into 2021 and cover will be declined if a player is not fully registered for the 2021 season in advance of any return to train or play in 2021.

### PAUSE ON "LOSS OF WAGES COVER" FROM 1 JANUARY 2021

Following discussion at a meeting of Central Council on Saturday 20th March last, it was agreed to review the following two options as alternatives to the current pause that has been applied to the loss of wages cover that forms part of the wider Player Injury Benefit Fund.

1. Offer all our playing members who may feel that loss of wages cover is a prerequisite for participation in GAA activities for 2021 to individually subscribe to a stand-alone GAA endorsed personal injury cover plan for 2021.
2. Review the 2021 Injury fund premium payable by each of the 1,600 units and potentially increase this premium by 25% to partly cover €1.3m of the forecasted €3m fund deficit to May 2022 if loss of wages cover is to be reinstated during this term. The funds ongoing deficit is primarily due to the absence of gate receipts during this term which ordinarily sub-vents the shortfall in the fund annually.



# HOW TO AVOID INJURY WHEN RETURNING TO PLAY

**THE CHALLENGE OF RETURNING TO PLAY FOR GAA PLAYERS AFTER A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD OF LOCKDOWN LAST YEAR LED TO MANY SUFFERING INJURIES FROM PUSHING THEMSELVES TOO HARD, TOO SOON.**

That's a reasonable assumption to make when you analyse the 2020 figures for the GAA's player injury fund.

Even though there was no club action from March to June and from October on, there were 5,692 injury claims in 2020 which was only slightly less than the 2019 figure of 6,288 injuries.

This year male and female players in both codes will be faced with the same challenge – how best to get back into optimal condition once the lockdown ends and collective training can resume.

That's where the **'Be Ready to Play'** programme should prove to be hugely helpful.

A Coaching and Sport Science programme developed by the Gaelic Games Sports Science Workgroup in association with UPMC, official healthcare partner of the GAA and GPA, will be delivered via webinars, website programmes, instructional videos and live online sessions.

The first of those webinars, 'Preparing to train and play: How to decrease your injury risk', was hosted on March 16 by Helen McElroy, a Chartered Physiotherapist who specialises in Sports and Exercise medicine, and can now be viewed in full at the top of this article.

Preparing to train and Play How to decrease your injury risk Helen McElroy 16 03 21

Watch later Share

**WEBINAR - SPORTS SCIENCE**

**'Preparing to train and play: How to decrease your injury risk?'**

**SPEAKER**

**Helen McElroy**  
Clinic Director of Focus Physiotherapy & Sports Performance, and Lead Physio with Tyrone GAA Academy

**WELCOME TO TONIGHTS EVENT**

**WE WILL COMMENCE AT 7.00PM**

MORE VIDEOS

0:00 / 57:54

**Be Ready To Play**

In Partnership with UPMC LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

GAA WHERE WE ALL BELONG THE GAMOGIE ASSOCIATION LGFA PEIL na mBAN

GIVEN THAT NO ACTIVITY HAS BEEN POSSIBLE FOR JANUARY TO MARCH 2021 A FURTHER TWO-MONTH EXTENSION OF INJURY FUND COVER HAS BEEN RATIFIED BY COISTE BAINISTÍOCHTA.



Over the last 12 years McElroy has worked with all codes of inter-county GAA at senior level and is currently lead physio with the Tyrone GAA.

“We saw an awful lot of niggly injuries at the start of last year,” confirmed McElroy when asked about the incidence of injuries among Gaelic Games players after lockdown last year.

“We were expecting the bigger hamstring injuries and knee injuries because that was what we had learned from the resumption of the Premier League and Bundesliga.

“One thing that we actually saw was a lot of quad injuries because people weren’t

doing a lot of kicking before they returned to collective training. People hadn’t really considered the kicking load when they were doing their own individual training and I’m not sure if that will be any better this time around because of the lack of access to pitches again.

“Not knowing the timescale of a return to playing is obviously a challenge for players and last year you had a situation where when players did know when matches would resume they pushed too hard too soon in terms of their training which led to injuries.”

The first piece of advice that McElroy has for players who want to do all they can to avoid injuries when returning to play this year is to

be honest with yourself.

If you’ve spent much of the last few months on the couch rather than being active, then your return to training will have to be a gradual rather than sudden one.

“The big thing is that when you’re starting off not to underestimate or overestimate your current baseline fitness,” says McElroy.

“We want people to honestly evaluate where their base line is and then progress from there. Everyone’s baseline is going to be different based on their own circumstances. What you’re doing and what your team-mate who has a gym in their house are doing are going to be two completely

different things.

“We want everyone to get back moving within those patterns that they need for their sport and then progressively add load to that.

“That’s where the Be Ready to Play programme comes in because it starts at that baseline and shows you how to progressively add load over the next 10 or 12 weeks.

“It’s grand going for a run in the park, but that doesn’t prepare you for what you need to be doing when you’re playing Gaelic Football or Hurling.

“The acceleration, the deceleration, the cutting and turning and the contact are the things that we need to progressively expose players to before they can return to play.”

If you sustained an injury towards the end of last season and have presumed that the period of rest since has sorted it out, then McElroy says you could be making a mistake.

“Previous injury is the biggest risk factor for injury,” she says. “So, for example, if you had recurring groin injuries last year you might not have stressed that part of your body since.

“So in the webinar I’ll be giving a few wee tips on how to try manage those older symptoms and work on a base level strength and what to look out for, what are the worrying signs of these injuries coming back.

“Some injuries will have responded well to rest since players were last playing matches last year but if someone had a tendon injury last year that they played through the season with and have done nothing about it since, it’s more likely to rear its head if you’ve done nothing over the winter.

“The likes of hamstring and achilles tendinopathy, those injuries that are a bit more chronic in nature that you might have played a short season with, they will need to be addressed and addressed now.”

The ‘Be Ready to Play’ programme is an impressively holistic one that will cover games-based coaching, athletic development, psychology and wellbeing, nutrition, performance analysis, skill acquisition and biomechanics, physiotherapy, and injury prevention.

One of the messages that McElroy will be giving in her message is that in the same way there are many factors that impact optimal athletic performance, there are also

many factors that can give Gaelic Games athletes the best chance of avoiding injury.

“In the webinar I’ll be talking about the importance of nutrition, the importance of recovery, the importance of sleep, and the importance of looking at your own schedule and making sure that you’re not getting overloaded,” she says.

“The nutrition and recovery aspect of it is massive. That’s difficult at the moment in lockdown when you might be working from home and home-schooling and all of that so it’s not easy try to get your recovery right.

“A lot of our day-to-day structures have been taken away from us and everyone’s

routines are a wee bit up in the air so trying to get a bit of that back now is important as we hopefully ease out of lockdown will be nice.

“People are a little bit lost for guidance at the moment because they don’t have any structured training or any kind of plan or anything. So they’re looking to the internet or asking what team-mates or county players are doing.

“The Be Ready to Play programme has a youth aspect, an adult aspect, and an advanced adult aspect and have progressions and regressions for every exercise so it is geared to helping our players find what their base line is and to

start there so it is properly structured.

“Because if you don’t have a structure you will go 100mph and you will go far too quick.”

You can register for the ‘Be Ready to Play’ programme [HERE](#).

The next live educational webinar takes place on Tuesday March 30th at 7pm and the title of the presentation from Fiona McHale, John Doyle, Niall Corcoran and Eileen Glesson is “Technical Coaching for Hurling Camogie & Football”

Click on this link to join on the night: <https://bit.ly/3rDcVJK>

## Be Ready

# To Play

In Partnership with **UPMC** LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

‘Be Ready to Play’ is a season-long Coaching and Sports Science Programme delivered via webinars, website programmes, instructional videos and live sessions.

A holistic programme supporting youth & adult players and coaches in their return to play, the aim is to increase enjoyment, performance, participation and reduce the risk of injury.

**Register for the programme  
from March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Programme Lead:**

Gaelic Games Sports  
Science Workgroup

**Delivery Partner:**

SETANTA  
College

By John Harrington

## HENRY SHEFFLIN LAUDS CLUB ETHOS OF GAELIC GAMES PLAYER PATHWAY



HENRY SHEFFLIN FROM BALLYHALE SHAMROCKS GAA CLUB AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW GAELIC GAMES PLAYER PATHWAY WHICH IS A NEW UNITED APPROACH TO COACHING AND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT BY THE GAA, LGFA AND CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION THAT PUTS THE CLUB AT THE CORE.

**KILKENNY HURLING LEGEND, HENRY SHEFFLIN, BELIEVES ONE OF THE MAJOR POSITIVES OF THE NEW GAELIC GAMES PLAYER PATHWAY IS THAT IT PUTS THE CLUB AT THE HEART OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT.**

No-one has achieved more at the elite level than 10-time All-Ireland winner, Shefflin, but in his developmental years as a teenager he didn't always look like a star in the making.

He struggled initially to make the grade in the famed hurling nursery of St. Kieran's College where he went to secondary school, and it was thanks to the support of his club he was ultimately able to unlock

his full potential.

"It's been well documented that I really struggled when was 14, 15, 16 years of age in St. Kieran's," said Shefflin at the launch of the Game Games Player Pathway.

When I reflected, I went back to my club, which is always there, always the default and the centre of what you do.

"That's why I was so happy with the Pathway because club is core. I went back to my club and the most important match for me was after I had gone back and got the confidence of playing well again that I played in a minor A county final on a Sunday and the following Sunday, an intermediate county final with Ballyhale.

"That was the most pivotal week of my career. We beat James Stephens in the minor final and Brian Cody would have been watching the match. Fast forward a year later and I was at the elite level with Kilkenny but, without the club, I could have been completely lost.

"A lot of this is about resilience as well. If you want to get to that elite level you have to learn the traits of resilience and you learn it in your club because if you're going to be one of the elite players, there is pressure on you to perform for your club.

"That's always what Brian Cody instilled in us all in Kilkenny and I think it's no different all over the country. That's why

For full details on the Gaelic Games Player Pathway, visit <https://learning.gaa.ie/playerpathway>

it's brilliant to see it at the centre of the player pathway."

The Gaelic Games Player Pathway is the latest of a number of initiatives the GAA has taken to grasp the nettle of elitism.

Another important step in the right direction was the decision by Annual Congress this year to ratify a season split between inter-county and club action which means a club fixture programme will be beholden to a county team's schedule.

"I am very, very positive about it," says Shefflin of the split season. "My first year involved at a management level, and it was still kind of a mixture of both and we were due to have two club matches in April, and we had obviously spent a lot of time training for that.

"It ended up the weather was bad. I think Kilkenny played the National League late. We got to play one game, so we trained basically for four months - and I know teams previously had trained for six months to play one game - it just didn't make any sense whatsoever.

"I am very happy with it both from a player point of view, an inter-county player's point of view and a manager's point of view. I think it is the way to go. It really does benefit everyone.

"And look, there are so many benefits to it from an enjoyment point of view as well.

"I think the clubs know exactly what's coming, and we have often said it, 98 percent of the playing population are club, so I think it's very important for them that they know exactly what's taking place.



"And a lot of the club players don't have to be required going out in January and February in the awful nights and train when they don't really want to.

"The core of the Association is always about fun and enjoyment and I think that's what it should always be about. I think it's the only way to go."

After retiring from playing, Shefflin managed his own club Ballyhale Shamrocks to back-to-back All-Ireland club titles in 2019 and 2020.

For full details on the Gaelic Games Player Pathway, visit <https://learning.gaa.ie/playerpathway>





BALLYHALE SHAMROCKS MANAGER HENRY SHEFFLIN CELEBRATES WITH COLIN FENNELLY AFTER THE 2020 AIB GAA HURLING ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL BETWEEN BALLYHALE SHAMROCKS AND BORRIS-ILEIGH AT CROKE PARK IN DUBLIN.

He has since stepped down from the role and in 2021 will instead try to mastermind promotion to the senior grade for intermediate club Thomastown.

Hailed by many as Brian Cody's successor in waiting as Kilkenny manager, he insists the prospect of managing at inter-county level is not something he currently has the ambition to do.

"At this moment in time, no," said Shefflin. "At the time I wasn't even sure I wanted to get involved with Ballyhale.

"I just felt we needed something different than someone to stand in there and obviously I became involved. Little did I think that we'd go on the run we did for two years and I really needed a break then to spend time with my family.

"Obviously I've spent a lot of time with my family over the past year – Deirdre's nearly sending me back out the door again – and I've really embraced that. It was something different for me. That was one of the major benefits for me of Covid. We got to spend quality time with our family and the ones we love most.

"Now I'm getting involved with Thomastown, a local club, and it's really broadened my experience. I knew the dressing room and knew the lads in Ballyhale. In one sense that can be difficult but there were a lot of positives for me. I'm going into an entirely different environment in Thomastown where I don't know many of the players or many of the people around the club, et cetera. I don't know the culture in there so it's a learning experience.

"In tandem with that, my family life has become more independent in the sense that the children are getting that bit older. So that's the journey I'm on and where it takes me, I'm just not quite sure."

For full details on the Gaelic Games Player Pathway, visit <https://learning.gaa.ie/playerpathway>

GAA Gaelic Games Player Pathway launched.

GAELIC GAMES  
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PLAYER PATHWAY



**Larry McCarthy**  
GAA President

For full details on the Gaelic Games Player Pathway, visit <https://learning.gaa.ie/playerpathway>

By John Harrington

# COULD REGIONALISATION GROW HURLING?

**IN 2018, HURLING/CAMOGIE WAS ADDED TO UNESCO'S LIST OF PROTECTED CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AROUND THE WORLD.**

This was an acknowledgement of a sporting culture so unique and of such a storied lineage it is immortalised in Irish mythology.

UNESCO's decision also felt like a fitting one for a more uncomfortable reason, though.

We know from the animal kingdom that when a species becomes protected it is because it is endangered.

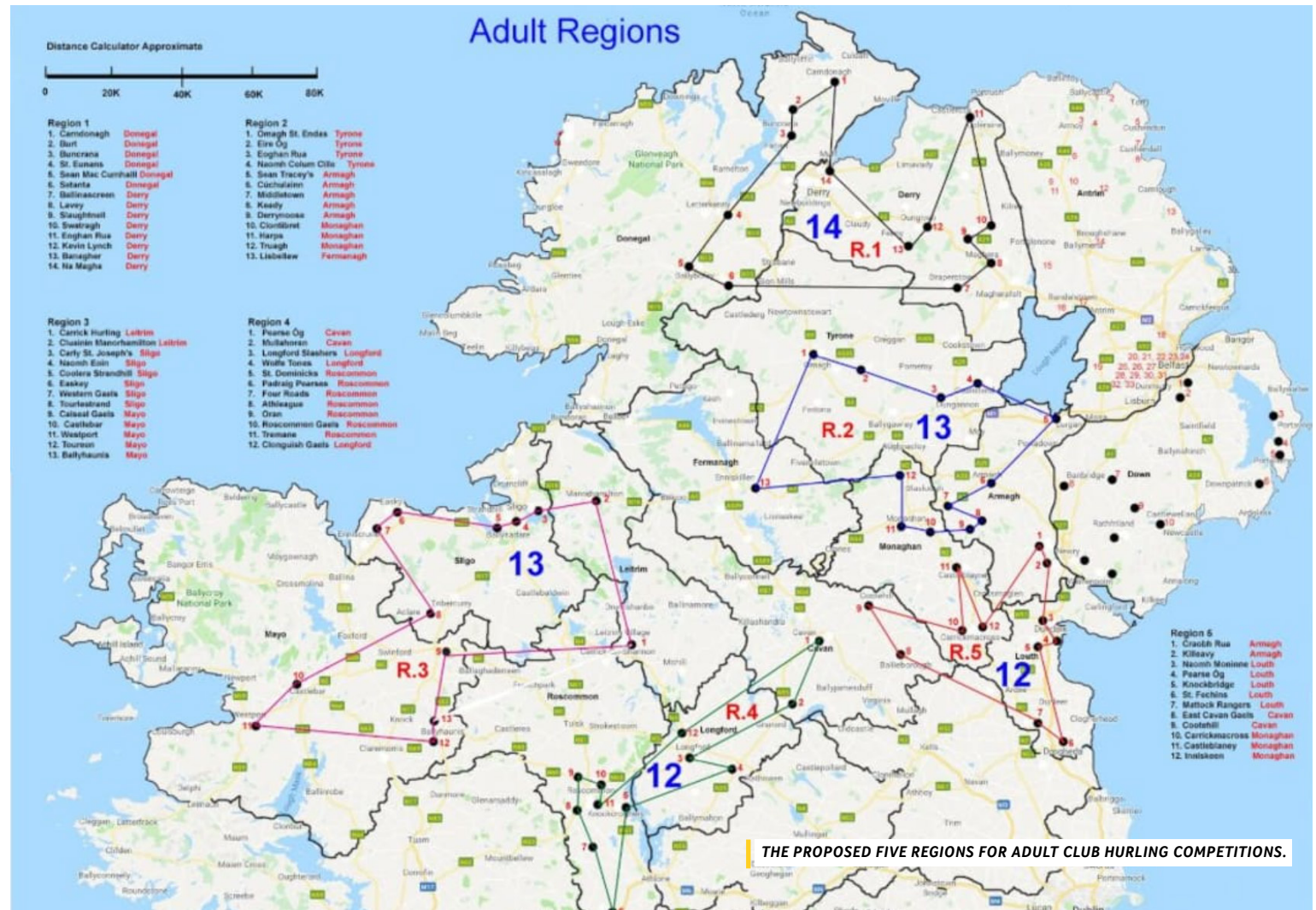
And for all of hurling's brilliance as a sport and cultural significance to this country, it too is an endangered species across large swathes of Ireland.

13 counties have eight senior hurling clubs or less. Six counties have four senior hurling clubs or less.

The harsh truth is that hurling is being kept alive in these counties by a small group of zealots who must overcome many challenges to keep that flame flickering.

Some encouragement can be sourced, though, from the GAA's success since 2018 in tackling the biggest challenge of all facing clubs in these counties – a lack of meaningful competition – through the introduction of the Tain Óg Leagues.

The brainchild of GAA Games Development staff Pdraig Dowdall, Ryan Gaffney, and Aidan Morgan, their idea





THE FOUR ROADS U-13 HURLERS OF ROSCOMMON CELEBRATE AFTER BEATING LONGFORD SLASHERS IN THE 2019 TÁIN ÓG FINAL.

was to wipe away county and provincial boundaries and bring together the scattered hurling strongholds in the developing counties under the one umbrella.

As a noted county hurler with Armagh, Middletown club-man Gaffney was especially qualified to develop a blueprint to advance hurling in the developing counties.

You won't find a bigger champion for the Táin Óg League than the GAA's National Hurling Development Manager, Martin Fogarty, who has driven highways and byways growing the competition over the course of the last three years.

"I've been working very closely with the Connacht Hurling Development manager,

Damien Coleman, and the Ulster Hurling Development Manager, Kevin Kelly," says Fogarty.

"The hurling games development staff are the life and soul of these competitions. They work tirelessly with the dedicated hurling clubs to ensure the competitions take place and that means regularly juggling fixtures, venues, and referees to make sure that the games can go ahead."

In 2018, 29 clubs from 11 counties played 68 Táin Óg matches in the U-13 grade.

In 2019, an U-15 grade was also introduced and 68 teams from 46 clubs and 15 counties played 216 matches.

2020 was due to be the biggest year yet for the Táin Óg by some margin. 60 teams

were entered to compete at U-13 and 48 teams at U-15 level.

Even more significantly, the Táin Óg model was going to be introduced at senior club level in the guise of the inaugural Cúchulainn Cup which would have seen 44 clubs from 15 counties competing in three different divisions reflective of their standard.

Provision was also made for teams struggling with numbers. Division 1 was planned to be a 15-a-side competition, Division 2 was to be 13-a-side, and Division 3 was to be 11-a-side with the provision that Divisions 2 and 3 could be played as 15-a-side matches where numbers allowed.

This was to be the flagship project for

National Hurling Development Committee but unfortunately did not come to pass due to Covid-19 which was a bitter pill to swallow for everyone involved.

2021 hopes to see the introduction of an U-17 grade in the Táin Óg League which would complete the pathway. U-20 is not a viable prospect at this point in time, but the hope is that in time it will be.

Fogarty has already seen enough though to convince him that regionalisation is the way forward for hurling in the developing counties as he strives to implement a three-pronged approach – Consolidate, Nurture, and Grow.

'Consolidate' refers to supporting existing clubs with meaningful competition, and he believes the next step in doing this, in addition to the Táin Óg & Cúchulainn competition, should be to establish possibly five regions with further graded competitions at U-13, U-15, U-17, and adult in the Táin Óg area counties.

At this point in time Down or Antrim clubs have not been included in this blueprint as they did not fall under the 'Counties in Crisis' category with both counties having in excess of 10 Adult hurling clubs.

However, should such a project get up and running, Fogarty believes it is likely that some clubs from those counties would also be interested in participating as could a number of fledgling clubs in North Meath that have been finding their feet in the Táin Óg.

"The challenge for these clubs is that they can't get enough games because they don't have enough other clubs they can play within their own counties," says Fogarty.

"So that was the first box we were trying to tick with the Táin Óg League and Cúchulainn League. We were basically

creating a bigger county for them and giving them meaningful games.

“Now, you’re still left with challenges, most obviously the geographic one.

“The Táin Óg is a semi-national tournament where, for example, you could have Westport from Mayo playing Sean Treacy’s from Lurgan or Carndonagh from Donegal playing St. Fechin’s from Louth in a Final.

“That gives teams the opportunity to play teams from other counties they would never have played before, but it also means travelling some significant distances.

“So, the second box we’re trying to tick then is to have a slightly more regional competition. For example, a group could comprise of teams from neighbouring counties like Derry and Donegal or Roscommon, Longford and parts of Cavan with another group taking in Louth and parts of Cavan, Monaghan, Armagh and maybe Down.

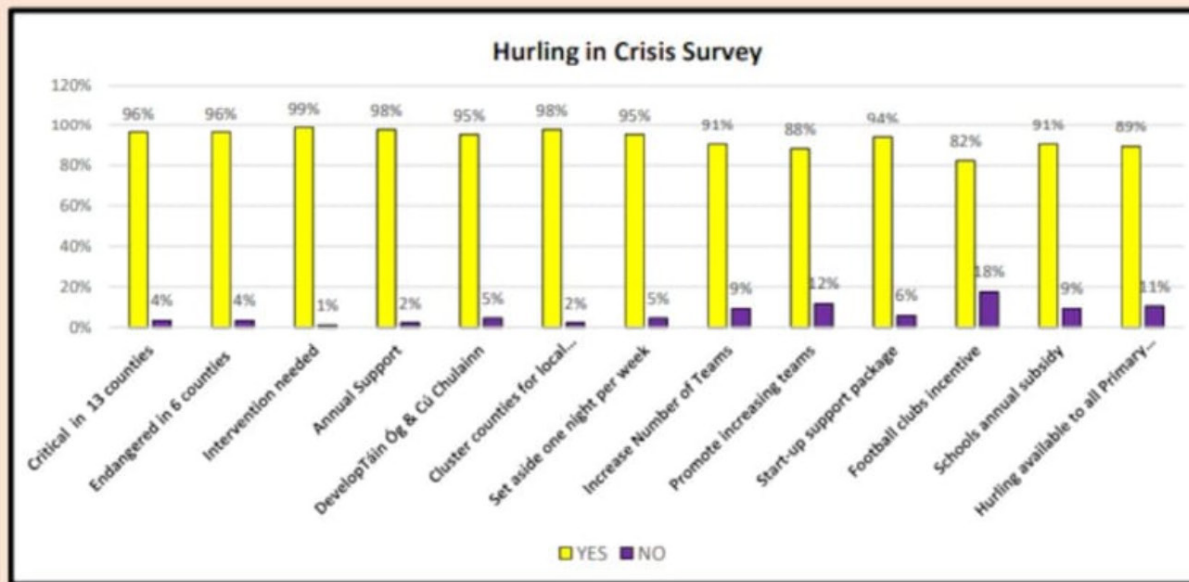
“I believe that’s the only way forward at the moment until every county can become independent with enough teams in their own county. It won’t be in my time, but we have to start somewhere. We cannot stand back and watch the rich become richer and the poor disappear altogether.”

The ‘Nurture’ element of Fogarty’s three-pronged approach to developing hurling in the Táin area counties refers to bringing through juvenile only clubs to the adult grade.

Ultimately, he also wants to ‘Grow’ new club and school teams so that in time every county can be independent and self-sustainable, surely the dream for all.

First must come the Consolidate phase,

**FINDINGS OF A SURVEY COMPLETED BY THOSE WITH A VESTED INTEREST IN PROMOTING HURLING IN THE 13 COUNTIES WITH EIGHT HURLING CLUBS OR LESS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL HURLING COMMITTEES, AS WELL AS GAMES MANAGERS, HURLING GDAS, AND COUNTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**



Survey Findings:	YES	NO
Club Hurling is in a critical situation in at least 13 counties	95%	5%
In at least 6 counties Club Hurling could be classed as "endangered"	97%	3%
Club Hurling needs urgent intervention in these counties	100%	0%
Existing clubs in these counties need annual support	97%	3%
Táin Óg & Cú Chulainn leagues should be prioritized and further developed	98%	2%
Counties need to cluster to provide meaningful leagues at all age grades.	98%	2%
One night per week should be set aside to run cross county competitions	95%	5%
Increasing the number of teams should be a priority	91%	9%
Campaign to increase the number of teams necessary	88%	12%
New start-up hurling units need a "support package"	97%	3%
Existing "football only" clubs should get an incentive to promote hurling	83%	17%
Hurling schools should get an annual subsidy to assist in promoting the game	90%	10%
Hurling should be "made available" to pupils in every Primary School in Ireland	90%	10%

CLUAINÍN IOMAINT PLAYERS CELEBRATE AFTER THEIR VICTORY IN FINAL 1 OF THE 2019 TÁIN ÓG HURLING LEAGUE.



though, because hurling is in such a precarious position in so many counties. This consolidation can be achieved by ensuring existing clubs have plenty of meaningful matches at all age-grades.

“Having worked with the full-time GDAs and volunteer coaches in clubs, this is my take on what hurling needs to do,” says Fogarty.

“I’ve met the hurling people in every single club and this is what they’re crying out for. They’re crying out for games. I believe that if we can raise the level of competition, make leagues and maybe in time even championships more difficult to win, that more players will want to play the game and standards will rise.

“To be fair, without wishing to offend anyone, a four-team championship that could be played off in a weekend or indeed a three team round robin with two of the three teams ending up in the final, would hardly inspire an athlete to commit to the game for a year.

“We must change that. Look at what Slaughtneil and other clubs like Loughleil, Cushendall, Ballycastle and Dunloy have done for themselves and for the game by getting up and seeking out high level games all over the country.

“It’s important that clubs know every year where they’re going for a meaningful competition. Currently you have a situation where clubs from one county are applying on an annual basis to take part in another county’s league so they can have those meaningful matches without even being sure if they’ll be accepted.

“We want to take that uncertainty away so that every year players at U-13, U-15, U-17 and senior level in these developing counties know exactly what competitions they’ll be playing in and how many matches they’ll have.”

Getting some sort of certainty around a playing calendar has already proven to be transformative for juvenile hurling teams in the developing counties.

Something as simple as ring-fencing Monday evenings as a hurling only day of the week has made the world of difference to running a comprehensive games programme.

“It’s been massive because a lot of these hurling teams are drawing lads from three, four, or five football teams,” explains Fogarty.

“So, if one football team decides to have training, that really disrupts the team and the knock-on effect is that fixtures for the entire group they are playing in is disrupted.

“And because you’re crossing the counties and the provinces and because you’re drawing on players from so many different clubs for a competition like the Táin Óg League, you need a fixed night.

“The Táin Óg League gives a child six or seven games spanned over 14 weeks. So, with the games you have at least another fourteen, maybe 20 training sessions during and coming into it. That’s real hurling development where you are providing the opportunity for the dedicated club coaches and players to actually have something to train for.

“If we’re able to play an U-17 Táin Óg League this year then you’ll have lads playing in that who have come right through playing U-13, U-15, and now U-17 Táin Óg League which is a great pathway for them.

“For all of this to fall into place it will require a concerted effort by many people, hard work from those at the coalface but more importantly a willingness and desire



COACHES AND PLAYERS PICTURED AT THE LAUNCH OF THE TÁIN ÓG HURLING LEAGUE AT THE MONAGHAN GAA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE.

GAA 2019 U-13 Táin Óg League Finals



to let, if not make, it happen by county boards.

“These clubs are all in predominantly football counties and while most county boards already have their hands full running their day-to-day business and may not have the time or energy to promote hurling, their blessing and support towards those who are trying to do so is immeasurable and appreciated.

“Most of what needs to be done is structural and organizational but there will also be a great need going forward for a financial injection when we get back to

some form of financial normality.

“I would like to see clubs getting an annual support package that would help sustain them and be conditional upon engaging in various projects such as participation in the various games programmes, recruiting new coaches and referees and having a good club/schools link.

“It would also be crucial to provide really meaningful support to new club or school teams.”

Hurling has been played for an estimated 3,000 years on this island, but yet has

struggled to flourish outside of the traditionally powerful counties since the GAA was founded in 1884.

Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome is said to be the definition of insanity, so perhaps a different approach is now required.

County borders have always been a big part of the identity of the GAA but they're arguably constricting the growth of hurling in much of the country.

Perhaps, then, it's time to think bigger, time to think regionally.

To watch  
the  
2019 U-13  
Táin Óg  
League  
Finals  
visit

[https://  
youtu.be/  
TvkRsrs-  
rZV4](https://youtu.be/TvkRsrs-rZV4)

# GAA LAUNCH MOVEMENT BREAK RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN



A partnership between



**THE GAA ARE DELIGHTED TO LAUNCH A NEW SERIES OF MOVEMENT BREAK RESOURCES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MOVING WELL - BEING WELL (MWBW) INITIATIVE. AIMED AT FOUR TO 8-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN, THESE EVIDENCED-BASED AND DEVELOPMENTALLY SOUND VIDEOS AIM TO ENHANCE THEIR FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS (FMS).**

To help meet the challenges of home-schooling and no club activity, this set of video learning resources provide assistance to both primary teachers and parents to contribute to children's physical activity needs.

FMS are the 'building block' of more advanced sport-specific skills and are key to

children being active later in life. Each video series concentrates on a specific skill and then progresses to a slightly more difficult version of the same skill.

The Moving Well - Being Well project is a partnership between the GAA, the DCU's School of Health and Human Performance, and the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics and Dublin GAA. The team are also delighted to collaborate with the PDST PE department.

The MBWB resources are designed as a tool to support the outstanding services continuing to be provided remotely by GAA Coaching and Games Development personnel throughout the island of Ireland. Face-to-face coaching has been provided

across a number of schools in each county since Sept. With schools closing at the beginning of the year, personnel in many counties have taken innovative steps to continue providing these services remotely.

Ulster GAA's DENI Curriculum schools' coaches have delivered 27 physical activity challenges and over 60 live lessons to schools and homes of pupils since the beginning of January. Over 1,550 children have logged into these lessons. Schools Project Coordinator Michael Glover said, "the school's staff have fully come on board, even though the schools have been closed. Principals and teachers are acutely aware of the need for children to be physically active and our staff have responded to deliver lessons tailored for children and parents at home. From the roll out of virtual lessons in

April 2020, there have been around 200,000 views which shows the colossal general engagement."

Similarly, Carlow GAA GDAs have been running live coaching sessions for primary schools across the county. Carlow GAA Games Development Manager, Sean Gannon, noted that "the sessions are being run in conjunction with the teachers across 23 schools. This week alone we ran 30 live classes and provided coaching to 948 different households Teachers are present for all sessions to moderate. If that even goes a small way towards helping either the children or parents cope a bit better, it will have been a very worthwhile exercise."

The GDAs of Rebel Óg Coaching in Cork have been posting Gaelic games coaching and



**AIMED AT FOUR TO 8-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN, THE MOVEMENT BREAK RESOURCES ARE DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THEIR FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS.**





FMS videos on the YouTube channel weekly since the start of January. Cork GAA Games Development Manager, Kevin O’Callaghan said, “this initiative is being rolled out in collaboration with Sciath na Scol, who do an excellent job of emailing the videos to all the schools in their network every week. Their support and that of all the primary teachers and parents has been outstanding, with over 30,000 video views to date.”

The MWBW Movement Break resources are the latest addition to a bank of children’s learning and physical activity resources that the GAA has produced in response to

Covid-19 restrictions in collaboration with Cumann na mBunscol, the GPA, the LGFA and the Camogie Association. The #GAAPrimary Challenges are designed to help Primary Teachers and parents to work on the cross-curricular lesson plans with children. Gaelic game-themed lessons are across all curriculum subjects and are for children at every class level. These and other resources are available [learning.gaa.ie/primary-school](https://learning.gaa.ie/primary-school).

Speaking about the launch, the GAA’s Director of Coaching and Games Development, Shane Flanagan noted:

“The achievement of this latest milestone for the Moving Well Being Well project teams is timely for the GAA as we will soon be launching our new Player Pathway Framework. The pathway is based on the FTEM Framework and its purpose is to support player development by providing the right support, at the right time for the player.

“In partnering with DCU and others, we now have an outstanding, evidenced-based research set of resources to ensure the child in the participation phase of our pathway experiences an environment that focuses on physical literacy and helping children to

learn basic movements skills, while having fun. Acquiring these skills through the delivery of our club and school programmes will help these young participants remain involved in sport and physical activity for life. Key to this will be the coach/teacher and we will be using the research to inform our coach education framework.”

The GAA MWBW Movement Break Resources are available here - <https://learning.gaa.ie/movingwellbeingwell>

## GAA HANDBALL LAUNCH JUVENILE DEVELOPMENT YOUTH EXPO



CHAMPION HANDBALLER, CAITRIONA CASEY, WILL HOST ONLINE SKILLS WORKOUTS FOR THE JUVENILE DEVELOPMENT YOUTH EXPO.

**GAA HANDBALL ARE DELIGHTED TO LAUNCH THEIR EXCITING NEW JUVENILE DEVELOPMENT YOUTH EXPO, A MONTH-LONG ONLINE SERIES OF TALKS, WORKOUTS, COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS AND COMPETITIONS TO KEEP JUVENILE MEMBERS ENGAGED AND HELP THEM TO FILL THE HANDBALL VOID IN THEIR LIVES AT PRESENT.**

The 2021 Youth Expo will see a range of top sportspeople from across the Gaelic Games family and from other sports share their thoughts, experiences and tips over a wide range of topics.

Beginning on the 5th April, Mindful Mondays will see a series of talks each Monday, presented by Grainne McElwain (Sky Sports) and Handball aficionado Paul Fitzpatrick, dealing with the emotional and psychological side of sport.

We are delighted to have Olympian Jessie Barr who will deal with coping with lockdown and impart her knowledge and advice on how to cope with being in lockdown. Longford senior footballer and former AFL player Mickey Quinn who works as a PE teacher will discuss how to balance sport and study and give yourself the best chance of excelling at both. Current Dublin Ladies Football star Nicole Owens discusses mental health, shares her own experiences and the tools she uses to look after her mental wellbeing in a bid to raise awareness among members. Finishing up the Monday talks, Cavan's Paul Brady will talk in depth on how to develop a winning mindset in what is sure to be a fascinating interview with the 5-time World and 10-time All-Ireland champion.



DR SHARON MADIGAN, HEAD OF PERFORMANCE NUTRITION, SPORT IRELAND INSTITUTE.

Tasty Tuesdays provides an exciting opportunity for our young members to learn more about nutrition with Sharon Madigan (Sport Ireland Nutritionist) and her team sharing a number of nutritional talks on what to eat before, during and after games to help reach peak performance. There will also be some cook

along videos showcasing how to make various foods that will help to fuel the body.

Workout Wednesdays sees top handballers put our young members through their paces with World #1 Killian Carroll doing a speed and agility workout, while Robbie

McCarthy & Catriona Casey will host online skills workouts that all young members are sure to be excited by. Sports Injury Specialist Tommy Gallagher will deal with preventing injury on our return to games, and will have a series of self-assessment tests to make sure members are in the best possible shape to avoid

injury when play returns.

Takeover Thursdays will include a range of top handball stars taking over the GAA Handball Instagram account and sharing their daily routines, coaching tips and also answer questions. There will also be a number of exciting tik tok challenges and

a fantastic design a jersey competition in conjunction with O'Neills i-create which will see the winners jersey be produced for sale on the GAA Handball online shop. There will be several other features throughout the month with a series of fun activities and challenges for our youngest members to ensure that there is something for all ages during the month.

The Friday Forum will see International stars from 4-Wall and 1-Wall Daniel Cordova (USA) and Luke Thompson (England) join Ireland's Catriona Casey to talk about their Handball globetrotting exploits. Top handball stars Martin Mulkerrins, Martina McMahon and Diarmaid Nash will discuss what it takes to succeed at the top while Galway's Ciana Ní Churraoin and Clare's Colin Crehan will talk about making the transition from underage to senior handball. Finishing off the youth expo will be a keynote panel of speakers where All-Ireland winning Kerry footballer Kieran Donaghy, multiple All-Ireland winning Cork dual star Rena Buckley and All-Ireland winning hurler and former underage Handball star Richie Hogan (Kilkenny) discuss playing multiple sports and the benefits of same.

It is the biggest online project ever undertaken by GAA Handball and National Manager John Kelly commented on the exciting new venture.

He said: "The pandemic has hit our Juvenile players extremely hard and it is crucial that we as an Association do all we can to keep these members engaged with our sport and give them something meaningful to fill the void in lockdown. With no handball permitted during lockdown we have worked hard on coming

up with alternative ways of keeping our juvenile members engaged and we are confident that across the month we will have something for everyone and that all our Juvenile members will benefit from the Expo. We are hugely excited by the programme on offer and hope that it will ignite the passion for handball in our juveniles and fill the void before our games recommence hopefully in the near future."

The series will aim to keep the current crop of juvenile members engaged but also attract new members and the talks are open to everybody both young and old and will be available on the GAA Handball social media channels.

National Club Support Officer Pauric Dowdall commented: "Juveniles are the future of our sport and we understand that the last 12 months will have been like nothing they will have ever experienced before. While coming up with the idea and format for our first Youth Expo we had to ensure that it was going to be relevant, interesting, engaging, and fun and we are confident we have ticked these boxes. We have a fantastic line up of speakers and content which we are delighted to launch today. We encourage all our clubs to pass on the message about our Expo to your younger members and we look forward to the Expo being a huge success and something that could become an annual fixture on the GAA Handball calendar."

The action kicks off on Monday 5th April and runs throughout the whole month of April with further details available on

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

FORMER KERRY FOOTBALLER, KIERAN DONAGHY.



## GAA LAUNCH COMMUNITY HEART PROGRAMME

HUGH MCMANUS, FATHER OF ANTRIM HURLER NEIL MCMANUS, PICTURED WITH THE AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR GAA CLUBS CAN PURCHASE THROUGH THE COMMUNITY HEARTS PROGRAMME. HUGH'S LIFE WAS SAVED WHEN HE WAS TREATED WITH A DEFIBRILLATOR AFTER SUFFERING A CARDIAC ARREST IN HIS HOME IN 2015.



**ACCORDING TO A RECENT SURVEY, 42 LIVES ACROSS IRELAND HAVE BEEN SAVED BY AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AEDS) LOCATED IN GAA FACILITIES BEING USED ON MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.**

The GAA is marking this by today launching the Community Heart Programme.

This initiative encourages every club in the country to A.C.T. now and ensure that their club can also be prepared in case of an emergency and that they can avail of a defibrillator that is ACCESSIBLE, CHARGED and that there are enough TRAINED rescuers within your Club who have the ability to operate the device(s).

The Community Heart Programme allows GAA Clubs to fundraise for life-saving Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) via a bespoke fundraising platform. The programme allows clubs to fundraise for new AEDs, which are connected to the internet via the mobile phone network. This means the AED will check itself and notify designated club members via email if there is an issue that needs to be addressed, such as the battery or pads needing to be changed.

In addition to having a bespoke fundraising platform, Clubs will be able to avail of a significant reduction of €995 saving per unit if they register and secure their AED(s) via the Community Heart Programme. Once the fundraising target of €2,150 per unit has been reached, the AED unit(s) will also be delivered directly to the Club. Programme partners Heart



Safety Solutions will supply the unit to the club.

We know that AED units save lives. However, AEDs, like all medical equipment, need to be replaced over time. The life expectancy of an AED is between eight and 10 years. Critical components such as pads and batteries need to be checked regularly.

Remember, an AED should be ACCESSIBLE, CHARGED with sufficient Club members TRAINED in how to operate the device. AEDs must be checked regularly to ensure

that they are in working order and ready for use.

From school children to seemingly fit and health club players to older members of the community, there is a broad spectrum of people represented among the list of those who have benefitted by being near a GAA-based AED during an emergency.

Uachtarán CLG Larry McCarthy encouraged clubs to engage with the Community Heart Programme. He said: "The GAA club is the focal point of the communities in which we operate. In the

past we have seen how access to these devices have made a critical difference during an emergency. This Community Heart Programme not only plays a vital role at raising awareness, but also affords clubs an opportunity to ensure that they have some of the most up-to-date equipment available."

The GAA is working alongside Stryker to deliver the programme. Stryker is one of the world's leading medical technology companies and, together with their customers, is driven to make healthcare better. The company offers

## To watch the community Heart programme [HERE](#)

innovative products and services in Orthopaedics, Medical and Surgical, and Neurotechnology and Spine that help improve patient and hospital outcomes.

Where can a Club find out more about the Community Heart Programme?

**Communication and a registration link to the Community Heart Programme has already been sent to all GAA Club secretaries. Club members can find out more information and look up their club to place a donation at: <https://savealife.communityheartprogram.com/gaa>**

What happens during and after registration? The Club will set their fundraising target during the registration process based on the number of AED units that they wish to purchase.

Once this target is hit, the AED unit(s) will be delivered and installed within approximately 6 weeks. Heart Safety Solutions (the supplier) will make direct contact with the Club to arrange.

### The GAA Community Heart Programme is for EVERY CLUB

Is your club covered by an AED?

Is your AED out of date?

When was it last checked?

Does it need to be replaced?

Is it Accessible?

Is it Charged?

Are Club members Trained on using it?

## GAA GREEN CLUBS MARK NATIONAL TREE WEEK

**TO MARK THE LAUNCH OF PHASE 1 OF THE GAA GREEN CLUB PROGRAMME AND NATIONAL TREE WEEK, THE EASY TREESIE – CRANN PROJECT ([WWW.EASYTREESIE.COM](http://WWW.EASYTREESIE.COM)) SUPPORTED BY COILLTE ([WWW.COILLTE.IE](http://WWW.COILLTE.IE)) AND TREES ON THE LAND ([WWW.TREESONTHELAND.COM](http://WWW.TREESONTHELAND.COM)) WILL PROVIDE GAA, CAMOGIE AND LGFA CLUBS WITH 45,000 NATIVE TREE SAPPLINGS, WHICH DUE TO CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO CLUB GROUNDS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO SELECTED CLUBS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT PLANTING SEASON IN NOVEMBER.**

Coillte and Trees on the Land will donate and deliver the 45,000 native saplings to the project. The saplings will be used to create shelter belts, planted along walkways and to generally enhance the natural landscape and biodiversity of the site. Planting trees is included in the 5 ways to make clubs biodiversity-friendly as identified in the recently published guidelines on pollinator-friendly management of sports clubs by the National Biodiversity Datacentre. Biodiversity is one of 5 themes being explored through the Green Club Programme, which is a partnership between the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association and local authorities across Ireland.

The Easy Treesie Project aims to plant one million trees with Ireland's one million school children and their communities by 2023 joining the UNESCO-backed Plant-for-the-planet's [www.trilliontreecampaign.org](http://www.trilliontreecampaign.org) challenge, reducing global heating by 1° during the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, 2021-31. Orla Farrell of Easy



TO MARK NATIONAL TREE WEEK UACHTARÁN CUMANN LUTHCHLEAS GAEL, LARRY MCCARTHY, PLANTED A NATIVE OAK, PRESENTED BY ORLA FARRELL, PROJECT LEAD OF EASY TREESIE. THE PLANTING TOOK PLACE ON FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL LAND AT MALAHIDE CASTLE ADJACENT TO THE ST SYLVESTER'S GAA PLAYING FIELDS.

Treesie said, 'We are delighted to support the GAA with this initiative which will help restore biodiversity in communities across the island. We would like to thank our many supporters who have successfully started this work in recent years, planting approx. 14,000 saplings and apple trees with several GAA clubs and their communities.'

One of those clubs and a participant in the Biodiversity theme of Phase 1 of the Green Club Programme is Kilmeen/Kilbree GAA, Co. Cork, who previously devoted some of the club's land to planting pollinator-friendly plants and 1,000 native trees (a mix

of oak, birch, rowan, alder and hawthorn), with help from children in Kilmeen National School and Kilmeen and Castleventry Community Development Association (KCCDA).

"We're delighted with our new partnership with the GAA to see our trees planted in GAA, Camogie and Ladies football clubs nationwide this year," said Mark Carlin, Managing Director of Coillte. "National Tree Week reminds us of the multiple benefits of trees and forests for climate change, for nature, for recreational spaces and for providing a sustainable source of wood for our homes."

Larry McCarthy, Uachtarán Cumann Luthchleas Gael said: "The GAA, along with our sister organisations are very grateful for the donation of these native saplings to our clubs. While reinforcing our responsibility to our environment through the Green Club Programme we will also be exploring how our Clubs function from a sustainability perspective, in terms of energy use, water, waste and transport. This work is directly related to our values of Community Identity, Respect and Teamwork and reflects the best of our manifesto 'Where We All Belong'."

# GAA MEMBERS WALK SIX MILLION KMS FOR IRISH LIFE STEPS CHALLENGE

**PROFESSOR NIAL MOYNA HAS HERALDED THE PERSONAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT OF THE REGULAR EXERCISE AND HEALTH SCORE IMPROVEMENTS EXPERIENCED BY THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED GAA HEALTHY CLUB / MYLIFE BY IRISH LIFE STEPS CHALLENGE.**

Between January 13th and March 3rd, 28,000 GAA members walked a combined total of 6 million kms as part of the 'Every Step Counts' challenge hosted on Irish Life's MyLife App. To put that into perspective, it is the equivalent of walking the circumference of the earth 15 times; a combined step count of 7.5 billion. The aim of the challenge was to offer GAA members a fun incentive to stay active within their 5km radius. On average, each participant walked just over 200km.

Prof. Moyna, BA, MSc, PhD, FACSM, FFPHMI, Full Professor: Clinical Exercise Physiology, School of Health and Human Performance, Faculty of Science and Health, Dublin City University, who is also well known for his GAA credentials, said:

"It is very gratifying to see that the participants in this MyLife by Irish Life Healthy Club Steps Challenge walked an average of 268,000 steps and had an 11-point increase in their health score in only eight weeks. The public health implications of these results cannot be underestimated and demonstrate the value of promoting walking across the lifespan."

The challenge helped fill some of the void created by the absence of any on-field GAA activity and the forced cancellation of the popular annual Ireland Lights Up walking



initiative, normally delivered in conjunction with RTE's Operation Transformation during January and February.

The 28,000 participants represented over 700 GAA clubs across the 32 counties. It was the second such steps challenge delivered during the pandemic through the

GAA's award winning Healthy Club Project. The Healthy Club Project is delivered in partnership with Irish Life, Healthy Ireland, the HSE, and National Office for Suicide Prevention. The first challenge in June 2020 attracted 12,000 participants from over 400 clubs, with the MyLife App once again tracking all 2.2 billion steps taken.

"The amount of physical activity required to produce substantial health benefits is quite small. Walking is a highly accessible activity. It requires no special skills or facilities, can be easily accommodated into an existing lifestyle, can be undertaken at almost any age with little risk of injury and has been



shown to positively impact on physical, psychological and cognitive function. Indeed, there isn't a single organ in the body that is not positively affected by a brief walk," Prof. Moyna added.

A club target of 4,000km was set for the 'Every Step Counts' challenge – the equivalent of a circuit of the coast of Ireland. All clubs that achieved this goal were entered into randomised draws in their province for gear vouchers worth €2,500, €1,500, and €1,000, generously provided by Irish Life as part of their ongoing CSR partnership of the Healthy Club Project (see editors notes for full list of prize winners). An additional €23,000 worth of gear vouchers were set aside for specific achievements within participating clubs, with the winners to be announced next week.

While the winning clubs welcomed the prize monies during this challenging financial period for all sports clubs, the benefits of the challenge far exceeded the financial rewards.

Ciara Lalor, PRO with the St. Colmcille's Healthy Club in Meath, explains: "Seeing the engagement that we have had from members and the community and giving something back to our members at this time when there is very little else going on, you take great pride in being able to do it. We take great pride in keeping people active, keeping people engaged and keeping people having a bit of fun and giving them a reason to get out and a reason to walk."

Ciara also noted the benefits of a bit of inter-club rivalry during a time when Gaelic Games have been forced to stop as leader boards on the MyLife App allowed clubs to see their standing within their own county, province, and nationally. St. Colmcille's topped the Leinster leader-board for total distance covered, just ahead of Clontarf in Dublin.

"We (were) having great craic with them on social media chasing each other. They have done super work in their community as well. I saw a fundraiser they did in aid of the Irish Cancer Society and Pieta House encouraging all their members to do something active. They have been a great kind of adversary in the nicest possible way for us throughout this."

GAA President Larry McCarthy said: "The steps challenge provided our clubs with a meaningful and safe way to express their community identity while keeping people connected during this difficult period of lockdown. As the incredible figures demonstrate, it also helped motivate thousands of participants to achieve their recommended weekly physical activity levels within their 5km limit. I'd like to thank Irish Life for their continued, innovative, support of the GAA Healthy Club Project and look forward to more clubs getting involved in this great project in the future."

Head of Wellness, Irish Life Stacey Machesney said: "Health & Wellbeing continues to become increasingly important with immediate and long term health benefits directly linked to physical health and exercise. From our own research carried out we know approximately 90% of us are looking to improve our health with lack of motivation being the biggest challenge to achieving this. The insights coming from MyLife are showing us, the more opportunities we get to exercise in a social and connected way, the greater success we have in staying motivated to be physically active".

The GAA Healthy Club Project currently engages 300 clubs and will open expressions of interest for to new entrant clubs in November 2021. For more details go to: [www.gaa.ie/community](http://www.gaa.ie/community).

Winners of random provincial draw amongst all clubs that reached 4,000km target.

## LEINSTER

**€2,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - GAEL COLMCILLE CLG, MEATH**

**€1,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - JOHNSTOWNBRIDGE GAA, KILDARE**

**€1,000 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - ST. MICHAEL'S GAA, MEATH**

## CONNACHT

**€2,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - OWENMORE GAELS, SLIGO**

**€1,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - ALLEN GAELS, LEITRIM**

**€1,000 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - BALLINAGLERA GAA, LEITRIM**

## ULSTER

**€2,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - LOUGHGIEL SHAMROCKS GAC, ANTRIM**

**€1,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - LAVEY GAA, DERRY**

**€1,000 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - DERRYNOOSE GAA, ARMAGH**

## MUNSTER

**€2,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - BEALE GAA, KERRY**

**€1,500 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - BALLYBACON-GRANGE HURLING & CAMOGIE CLUB, TIPPERARY**

**€1,000 O'NEILL'S GEAR VOUCHER - EMLY GAA, TIPPERARY**

# MACNAMEE AWARDS /GRADAIM MHIC CON MÍDHE SEEK ENTRIES TO RECOGNISE EXCELLENCE IN GAA COMMUNICATION

**THE GAA MACNAMEE AWARDS ARE HELD ANNUALLY TO HONOUR EXCELLENCE IN THE AREA OF COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND JOURNALISM, SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION. THESE AWARDS ARE NAMED AFTER THE LATE PÁDRAIG MACNAMEE, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE GAA, CHAIRMAN OF THE GAA COMMISSION (1969-1971) AND MEMBER OF RTÉ AUTHORITY.**

Applications for the 2020 MacNamee Awards are now being accepted. It should be noted that only work published or completed in the 2020 calendar year is eligible for consideration and entries will not be returned. The awards scheme will be judged under the following headings:

- **Best GAA Publication**  
To cover general works focussing on the Association.
- **Best GAA Club Publication**  
To cover GAA County Yearbooks and Club History.
- **Best GAA CLUB Website**  
Acknowledgement for the best club website, taking into consideration design, content and usefulness to members.
- **Best Digital Impact Award**  
Award for a club, county or province's use of existing digital channels, own creative content or cutting-edge innovations (streaming, video, podcasts, newsletter, archives, other) to present a story or activity online.  
Entries should
  - Illustrate the Who, What, Where,

When and Why of entry  
- Illustrate innovation or use of new technologies, where relevant  
- Examples of content created for the campaign  
- Examples of engagement with online community  
- Illustration of results achieved and future development/use.

- **Best Photograph**  
Focussing on the best GAA-themed image.
- **Best Programme**  
To cater for all match day programmes produced for any level of the GAA.  
-2-
- **Best GAA related Radio Programme**  
To cater for all GAA programming broadcast either nationally or locally.
- **Provincial Media Award**  
To acknowledge high quality written journalism in a provincial publication.
- **National Media Award**  
To acknowledge high quality written journalism in national daily or Sunday publication.
- **Outstanding Community Contribution Award**  
An award to acknowledge a special Covid-related initiative organised by a club, county or province that impacted positively on a community over the course of the challenging year that was 2020.

- **Best TV Documentary**  
To acknowledge the high quality of TV documentaries currently produced on the GAA.

- **Irish Language Award / Gradam na Gaeilge**  
To recognise excellence in the field of Irish language GAA journalism across all media/Aitheantas ar ardchaighdeán iriseoireachta Gaeilge bainteach le cúrsaí CLG, ina chuimsítear gach cineál meán cumarsáide.

\* Please note: There is a limit of three photographs per entrant for the photographic award and one entry for all other categories.

A Hall of Fame Award / Outstanding Service Award will also be made in

recognition of a prolonged personal involvement in the coverage of GAA activities to the highest standards.

All entries should be marked "GAA MacNamee Awards 2020" and addressed for the attention of Alan Milton, Director of Communications, Croke Park, Dublin 3 or emailed to [awards@gaa.ie](mailto:awards@gaa.ie). Entrants should also clearly state what category they are submitting their entry under. Award winners will be contacted in due course with further details in relation to the awards presentations.

**CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES IS FRIDAY, 16TH APRIL 2021.**

**For further information please contact Alan Milton, Director of Communications, Croke Park.**



## GAA MUSEUM LAUNCHES FREE SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY RESOURCES TO REMEMBER BLOODY SUNDAY



1920 **B100DY SUNDAY** 2020



**THE GAA MUSEUM AT CROKE PARK HAS LAUNCHED A FREE NEW SUITE OF INTERACTIVE LEARNING RESOURCES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVENTS AROUND BLOODY SUNDAY 100 YEARS ON.**

The history resources, offering three ways to learn, are available free of charge to all secondary schools. They include an education pack; a series of online video and podcast lectures from leading Irish historians; and an interactive virtual classroom session with a GAA Museum Tour Guide on the topic of Bloody Sunday.

The secondary school history resources are being launched as part of the GAA

Museum's Bloody Sunday centenary programme commemorating the 100th anniversary of the tragic events that unfolded on November 21st, 1920 and their impact on Irish history.

The education pack, which contains biographies of significant figures in the history of the GAA, can be posted to teachers in hard copy or sent digitally via email, and can be used to accompany existing curriculum textbooks. While the educationally rich online resources include a video and podcast lecture series with leading Irish historians speaking about the events of Bloody Sunday, the War of Independence and other key moments in Irish history and sport. These informative and thought-provoking talks were recorded as part of the GAA Summer

School and Lecture Series and will be of particular interest to teachers with Leaving Certificate history classes and may inspire further research or study as part of the students' special topic.

Presentation topics include 'Atrocity and Atonement: The Civil War and the Rise of Kerry's Greatest Team' (video) with Dr Richard McElligott (DKIT); 'Setting the scene: Overview of the War of Independence in Ireland, 1920' (podcast) with Prof Diarmuid Ferriter (UCD); 'Killing and Bloody Sunday Morning' (video) with Dr Anne Dolan (Trinity College); and 'Sport and Revolution: The Irish Case,' with Dr Will Murphy (DCU).

To ensure the learning resources are fully interactive and engaging, the

GAA Museum has created a virtual live classroom session with a GAA Museum tour guide. These sessions which will complete the learning experience, include an overview of the events of Bloody Sunday, a short film about the GAA Museum's new 'Remembering Bloody Sunday' exhibition and a Q&A session. The virtual classroom sessions will be conducted via Microsoft Teams, must be booked in advance and are subject to availability. They will also require good internet connection but can be tailored to teachers' class times.

For more information on the schools programme, visit [crokepark.ie/bloodydaysforschools](https://crokepark.ie/bloodydaysforschools)

By John Harrington

## ANNE LOONEY HAPPY TO SHATTER GAA'S GLASS CEILING

**GAA PRESIDENT LARRY MCCARTHY'S DECISION TO NOMINATE PROFESSOR ANNE LOONEY AS HIS APPOINTEE TO THE GAA'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, COISTE BAINISTÍ, LOOKS A WISE ONE.**

Currently Executive Dean of DCU's Institute of Education, Looney's resume is highly impressive.

She was previously a post-primary school teacher, a research fellow, CEO of the National Council for Curriculum, and, most recently, Interim CEO of the Higher Education Authority.

Looney is also President of the International Professional Development Association and a board member of Early Childhood Ireland and the Ark Cultural Centre for Children.

A Dublin season ticket holder, she inherited her love of Gaelic Games from her late father Donal who was a native of Macroom and a passionate Cork football supporter.

In an ideal world all of the above would be the most noteworthy bullet-points when reporting Looney's appointment to Coiste Bainistí, but it's also a fact that she is the first ever female Presidential appointee to the committee.

Larry McCarthy hasn't wasted any time following through on his promise to include a woman on every single one of his committees, and Looney is the most high-profile of those appointments.

It heralds a progressive step in the right direction for the Association, but, as Looney herself quite rightly points out, not before time.



**PROFESSOR ANNE LOONEY IS THE FIRST EVER FEMALE PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEE TO THE GAA'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.**

"Yes, it's very positive but it's probably long overdue," she told GAA.ie.

"A number of women in the GAA at different levels and in different organisations and associate different codes have been in touch with me in recent days to say, "Well done, it's

great, but it is long overdue."

"So, I think it's really a glass ceiling shattered, which is positive. I recognise too that it's only the beginning and that into the future people will look back and say it was ground-breaking of Larry to take that

decision because very often these things don't happen naturally, somebody has to make a decision or make an intervention in any kind of area of equality.

"Larry showed leadership here and made that intervention and I think that is

significant for women, for men, and for diversity in the GAA more broadly.

“It puts a great responsibility on me and on the other women appointed to the other committees to ensure that we bring our professionalism and commitment to the GAA, but also our unique perspective and insight into the deliberations over the next three years as well.”

Along with the Chief Executives of the LGFA and Camogie Association, Helen O’Rourke and Sinead McNulty, Looney will bring the female representation on Coiste Bainistí to three.

There’s still a considerable journey to travel, but this continues a trend of incremental gender equality in the Association’s committee rooms.

Roughly a quarter of executive committee members at club level are women, and around two thirds of clubs have two or more women on their executive.

“Yes, it’s a timely recognition of the work that women have been doing in claiming leadership roles and moving into leadership roles at club, county and provincial level,” says Looney.

“It’s great to see women moving into leadership roles, but if you look at the kinds of roles that women are taking up they’re probably over-represented in some roles, and under-represented and sometimes invisible in others.

“So, we need to look at that more closely within the organisation. Yes, it’s great to see women moving into leadership roles, but what are the kind of leadership roles that they’re still not getting into? And what are the ones that they’re over-represented in?

“I think a bit like in large companies, women can be strongly represented in human resources, for example, but less well-



LARRY MCCARTHY SPEAKING AFTER HE WAS ELECTED TO BE THE 40TH PRESIDENT OF THE GAA AT GAA ANNUAL CONGRESS 2020 AT CROKE PARK IN DUBLIN.

represented in finance, for example.

“And within the GAA there is a tendency to see that a woman’s role is in the PR side of things, for example, and less in areas such as Chairperson, Secretary and Vice-Chairperson. So, I think that’s an area that I think we need to keep an eye on.”

It’s surely frustrating for women to be still asked to justify gender equality, but there remains an onus to beat the drum until it is no longer even a topic of debate.

Looney has no qualms about spelling out just why having more women involved at all levels of the GAA would be a good thing,

even if it should already be a self-evident truth.

“There would be the same benefits to the GAA that there would be having a more gendered balanced organisation if you’re a business or University,” she says.

“First of all, there is a really strong research base that says companies, organisations, institutions, are more successful when they have more women in the boardroom.

“The chances are the financial bottom line will improve. It’s not just an exercise in ticking the box in terms of having a 30% female board, for example, which is a target in Ireland at the moment.

“There’s evidence that organisations are more successful, generally, when they have a more diverse leadership group.

“I think, secondly, having a more gender balanced leadership and a more gender balanced GAA also means that multiple perspectives are presented.

“I think even if we look at the current pandemic, a lot of people are voicing a concern that a lot of the key committees in Government and the key leaders in NPHE, that women are under-represented there.

“And that perhaps if more women have been represented in the key decision making, I’m not saying we would be in a better place, but I think, for example, that issues to do with schooling, working at home, and childcare might have moved a little bit of the agenda.

“They’re not just women’s issues, but they’re issues into which women have a unique insight. I think ensuring that those issues into which women have a very particular insight can be foregrounded for the GAA and would only make things better into the future.

“I think it’s something you can make an intervention with in terms of training and mentoring by ensuring that women who do take up leadership roles get the appropriate mentoring and support so that if they do a very good job in whatever role they’re in they might think the next role they could take would be as Club Chairperson, for example. Are they looking to the next

leadership role they could have?

“We need to ensure that we’re providing mentoring and support for all leaders at club level, especially, because growing your leaders early is a very good strategy.

“There’s already good work being done in the GAA in that regard, but I think we could do more with a particular focus on diversity and inclusion.”

That’s why Looney is so enthusiastic about working with Larry McCarthy over the course of the next three years. The GAA’s 40th President has made it very clear that promoting diversity and inclusivity will be a core element of his tenure.

“This is an area where he followed through because he said this was going to be a big issue for him,” says Looney.

“You know, getting on the phone to me and inviting me to do this, I think that really showed that he was prepared to follow through which is impressive.

“I also think it’s great that we have our first President from outside of Ireland, from New York.

“I believe the next three years will be very outward facing for the GAA now, because the focus will be on the GAA as a global entity.

“With Larry’s commitment we have an opportunity to present the GAA as a really inclusive entity. And I think that both of those things really will allow the GAA to thrive over the next three years.

“It’s great to get to work on a committee that’s focused on something you’ve been passionate about all your life so I’m just really looking forward to it.”



Dublin City University   
@DCU



Comhghairdeas to Prof Anne Looney @annelooney, dean of @DCU\_IoE, who has been appointed to the Coiste Bainistí (Management Committee) of @officialgaa by incoming President Larry McCarthy. She is the 1st woman to be a Presidential appointee to this committee in its 40 year history



6:07 PM · Mar 5, 2021



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## NEW COACHES TEMPORARY SAFEGUARDING 1 PROGRAMME

**WITH NO ON-FIELD ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS MANY CLUBS AND COUNTY BOARDS HAVE CONCENTRATED ON RECRUITING NEW OR POTENTIAL COACHES TO WORK WITH UNDERAGE TEAMS OR IN RELATED ROLES OF RESPONSIBILITY. THE COACH EDUCATION PROVIDED FOR NEW OR POTENTIAL COACHES OFFERS MANY CLUBS ADDITIONAL NUMBERS FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE NEW COACHES IN 2021.**

These additional coaching programmes have naturally led to a surge in applications to attend the Safeguarding 1 Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop, a requirement for all underage coaches. The current temporary ban on face-to-face training has put pressure on our delivery of virtual safeguarding training with every available online slot utilised on a daily basis. We are currently delivering virtual Safeguarding Training Workshops, via our agreed training platform, 7 days a week and we are extremely grateful to our Safeguarding Tutors who have rallied to the call and made themselves available on each and every day as called upon.

While new and potential coaches are also obliged to submit and complete their vetting applications and have achieved, as a minimum, a Foundation/Fundamentals coaching qualification, we are pleased to introduce special arrangements that will assist them in achieving their safeguarding requirements while they await attendance at a virtual or face-to-face safeguarding training workshops.

As a temporary measure, NEW or POTENTIAL coaches of underage teams

who have completed or are completing their Foundation/Fundamentals coaching qualification may avail of a short term arrangement and fulfil their initial safeguarding training requirements by completing the Safeguarding 1 Online Refresher Programme. For NEW or POTENTIAL coaches of underage teams this training will be known as the Temporary Safeguarding 1 Programme.

This safeguarding training recognition will suffice for them to commence in a coaching or related role of responsibility, in addition to the aforementioned requirements. This temporary agreement remains in place until such time as the new coach has attended their virtual or face-to-face safeguarding workshop. While the SG1 Online refresher programme is a safeguarding recognised training programme in itself the agreement being proposed is temporary and shall expire

on 31 December 2021, unless renewed by the NCSC. On completion of the Temporary Safeguarding 1 Programme, the underage coach shall present their Safeguarding 1 Refresher certificate to their Club Children's Officer.

All New or Potential coaches who have applied to attend a virtual Safeguarding 1 workshop via their club are (or have been) allocated a workshop date. I cannot emphasise how important it is to fulfil this arrangement once they are informed of their workshop date. Failure to attend will result in their temporary safeguarding training recognition expiring on 31 December 2021 and unless they have attended a virtual or face-to-face safeguarding workshop by that date they will have to withdraw from their coaching roles.

It should be noted that when a safeguarding

training place is allocated to your club for NEW or POTENTIAL coaches, and it is not taken up, that they are depriving some other new coach of a place on a virtual workshop – something we are anxious to avoid while we are all under such pressure with training places.

**The above arrangements apply to NEW or POTENTIAL underage coaches, it expires no later than 31 December 2021** and does not apply to current coaches or those who work in coaching or other roles of responsibility at Cúl Camps or Club Camps later this year.

Children's Officers are requested to bring this temporary arrangement to the attention of new or potential coaches who have yet to attend their safeguarding training. The Temporary Safeguarding 1 Programme may be accessed and completed at <https://learning.gaa.ie/tempsafeguarding1>



# ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN – GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE



## ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



### ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

#### ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The temporary postponement of our games, training and coaching sessions during the Covid pandemic has undoubtedly impacted on many of us and in particular on our underage teams and the children and young people\* in our Clubs, i.e. those under 18 yrs. of age, including their families.

It is however always gratifying to hear that despite the restrictions that may be placed upon us at any time we have developed a number of new resources and services to offset some of this impact. This includes the use of communication platforms that enable us to deliver live or recorded training programmes, Officer Training, Safeguarding Training, numerous webinars, and the live online coaching sessions\*\* for players of all age groups. Live online coaching sessions for children are particularly welcomed and will assist children to maintain their links with the Club and participate in much valued physical activity. We should however always be cognisant of the fact that some children, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to participate in these online activities or may find them unsuitable to their needs.

With the correct guidance and good practices in place, we wish to support all such initiatives, so that coaches and units may deliver live online coaching sessions in a safe and enjoyable environment, through the use of secure online communications.

This online coaching guidance for children and young people under 18 yrs. has been developed following consultation with statutory authorities, the Gaelic Games Associations, games and coaching personnel, volunteer coaches and parents. In addition to the online coaching sessions we encourage the use of pre-recorded online resources, accessible at <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachingresources>

This Guidance forms part of our Code of Behaviour (Underage).

\* Children and young people refers to any person under 18 yrs. of age. Referred to as child hereafter

\*\* Online coaching denotes training and coaching sessions online for children



## ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### GOOD PRACTICE AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

- Online coaching sessions should be conducted via the Microsoft Teams platform which is our preferred platform option for such purposes – other equivalent tools do exist but are not covered by GAA/LGFA/Camogie governance mechanisms
- Consent from a parent is required prior to the child participating in any Club or County online coaching sessions (see Appendix 1 – Online Coaching Parent/Guardian Consent Form)
- It is not permitted to take screen shots of individual children or groups of children who are participating in live online coaching sessions
- Coaches who deliver a coaching session as part of an in-school activity may be required by the school to use the school's preferred platform. In some instances this may not be our preferred Microsoft Teams app but as this is a school based or school approved activity this will be permissible
- Approved Association skills challenges/competitions/charity events should be facilitated in line with the Skills Challenges Protocol available on [gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/gujvmtqymbj1a6pzovws.pdf](http://gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/gujvmtqymbj1a6pzovws.pdf)

### MICROSOFT TEAMS

- Microsoft Teams is a virtual communication platform hosted on Microsoft Office 365. It enables a range of services such as video conferencing, messaging, and file storage
- Teams is a free to use platform and can be accessed by anyone with an email address.
- An online coaching session must be created by the use of an official @gaa, @lgfa, or @camogie account as this will enable more control and provide greater security when delivering a session e.g. use an existing person's or officer's @gaa, @lgfa or @camogie account
- There is no charge to a Club when they use the official @gaa, @lgfa, or @camogie account
- Microsoft Teams features available to the host include the following:
  - o The host does not have the ability to turn off an individual's camera but may turn off all cameras as required
  - o The chat functionality cannot be turned off during a Teams coaching session
  - o Parents must submit the email address to the host coach, on behalf of their child, to enable the issuing of an invitation to them
  - o It is this email address that shall invite parents to avail of the coaching session for their child
  - o The email address of a person under 18 yrs. shall not be accepted for such purposes
  - o Attendees can be muted/ unmuted
  - o Attendees can be removed from the meeting
- Children should be instructed not to use the chat function unless directly engaging with the coach

For more information on Microsoft Teams please see the Teams users guide [www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/lq8bomcq2tray2dtu56s.pdf](http://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/lq8bomcq2tray2dtu56s.pdf)

## ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### SETTING UP AND DELIVERING A COACHING SESSION

- An official @gaa.ie, @lgfa, @camogie address must be used to set up the online session on behalf of the coach. Please contact the Club Secretary or Children's Officer to facilitate this
- Each event must have an individual and newly created invitation
- The coach(es) should have their camera and microphone on at all times, except during breaks or in exceptional circumstances
- Children should join the session with their microphone mute and their camera off and should only turn these on at the request or under the direction of the coach in charge

### COACHES

- Coaches must receive permission and use an official existing email address from their Club or County, as relevant, to deliver online coaching sessions
- At a minimum 2 coaches (or 1 coach and 1 nominated responsible adult) are required to deliver a coaching session in accordance with agreed supervisory ratios
- One person who is delivering the online coaching must be nominated as the lead coach
- It is the lead coach who must act as the point of contact for each coaching session and shall also be the responsible person should it be necessary to make administrative or disciplinary decisions in relation to the delivery of the coaching
- If the young people participating include both male and females the coaches/nominated responsible adults must also include a male/female presence
- At a minimum, coaches must have achieved a Foundation/ /FUNDamentals level coaching qualification, must be satisfactorily vetted and have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training
- The responsible adult, if not a qualified coach, shall be deemed a Supervisor of Children and must be satisfactorily vetted and must have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training recognised by our Associations
- Coaches must keep a record of each participant at online coaching sessions
- Coaches and any nominated responsible adults must be in membership of their Gaelic Games Association
- Misbehaviour or conduct of an inappropriate nature may result in the offending person being removed from the session by the lead coach
- Coaches delivering an in-school coaching activity may be required to avail of the platform and existing procedures adopted by the school

## ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### DELIVERING THE COACHING SESSION - GOOD PRACTICE

- During underage online coaching for children and young people the coach should have their camera and microphone on at all times, except during breaks or in exceptional circumstances
- Children should join the session with their microphone mute and their camera off and should only turn these on at the request and with the permission or under the direction of the coach or if deemed necessary when asking a question
- While a camera 'off and mute' rule applies to children participating in the session it is recommended that the coach would occasionally request the children, as a group, to turn on their cameras for a short period of time, as this will enable the coach to be aware who is in attendance. Any such instruction will be under the guidance of the lead coach in charge

### CHILDREN ATTENDING THE COACHING SESSION

- Children participating in online coaching sessions must be in membership of the Club or unit
- Participants must be appropriately dressed when participating in the session
- Children who are unwell or injured, should not participate in an online coaching session
- Misbehaviour or conduct of an inappropriate nature may result in the offending person being removed from the session by the lead coach
- Children may not seek to turn on their camera or microphone unless requested to do so by the lead coach
- A 'chat' function is available as part of the Microsoft Teams function that may be utilised by the participants or their parents, with the permission of the lead coach
- Children should be instructed not to use the chat function unless directly engaging with the coach

### PARENTS/GUARDIANS\*\*\*

- Parents and guardians have a central role to play in supporting the participation of their child(ren) in our online coaching sessions
- The child's parent must complete a consent form on behalf of their child and submit same to their Club so as to enable their child participate in an online coaching session
- Parents shall receive an email inviting their child to participate in the coaching session. This invite may not be shared with any other person(s)
- Parents must undertake to be present or in close proximity to their child while they are participating in the coaching session
- Parents may avail of the 'chat' function on behalf of their child, if deemed necessary

## ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### CLUBS/COUNTY BOARDS

- Review the delivery of coaching sessions by their nominated coach
- Note that the parental consent form submitted to enable a child participate in online coaching has a 12 month recognition period
- Ensure that the content and delivery of all coaching sessions and uploaded recordings are age appropriate for the participants. To achieve this, each session should be targeted at a specific age group
- Agree a realistic number of attendees at each session
- Register and access the FMS/ABC Have a Ball Resources on GAA Learning site <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachingresources> where additional coaching and skills resources are available to download
- Register and access the FMS/ABC Have a Ball Resources on GAA Learning site <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachingresources> and the GAA Activity Planner <https://learning.gaa.ie/planner/> where additional coaching and skills resources are available to download

### INJURY FUND/INSURANCE

- Please note that the provisions of the GAA player injury fund and the LGFA injury fund do not extend to cover participants in online coaching. Camogie Clubs are advised to liaise with their broker on any specific cover that applies to them
- Participation in any physical activity has inherent risk and it is the responsibility of the parent / guardians to ensure they have cover in place should their child sustain an accidental injury whilst participating in online coaching

## APPENDIX 1 TEMPLATE ONLINE COACHING PARENT/ GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

### APPENDIX 1 TEMPLATE ONLINE COACHING PARENT/ GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

A club must receive parental consent for each child to participate in the online coaching session. A club can create a Parental Consent Form by using Microsoft Forms. Please see template below.

#### ONLINE COACHING PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

**1. Players Name**

**2. Players DOB**

**3. Team/Age Grade**

**4. Parent/Guardian Name**

**5. Parent's email address for purpose of invite to online coaching**

**6. Parent's contact telephone number**

**7. By ticking the box below, I/we agree to allow the above named child to participate in our Club Online Coaching**

#### ONLINE COACHING GUIDANCE

**Data Protection Notification:** Please note, your personal data as provided on this form will be used solely for the purpose of conducting virtual online training sessions, ensuring that you have provided the appropriate consent for your child to participate and contacting you with the appropriate links for your child to join. The Data Controller is your GAA Club and you can contact your Club Secretary if you have any questions or queries in relation to your personal data. Your personal data will be deleted once it is no longer required to fulfil the aforementioned purpose. Information on your rights and complaint mechanisms are available on the Data Protection Commission's website at: [www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)



Produced by the National Child Safeguarding Committee in association with Cumann Lúthcleas Gael, Cumann Camógaíochta, Cumann Peil Gael n mBan, Liathróid Láimhe CLG na hÉireann and Comhairle Cluiche Corr na hÉireann.

## CLUB OFFICER TRAINING – NEWS UPDATE

### **FOIREANN WEBINARS**

There are webinars ongoing for training for clubs on the GAA's new Games Management System – Foireann. Ard Chomhairle have indicated that in view of the ongoing Covid situation, the standard membership deadline of March 31st has been temporarily set aside. A new date will be advised well in advance of clubs returning to training and playing.

There is still room to register for Foireann webinars on two dates – March 29th & 31st, both at 8pm. Interested participants can secure their place via the Club Officer Training Calendar –

<https://learning.gaa.ie/officertrainingcalendar>

Over 1500 officers have availed of training on the new system to date.

### **COMMERCIAL & SPONSORSHIP WEBINAR**

Over 100 Club Officers tuned in to the recent workshop on the opportunities and responsibilities for clubs when it comes to commercial and sponsorship opportunities. Expertly led by Peter McKenna, Croke Park Stadium Director, Diarmaid Murphy, GAA Commercial & Sponsorship Manager, and Dónal Marah, GAA Sponsorship & Sales Executive, the session was well received by all in attendance, with some fantastic engagement throughout.

**GAA DEMOGRAPHICS WEBINAR** Offaly GAA Secretary, Colm Cummins delivered a fascinating workshop on the changing demographics throughout the country, and the impact this is having on clubs in both rural and urban areas. The session was well attended by both county and club officers alike.

### **ACCESSING RECORDED WEBINARS – CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Club Officers are free to access all of the webinars which were delivered between December – March as part of this year's CLDP rollout. Users must have a GAA Learning Portal account set up, then can follow these steps to access webinars of their choice –

<https://bit.ly/3f3JrBm>

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our Associates, Development Officers, colleagues in the LGFA and Camogie Association, Provincial staff and thousands of club officers who took part in this year's rollout of Club Officer Training. As we embark into another unknown chapter, we will continue to stay in touch with all clubs and advise of new learning opportunities as and when they arrive.



**CLUB**

**LEADERSHIP**

**DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMME**

# COMMUNITY FINANCE IRELAND OFFERS CREATIVE FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS FOR THE GAA COMMUNITY

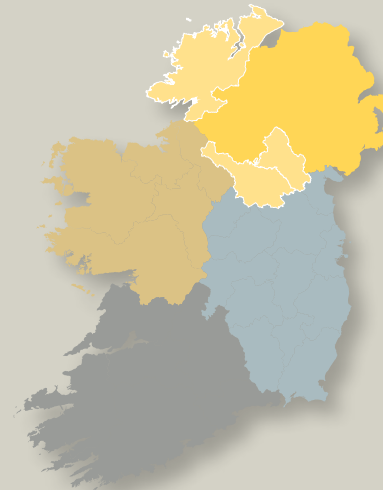
## Community Finance Ireland Offers Creative Financial Solutions for the GAA Community.

As the fastest growing social finance provider across the island of Ireland and the UK, Community Finance Ireland is a social enterprise that offers our clients the benefit of a real partnership that helps deliver social finance solutions, so they can get on with their ambitions and progress.

Today we are working with a wide variety of clients and financed many sporting clubs and facilities right across the island of Ireland. Some of our clients may be familiar:

- Michael Lang and his team built, what they term “probably the best facilities in the county”. Tuar Mhic Éadaigh GAA Club, based in the remote village of Tuar Mhic Éadaigh, realised their ambition to build a place and space for of all ages, to play and support all things GAA.
- Sinead Real and her team at Armagh LGFA (Armagh Ladies Gaelic Football Association) are making their own history with the first ever dedicated female playing pitch, anywhere on the island of Ireland.

Both have shown us that where there is a will, there is a way. They got in touch when they reached a tipping point in their development and as a result we were able to help “Build a club for people of all ages and create a sense of belonging” whilst also supporting “a dream to have a dedicated ladies football facility for all the county teams”.



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*We knew we had a huge mountain to climb and Community Finance took a leap of faith in us. They had seen our track record and they believed in us.*

Michael Lang, Club Secretary,  
Tuar Mhic Éadaigh GAA Club.



## Tuar Mhic Éadaigh GAA Club.

Location:  
Co. Mayo,  
Connacht

Tuar Mhic Éadaigh is a small village with a very big heart. The local team had a vision to build a centre where all generations could gather to play and compete. Their club now boasts a terrific playing pitch, right beside the local school.

The facility has become the backbone of all community activity with events and games almost every day and night. Their term loan helped build a facility that belongs to everyone in their community. Ensuring that the next generation has all they need to continue to foster the love of GAA.

Listen to Michael and the team on how CFI helped and tips on what type of team you need around you.



*Sinead's passion for the sport is only matched by her energy as a local volunteer who believes fundraising and dreaming big is easy when you believe and have a great team of like-minded people with you. Her team includes finance experts, sports coaches and ex-players.* Sinead Reel, Chairperson, Armagh LGFA.



## Armagh LGFA (Armagh Ladies Gaelic Football Association)

Location:  
Co. Armagh,  
Ulster

Armagh LGFA was formed in 1978 and is the administrative body that is responsible for the promotion, development and delivery of ladies' football in County Armagh.

Her team are creating history by building the first ever ladies football dedicated pitch currently under development in the small village of Killeen in Co. Armagh. Just a few minutes off the M7/M1 travelling either from the south or the north it's the ideal location for all ladies teams to tog out and compete.

## IT IS NEARLY TIME FOR THE GAA NATIONAL CLUB DRAW... HAVE YOU GOT YOUR TICKETS?

**GET YOUR CLUB INVOLVED AND BE IN WITH THE CHANCE OF RAISING €25,000!  
THE NATIONAL CLUB DRAW DATE IS 4TH JUNE,  
GET YOUR CLUB INVOLVED IT'S NOT TOO LATE !!**

*All money raised from selling the NCD tickets remains in the club. The Club Draw has proved hugely successful over the last number of years. Clubs can use this money to help with the upkeep of the club, capital development projects and the general running of the Club.*

*The June Draw date will now allow Clubs the additional time to sell Tickets during the current public health restrictions thus enabling them to raise valuable funds for their Club. Remember every person who buys a National Club Draw ticket are in with the chance of winning prizes such as a brand-new Renault Clio, All-Ireland Ticket Packages and a variety of cash prizes & the club retains all the Sales money €€€€€.*

*Additional tickets can be requested up until April 23rd 2021*

*To qualify for the Club Specific Draw, all clubs must abide by the following terms and conditions:*

- 1. Sell a minimum of 200 tickets*
- 2. Record all sold tickets on the online ticketing system.*
- 3. Account for all funds raised in the club accounts – i.e. the amount shown in club income should correspond with the total ticket sales amount.*
- 4. Adhere to all terms and conditions of the draw which are outlined on the back of the ticket.*

*Tickets (sold/unsold) must be entered onto the Online Ticketing System before they are returned to your County Liaison Officer by Monday 10th May 2021.  
If you have any further questions, please contact*

**[nationalclubdraw@gaa.ie](mailto:nationalclubdraw@gaa.ie)**

**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CLUB**

Opportunity for your GAA Club to raise up to €25,000





# THE PRICE OF GAA INSURANCE: THE MAJORITY OF CLAIMS AGAINST CLUBS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH GAMES

## ON AVERAGE, TWO-THIRDS OF THE INSURANCE CLAIMS BROUGHT AGAINST GAA CLUBS ARE FOR INCIDENTS THAT ARE NOT RELATED TO THE PLAYING OF GAMES.

The annual average cost of liability claims taken against GAA Units is €3.2m. Of that €3.2m only €1m relates to claims from games activity.

It means two-thirds of claims relates to non-Gaelic Games activity such as use of facilities like walkways, all-weather facilities and halls/meeting rooms for recreational users and groups and the staging of club fundraising event activities.

The highest incident of claims arises following alleged slip/trip/fall on premises costing insurers €1.2m annually and such claims are a direct result of the failure to maintain properties free from hazards and/or the adoption of controls such as requesting Third Party Users insurance when facilities are in use.

For all the recent high profile coverage of insurance claim reform in the media, these reforms whenever passed will only cover future claims.

The GAA's insurance department noticed a mark drop in claims in the second half of 2020 as facilities were only in use outdoors and were games based.

With premiums linked to the cost of claims it is in everyone's interest to keep them down.

The following are some tips from the GAA's insurance department led by Sinead Leavy as to how clubs can ensure they are well prepared for when facilities open again.

- Ensure that club properties are well maintained and free from hazards and that a documented system for maintenance/upkeep and cleaning when facilities are in use is in place and utilised
- Have a system in place to record all use of facilities and ensure that proof of insurance is obtained from all third-party users of property. Clubs need to understand that as a property owner you are legally required to ensure that access to your property is controlled, your property is fit for intended use and that your property is free from hazards and maintained. For example, if there are potholes in the club car
- park and a visitor to the club falls in the car park, the visitor may seek to bring a personal injury action against the club as the club is responsible for the property maintenance and upkeep
- Notify GAA Insurance Department or Marsh Ireland of any planned facility development as required under the terms of both Property & Liability insurance. This is so that best practice guidance can be provided in advance of works. Failure to notify facility development in advance may result in cover not being available when works are completed
- Ensure that risk assessments have been completed and training is in place for all persons who undertake tasks on behalf of the club whether paid/scheme worker or volunteer and in particular for persons who undertake ground maintenance

- activities such as grass cutting. This is an area where we see claims arising and units being exposed for failing to meet their legal obligations
- Notify all fundraising activities in advance as required under the T&C of the policy so that best practice guidelines can be provided to assist the unit manage a safe event and extension of insurance cover can be secured
- The policy documents are available on GAA.ie and clubs should read these documents carefully and familiarise themselves with the T&C of cover.
- GAA insurance department is [sinead.leavy@gaa.ie](mailto:sinead.leavy@gaa.ie) or [Ciara.clarke@gaa.ie](mailto:Ciara.clarke@gaa.ie) and our Insurance Brokers are Marsh Ireland [generalgaaqueries@marsh.com](mailto:generalgaaqueries@marsh.com)



## CLUB NOTES IN BRIEF

### TRUAGH GAELS RAISE MONEY FOR SUDAN

A 'Cash for Clobber' collection organised by the Gaeil Triucha Healthy Club team filled three of their dressing rooms with clothes and more importantly, in the process the 8,900kg of clothes raised €3,560 for Fr John Skinnader's Missionary Spiritan Congregation to support his work in South Sudan helping the people there across a range of initiatives from homelessness to medical emergencies to school and garden projects.



### DEDICATED ARMAGH CAMOGIE PLAYER AWARDED TRANSLINK YOUNG GAA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR TITLE

Niamh Rafferty's passion for her club has been recognised by her winning the Translink and Ulster GAA Young Volunteer of the Year Award.

19-year-old Niamh, from St Brenda's Camogie Club, Ballymacnab, Co. Armagh was presented with the prestigious award remotely due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The Young Volunteer Award celebrates the outstanding contribution made by young members of the Association aged 14-24 to their clubs and communities in the last season and throughout the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. A panel of experts met virtually to select one overall winner of the year and Niamh came out on top; she impressed the judging panel for her dedication and hard work that best represented the volunteering ethos and community spirit of the Association over the last 12 months.

14-year-old Étain Devlin, of Sean Treacy's Hurling Club in Lurgan, was also highly commended for the breadth of volunteering and commitment to her club and wider community over the last year.

Congratulating Niamh on her award, David Curry, General

Manager Bus Services at Translink said:

"This award was developed to celebrate the outstanding contribution made by young members of Ulster GAA to their clubs and communities in the last season and throughout the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. It was incredible to see the level of commitment Niamh has given especially during such a challenging year. From underage coaching to organising lockdown activities for younger club members, Niamh's work during the last 12 months has no doubt been invaluable."

Ulster GAA President, Oliver Galligan added:

"Niamh embodies what the GAA is all about – she is a self-motivated volunteer with a love for the game and a willingness to help and encourage others. Through her work as a support coach, committee member and co-ordinator of the club's lockdown videos, Niamh has shown a fantastic passion for her club which has been recognised in the club's appointment of her as Social Media Officer. She demonstrates GAA integration at its best – the GAA for all! We are delighted to present this prestigious award to this outstanding young volunteer from St. Brenda's."

St Brenda's Club Secretary Kathleen O'Hare also commended Niamh on her award:

"Niamh has shown herself to be an enthusiastic, up-and-coming volunteer, who has made an outstanding contribution to the development of sport within our club. She has done this both on the playing field via her role as support coach, at the committee table via her role as committee member and on her mobile phone via her role as initiator and co-ordinator of the 'lock-down' club videos."



### 2020 MUNSTER GAA AWARD WINNERS

Senior Hurler of the Year:  
Cian Lynch (Limerick)  
Senior Footballer of the Year:  
Conor Sweeney (Tipperary)  
Manager of the Year:  
David Power (Tipperary)  
Camogie Player of the Year:  
Mary Ryan (Tipperary)  
Ladies Footballer of the Year:  
Martina O'Brien (Cork)  
Handballer of the Year:  
Martina McMahon (Limerick)  
Under 20 Hurler of the Year:  
Shane Barrett (Cork)  
Under 20 Footballer of the Year:  
Killian Falvey (Kerry)  
Minor Hurler of the Year:  
Adam English (Limerick)  
Minor Footballer of the Year:  
Cian McMahon (Kerry)

# SCÉIM DEONTAS FHONDÚIREACHT SHEOSAIMH MHC DHONNCHA OSCAILTE

**TÁ GLÓR NA NGAEL AG GLACADH LE  
HIARRATAIS AR DHEONTAIS Ó CHLUBANNA  
CLG ATÁ CLÁRAITHE LE FONDÚIREACHT  
SHEOSAIMH MHC DHONNCHA LE HAGHAIDH  
BHABHTA 1 DEN SCÉIM I 2021.**

Tá deontas de suas le €500 ar fáil anois do chlubanna atá rannpháirteach sa scéim teanga Fondúireacht Sheosaimh Mhic Dhonncha a bhíonn á riar ag Glór na nGael i gcomhar le Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. Incháilithe faoin scéim deontais seo tá tionscadail agus imeachtaí a chuireann úsáid agus foghlaim na Gaeilge chun tosaigh i measc an chlubphobail. Cuirfidh an Fhondúireacht maoiniú meaitseála ón chiste ar fáil d'imeachtaí incháilithe ar bhonn €2 do gach €1 a chuireann an club féin ar fáil. Tá uasmhéid de €500 ar dheontas a thabharfar d'aon club sa bhabhta seo, sin €750 san iomlán le caitheamh ar thionscadal le bunsintiús an chlub san áireamh. Tionscadail ar leith a chuirfear i gcrích roimh dheireadh na bliana amháin a bheas incháilithe sa bhabhta seo.

Déan teagmháil leis an Oifigeach Forbartha áitiúil ag Glór na nGael chun foirm iarratais a fháil maraon le heolas ar théarmaí agus ar choiníollacha na scéime. Tá an maoiniú seo teoranta do chlubanna atá cláraithe leis an Fhondúireacht. Is gá d'iarratais a bheith istigh faoi 17:00 ar Aoine 16ú Aibreán 2021.

Is scéim tacaíochta de chuid Ghlor na nGael agus Chumann Lúthchleas Gael í Fondúireacht Sheosaimh Mhic Dhonncha le haghaidh clubanna CLG ar mian leo an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn. Tá Fondúireacht Sheosaimh Mhic Dhonncha buíoch as tacaíocht airgid i dtreo na scéime seo ón Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus na Meán, ó Chumann Lúthchleas Gael agus ó Fhoras na Gaeilge.



# ÁR GCLUICHÍ, ÁR LAOCHRA – CIANA NÍ CHURRAOIN

**IS Í CIANA NÍ CHURRAOIN ATÁ FAOI CHAIBIDIL AGAINN SAN EAGRÁN IS DEIREANAÍ SEO DE ‘ÁR GCLUICHÍ, ÁR LAOCHRA’ AGUS 20 CEIST SCIOBTHAÍ Á GCUR AGAINN AR LAOCH MÓR CHUMANN MHCHEÁL BREATHNACH AGUS NA GAILLIMHE. PEARSA SPÓIRT DOCHREIDTE MAITH Í CIANA ATÁ TAR ÉIS PEIL AGUS CAMÓGAÍOCHT A IMIRT AR FHOIRNE ÉAGSÚLA DE CHUID NA GAILLIMHE AGUS ATÁ ANOIS AR CHEANN DE NA HIMREOIRÍ LIATHRÓID LÁIMHE IS FEARR SA TÍR.**

Agus í ag caint ar a teanga dhúcháis, dúirt Ciana: ‘Is cúis bhróid é domsa go bhfuil an Ghaeilge agam agus gur as ceantar Gaeltachta dom. Níl tada níos fearr ná na himreoirí óga a chloisteáil amuigh ar an bpáirc ag labhairt lena chéile as Gaeilge agus go mbíonn mo chumann ag obair trí mhéan na Gaeilge.’

**(Ciana Ní Churraoin, 8 Márta, 2021)**  
Seo mar a d’fhreagair Ciana ár gcuid ceisteanna!

**Ainm:** Ciana Ní Churraoin

**Aois:** 24

**Club:** Míchéal Breathnach

**Contae:** Gaillimh

**An scannán is fearr leat?** Harry Potter

**An leabhar si fearr atá léite agat?** The Mindful Athlete le George Mumford

**An banna ceoil is fearr leat?** Westlife  
**An áit is fearr leat?** Indreabhán, Co. na Gaillimhe

**An bia is fearr leat?** Leite (bíonn sé agam don bhricfeasta agus sula dtéim a chodladh).

**Clár teilifíse is fearr leat?** Faoi láthair: Bridgerton agus Grey’s Anatomy

**An t-imreoir ab fhearr leat nuair a bhí tú óg?** Paul Brady

**An chéad chuimhne CLG atá agat:** Ag imirt le foireann na mbuachaillí ó bhí mé 7 bliain d’aois.

**An chéad uair a ndearna tú ionadaíocht ar do chontae:** faoi 14 sa bpeil agus sa gcamógaíocht

**An t-imreoir is fearr le himirt leat:**  
**Liathróid Láimhe:** Aisling Reilly  
**Peil:** Louise Ward  
**Camógaíocht:** Adhna Ní Bhraonáin

**An t-imreoir is fearr le himirt i do aghaidh:** Aisling Reilly, Martina McMahon, agus Catriona Casey.... tá sé deacair piocadh eatarthu

**An cluiche is fearr a d’imir tú riamh:**  
**Liathróid Láimhe:** an chéad chluiche i gcluiche ceannais an US Open i 2019  
**Peil:** Cluiche Ceannais Mionúir na hÉireann i 2014

**Buaicphointe do shaoil imeartha le do chontae go dtí seo:** ag buachaint cluiche ceannais i ngach aoisghrúpa ó faoi 14 - mionúir sa bpeil ghaelach.

**Buaicphointe do shaoil imeartha le do club go dtí seo:**  
**Liathróid Láimhe:** Ag buachaint comórtas oscailte san aon bhalla i 2019.  
**Peil:** Ag buachaint chraobh an chondae i 2014  
**Camógaíocht:** A bheith mar chaptaen ar fhoireann mionúir na Gaillimhe i 2014

**An duine is mó a raibh tionchar aige/aici ar do shaol imeartha go dtí seo:** Mo mhuintir

**Aon chomhairle agat d’imreoirí óga?**  
**Trí rud:** Cuimhnigh gur féidir le haon duine dul chun cinn a dhéanamh. Ní gá duit a bheith ar an imreoir is fearr... tá ról ag gach duine Bain sult as

**Aon chaitheamh aimsire eile?** Táim ag treanáil do mharathón faoi láthair.

**Laoch spóirt agat taobh amuigh de CLG?** Roger Federer

## Gluis / Glossary

**pearsa spóirt** – sports personality **teanga dhúcháis** – native language **cúis bhróid** – cause of pride **ceantar Gaeltachta** – Gaeltacht area **leite** – Porridge **comórtas oscailte** – open competition **mo mhuintir** – my people **cuimhnigh** – remember



## PITCH PERFECT ADVICE FOR CLUBS AND COUNTIES

### **THERE'S NOTHING GAA PEOPLE WANT TO SEE MORE THAN ACTIVITY BACK ON PITCHES.**

But while the wait for a full safe return continues, there has been a chance for hard working pitches to get a break and for the dedicated people to maintain them to have them ready for whenever the time comes for footballs and sliotars to be kicked and pucked again.

In his annual report, Ard Stiúrthóir Tom Ryan singled out grounds staff around the country for special praise as the condensed winter championship was run off without issue on pristine pitches across the land.

The GAA's national pitch work group have been busy in recent weeks making sure that the good work continues into 2021 and beyond.

Such was the success of a recent seminar held for ground staff in Munster that a plan is in place to host similar gatherings on line for the other three provinces, while the details of the presentations delivered have also been made available.

Stuart Wilson is the Pitch Manager at Croke Park. He stated: "We carried out an ask the pitch expert seminar/webinar trial with 40 representatives from clubs around the Munster region which was very successful. The panel including myself, Dr Ian McClements (STRI) and John Coogan (Nowlan Park, Kilkenny). In the hour and a half session the Munster representatives asked all sorts of questions relating to pitch maintenance, anything from

construction of pitches to mowing of pitches.

"Due to the success and very positive feedback of the event, we are now going to carry out an official ask the pitch expert with the Munster region later this month which will then move on to the other three provinces with dates to be announced."

To view the presentations, you can go through the GAA Learning portal <https://learning.gaa.ie/pitchmaintenance>





Football

Hurling

Club

General

## 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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