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# JOHN HORAN WILL PUT THE CLUB AT THE HEART OF HIS GAA PRESIDENCY

By John Harrington, GAA.ie

**N**ewly appointed GAA President, John Horan, sat down with GAA.ie to discuss his hopes and objectives for his three-year Presidency, and the challenges he's likely to face along the way.

Over the course of a wide-ranging interview, he spoke about his plans for putting GAA clubs at the heart of his Presidency by forming a National Club Committee, his intention to tackle creeping elitism in Gaelic Games, the challenge Ireland's urbanisation represents for the GAA, and his desire for more support for Gaelic Games at a Governmental level.

**Q: John, What do you think will be the main challenges you'll face as GAA President?**

**A:** I think the GAA, because of the complex nature of the organisation, faces challenges on a number of fronts. People talk about the amateur status, and I think that's key to the continued success of our organisation.

I think we need to look at trying to address that and hold back the tide there that might erode the value that the amateur status is to us as an organisation.

I think we've got to look at our development programmes of young players and see are

we getting it right or are we creating elite young lads at far too early a stage in their life. We need to review that and address it.

But I think critical to the whole organisation is the club. I'm putting a committee in place called the National Club Committee and the idea and background to that committee is to engage with the clubs and see how can we make the operation of our clubs easier and how can we make sure there's a strong connect to the club all the way up through the organisation and that we can bring volunteers into the actual clubs to perform their roles without making their tasks onerous.

I think society has changed in the last few years, even in my own profession of teaching. I talked to a principal the other night and he referenced the amount of legislative paperwork landing on their desk. A lot of that is creeping into club as well and making the tasks of being a club officer more difficult.

So we've got to see how can we make that position easier for those people on the ground because they're key. They're the bottom of the pyramid of the this organisation and without that bottom part of the pyramid being strong and secure, then the rest of the pyramid becomes very fragile.



Newly appointed Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchelas Gael, John Horan, pictured at Croke Park.

Clubs to me are key to the future.

**Q: Are you concerned about creeping elitism and an erosion of the volunteer ethos in the GAA?**

**A:** Yeah, there is an old saying 'don't close the door after the horse is bolted' and I think we have to be conscious about all those issues. I'd have a grave concern

about where our development squads and academies are going.

Are we making some of our younger players too elite too early? Are we really servicing them well? Are we losing them? The pyramid gets narrower, it is only 15 lads playing minor and only a small number go on to play senior. We have got to be careful, the ideals in education at the moment are mixed ability, it



is giving everybody a chance to maximise their ability and potential.

Then people channel into different areas and I think that is one key area. We have elitism at inter-county senior level and we certainly have a concern, in my mind, that we don't allow elitism to creep in at juvenile and youth level.

The other aspect is our amateur status has always been under threat. I don't think ruling from Central Council or Ard Comhairle is going to necessarily address that matter. I think this has to be tackled by a groundswell of opinion on the ground, that everybody in their club and the County Board resist payment to their managers.

It may sound like cheap talk on my part and that I'm passing the buck to somebody else. If we start passing rules at Central Council level I'm quite certain people will start finding ways to circumvent them. Really people in clubs have to decide it, that 'we shouldn't be paying a manager'.

I think we should look at succession stakes within clubs and County Boards. People should be identifying people to manage teams and to look at a pathway through for managers, not alone just for players. County Boards should be the same.

Your U-16 or minor manager at inter-county level should have the potential to become an U-21 manager and then give you a pool that you can hopefully have your own manager coming from within your own county. It is something that has gathered pace, but we have to try to pull it back. The pulling back comes from the membership themselves, rules will be circumvented.

**Q: What sort of remit will the National Club Committee have?**

**A:** The National Club Committee are there to engage with clubs and hopefully they will have an Annual Forum. The idea of it is to gather the information, to create a link between clubs on the ground and National Committees to see what can be put in place to make the operation of the clubs easier on the ground.

There are big challenges getting people to step forward to become officers in clubs and at County Board level. It is becoming more and more difficult. For that reason I think we need to focus in on that area, to

see can we help put in place and put training in place.

All the people in the GAA are all ultimately linked back to their club. To get a direct line from the people in their clubs up to national level to see how can we send back an extra support. If that means we put a club support desk in place to get a direct line into people to get advice.

You would find in a lot of clubs people are re-inventing the wheel here and here and here when, in actual fact, with a sharing of information or guidance or advice the re-inventions don't have to happen. They can just take the information from other people where it has worked successfully.

I was working on the Strategic Plan and one of the members of the Strategic Plan, who would have good business experience said that when they sat down to look at a fundraising pathway for themselves they said they were starting from scratch. I'm sure a lot of fundraising operations have gone on in different places, even in that sense, if we were to provide that information to people. Here are the ideas.

**Q: So you'd like to see clubs sharing knowledge?**

**A:** Shared knowledge to me would make life an awful lot easier. If the National Club Committee can pull in all of that knowledge and then dissipate it out to the membership I would think we could make life easier for everybody.

**Q: When would you hope to have that in place?**

**A:** That Committee has been appointed and will be up and running. Hopefully they will have a forum. We have a Youth forum, we have Congress, I think a club forum wouldn't be any harm in terms of getting people in from around the country, giving them an opportunity. You never know from that club forum we could probably create new leaders within clubs, County Board, and at national level.

**Q:** Have you have sensed that some ordinary club members feel slightly disenfranchised?

**A:** There is an element of that. Fixtures are one critical part of the problem, but we will have a National Fixtures Planning Committee in place and as I said to them when I spoke to them on taking the role up, they face challenges on that committee.

If nothing else they could be a great conduit of information from county to county as to what has worked in the new environment in the new Championships in hurling and football. What has worked in a particular county and could it be transferred to another county for their benefit.

We have all different types of counties. We have counties where football and hurling are equally strong. We have counties where football or hurling is strong. It is to get the balance between all of them, but I'm quite sure all County Boards have been working at it. Some solutions that are good have come up.

That committee will be tasked with that job to share that information to smooth out the difficulties that are probably ahead of us in terms of the new proposals in hurling and football when they come into effect.

**Q: When you were Leinster Council Chairman the Leinster Council did a lot of good work in analysing the urbanisation of Ireland and people leaving rural areas. How big a challenge is that for the GAA?**

**A:** Again, I have a group of people in place to deal with that and I have picked them from varying backgrounds to deal with the issues that are there.

The issues are equally different on both parts. In rural Ireland the GAA can try to influence things, but a lot of the factors and difficulties in rural Ireland are economic more than anything else. The GAA are not the economic driver in the country, but I think the GAA as a club is a huge part in keeping a lot of those communities.

We may need to look at creating a flexibility into the survival of rural clubs. I was in London last weekend and they had created an Under 17 competition and they had reduced the number in the competition down to 11 and the reason was everybody would be able to field their own club team with their own club identity. If they had all been pushed to field 15 they probably would have had to have amalgamations.

Something like that flexibility. Rural clubs will have a problem raising funds, but they won't have a problem in the context of getting green grass to have pitches and things like that. The urban build up is large numbers coming into city areas and towns with no green facilities to allow pitches to have matches.

You look at Abbottstown, that wasn't there a couple of years ago, now it is absolutely

maxed out in its use. It isn't just being used by Dublin, it is Kildare and Meath and other clubs from outside of Dublin and inter-county squads are actually using the facilities in Abbottstown.

There are difficulties in both areas, but I have a committee in place and hopefully they will look at both angles to it and we will see if they can offer solutions to it. I think it was recently highlighted out in South County Dublin that there is a maximum of eight areas where pitches could actually be placed.

If we get an increase in population there and an increase in membership and an increase in demand; I know of one club who are paying out a six figure sum just renting out facilities because they are in an urban area. They can't buy or purchase the green field sites for themselves so they have to go to purchase from other bodies.

**Q: The simplistic solution to cater for growing populations in urban areas would be to establish new clubs, but that's obviously a difficult thing to do for a variety of reasons?**

**A:** In theory it is good to say create a second club in a particular area. You have got to be realistic on the ground. If you gave people the option take the leadership role in a brand new entity or join a club that already exists most people want to play the game and they don't want to be the champions of a foundation of a new club.

They will stay with the club and that is how we have evolved into the superclub in some areas, particularly in Dublin and in some

areas outside of Dublin where you only have one club in an area. People look at it and think there could be two clubs here.

When you are faced with that option, do you want to get five or six people around you to get a brand new club or do you want to attach to what is already there? Most people will attach to what is already there. If you look into the histories of GAA clubs it is often because of a split that a club evolves rather than anyone wishing to create a new club in that context.

**Q: Is it time for the GAA to undertake a comprehensive strategic review?**

**A:** We have lots of challenges in this organisation on lots of fronts. We have a group together at the moment looking at a strategic plan that will work for the next three years within the organisation. That will cover certain areas, it won't cover all.

We have done research work on that and we now have a workshop coming up to put that actual final meat on the bones of that plan. In recent times Aogán (Ó Fearghail)

appointed two committees, one was to look to 2034, they came in with a report which was also looked at by the strategic committee. He also formed another committee to look at all policy reports back to 2002.

There has been a lot of work done on that. I would find as being President and I know I had said that I would look at starting a strategic review, but in light of the work that has gone on we could waste a lot of time sitting back now and spending the next two or two and a half years of my term putting a very detailed strategic review together and then I would leave office and would someone else take it onboard?

I think the road we have gone in terms of gathering the information from Aogán's two committees, putting our own strategic committee together and some of the committees I'm putting in place and the guidelines they will work under I think will address a lot of the challenges for us going forward.



*Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, John Horan, acknowledges the growing urbanisation of Ireland presents specific challenges for the GAA.*



**Q: It's easy to criticise, but is it also important to acknowledge how progressive the Association has been on a number of fronts, particularly in terms of coaching?**

**A:** I think the organisation plays a massive role in Irish society and I think we do an awful lot of things very well. Are we trying to do some things better? Most definitely. Unfortunately there is criticism going on out there and I'm not going to engage with that whole area.

I'm more interested in focusing on pushing forward. Negativity catches people's minds and gets conversations going. Positivity doesn't get the same traction. I'd like to see us be a bit more positive, to drive things on. Not necessarily clap ourselves on the back, but quietly look in the mirror as an organisation and know we do a good and make a huge contribution to Irish society.

Often I feel we don't the credit be it from government or local authorities, I think if you took the actual social impact role GAA plays in society, local authorities and governments would have a huge difficulty on their hands in terms of how society would function without us.

**Q: Should there be more help from a governmental level considering the GAA's contribution?**

**A:** Absolutely, I think they could give us more recognition. They do give us recognition, but I feel they could give us more recognition for the actual role and the benefit we give to society from every aspect: health - physical health and mental

health. Occupation of time, if you think about it, if a lot of the teenagers weren't engaged in GAA clubs and tied up in training and the conscientiousness of being fit and abstaining from alcohol, where would they be? Would they be all on street corners creating social difficulties and social problems?

I think they would. The government and local authorities should never underestimate the importance that this organisation plays in keeping Ireland as a stable and healthy country.

**Q: This country's health crisis is well publicised. If you put significant funding into sport then surely you would save money in the sphere of health further down the line?**

**A:** Absolutely, coming from my background in teaching the young lads involved in sport they were always the healthier looking young lads coming to school. It doesn't have to be hurling or it doesn't have to be football, it could be running. It doesn't have to be a contact sport some of them don't like contact sport.

Sport gives kids an opportunity to keep themselves in good shape and it also puts discipline in their life. I think it is very important the Government sees that and instead of having to build a whole load of hospitals and put money into health programmes they could in actual fact solve the problem before it comes around.

**Q: When you were elected Uachtarán Tofa last year you referenced the Na**

**Fianna club motto - 'Purity in your heart, strength in your limbs and action according to your words.' Will those same values define your Presidency?**

**A:** Yeah, look that is what we were brought up with, it was always written on your membership card. It always sat in on your sub conscious. That was something on the night I was elected, it just came out. It does make me emotional even thinking about it.

The people that had been in Na Fianna that put that in front of us. If you lived your life with those qualities, purity in your heart, strength in your limbs and action according to your words, if they were your mottos for life, I think you deliver a fairly good contribution to society and you'd reflect back and say you did well.

**Q: How much does being President of the GAA mean to you?**

**A:** It does mean a lot. I'm looking forward to it and I think I'm bringing plenty of GAA experience to the table.

I've been on management for the last four years, I have been a Director of the Stadium, I was Chairman in Leinster, I did six years in Coaching and Games, I did the schools, did the club, both from a playing and an administrative point of view.

I think I have a reasonable knowledge of where the organisation is. It is not about a revolution, it is about the continued evolution. I view it that I'm getting the baton from Aogan and hopefully that I will give that baton on to my successor in a stronger condition than I have received

it and hopefully he will pass it on in a similar vein to someone else in a stronger condition.

That is the way I look on it, that is the way clubs actually work on the basis that a certain group of people operate it for a period of time and help to improve it. Then another group comes along; it is a succession stakes within a club. I suppose when you join a club you add something to your DNA because your name is your name and it will always be your name.

Your first GAA club will always be your first GAA club no matter where you go in the world. If you do change by just changing location to another club you will always still refer back to your original club. I've found when you go to different parts, whether here in Ireland or overseas, people will always say to you what is your club. That is the first question and people look to identify you from that as to who you are.

That never changes, it does become part of your DNA, it is nearly like you are getting an inheritance when you are walking in that gate. Suddenly you are somebody different because you are a member of that club.

**Q: The club is the heart of the GAA and so hopefully will also be at the heart of your Presidency?**

**A:** Hopefully, it won't be from the want of trying. I'm not going to be naive enough to think that we will solve everything, but hopefully we will leave it in a better place after three years.

# GAA CONGRESS BANS ALL FORMS OF GAMBLING SPONSORSHIP

**The 2018 GAA Congress held in Croke Park has voted overwhelmingly to prohibit sponsorship by gambling companies at all levels.**

The passing of Motion 1 on the clár prohibits “sponsorship by a betting company of any competition, team, playing gear or facility”.

Speaking on behalf of the Motion, Mick Rock of Connacht GAA made the argument that banning sponsorship by betting companies would “enhance the moral standing of the GAA in Irish life and protect the integrity of our games”.

While GPA delegate Alan Kerins revealed a large number of their members who had sought help through their counselling service had done so because of gambling issues and commended the GAA for “taking this leadership step for society as a whole”.

The Motion was passed overwhelmingly, with 93% of delegates voting in favour of it.

By and large, most of the Motions that were passed or defeated had a clear-cut result either way, but there was a robust debate on Motion 30 which sought to abolish the All-Ireland U-21 hurling

championship in favour of an All-Ireland U-20 Championship.

Offaly forwarded the Motion and drew vocal support from Tipperary, Galway, and Wexford. But delegates from Cork and Waterford voiced their objection to it. When it came to the vote, 70% of the delegates voted in favour, which means this year’s All-Ireland U-21 Hurling Championship will be the last one ever.

Other significant Motions that were passed included Motion 24 which gives GAA Central Council the power to authorise the use of all GAA property outside of

Ireland which are owned or controlled by units of the Association for games other than those controlled by the Association; Motion 26 which means only counties competing in the Nicky Rackard and Lory Meagher Cups will now be able to avail of ‘special eligibility players’; and Motion 40 which has deleted the rule that currently prevents a player who was sent off in a Final from participating in the after-match presentation ceremony.

A Leinster Council motion which would have made it a rule that only club chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers were allowed to represent a club at a

county board meeting was defeated. Also defeated was a Tipperary attempt to redefine what constitutes ‘a melee’ in a referee’s report.

A motion passed last year which would have paved the way for referees and match officials to have sponsorship logos on their gear was overturned and ditched. Meanwhile, following an election, Tipperary’s John Costigan and New York’s Larry McCarthy were voted in as the GAA’s new trustees. They replace John Greene (Longford) and Niall Erskine of Donegal.





## CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

# LEADING YOUR CLUB TO THE NEXT LEVEL

CHAIRPERSON

TREASURER

PRO

SECRETARY

### OVERVIEW

The Club Leadership Development Programme (CLDP) gives the Principal Officers in all Clubs - namely the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and PRO - an opportunity to gain the key knowlegde and skills to carry out tehir roles effectively

### GET INVOLVED

The Club Leadership Development Programme is open to all current Club Officers or anyone interested in taking up a role in the future. Registration is online only, and a GAA Membership ID, available through a Club Secretary / Registrar is required to register.

See [learning.gaa.ie/club\\_leadership](https://learning.gaa.ie/club_leadership) for more information or contact your County Development Officer

## GAA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WEBINARS

The GAA Management System Webinars are a series of webinars being rolled out throughout February and March, providing Club Officers with an opportunity to improve their understanding of the GAA Management System.

Each webinar, provided by Servasport and aimed at the person responsible for registration in any GAA Club, will look at the following areas:

*Annual club update* - New six step process for club administrators to ensure all club information is accurate and complies with GDPR.

*Registrations via the Official GAA app* - Members can now register and pay for their membership via the Official GAA app.

*Registrations via the GAA Management System* - Club representatives updating and registering members on their behalf.

*Player Injury Benefit Fund (Insurance)* - Club representatives insuring their teams for the season ahead

*Support* - Guidance on how to complete any tasks using the official GAA Management System and app

Registration is now open for the four dates shown below. Each session is capped to 25 participants however additional sessions may be scheduled based on demand so be sure to add your name to the waiting list if your preferred date is fully subscribed.



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



## GAA PRESIDENTS' AWARDS 2018

**T**he GAA staged the annual **Gradaim an Uachtaráin 2018** at a special awards banquet in early February to highlight outstanding contributions to GAA life.

These prestigious annual awards, organised with the support of Club Championship sponsors AIB and broadcast by TG4, affords Uachtarán CLG with an opportunity to acknowledge outstanding commitment and long service across the club, and county network.

Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Aogán Ó Fearghail said: "This event is one of the highlights in the diary of an Uachtarán because it is a special opportunity to shine a light on some of the outstanding people whose selfless dedication to our Games has made our Association the thriving entity that it is today.

"The GAA is at its best when it sees people come together to work towards a goal and all of those who are gathered here tonight for awards deserve special tribute for the inspirational work they have done.

"I would like to acknowledge AIB and Denis O'Callaghan, for their ongoing support of these awards and of their wider commitment to Gaelic games."



Buaiteoirí Gradaim an Uachtaráin 2018

### **Seamus O' Hare, Ulster**

Dependability and reliability are the hallmarks of what has been an outstanding lifetime commitment to the GAA by Seamus O'Hare. Working first with the former St Colmcille's GAA Club in East Belfast in the 1950s and subsequently with St John's, Seamus has been always ready and willing to answer the call where needed.

Whether that was serving as a widely respected referee, stewarding at Croke Park, serving on committees or acting as Club Secretary for several years, his passion for the GAA was in making a

contribution that improved his club and the wider association and the positive legacy of this work is in the depth of the respect with which he is held by all who know him.

### **Seamus King, Munster**

Seamus King is a name synonymous with GAA excellence. He was a renowned club administrator and was the chairman of his beloved Cashel King Cormac's from 1985 to 1992 – a period which saw the Tipperary club enjoy magnificent success that included a county senior crown and a Munster club championship in 1991.

Off the field, Seamus King has given extraordinary service to the GAA in the work he has done producing historical books and record books that have

preserved the heritage of our Games for future generations and is an exemplary figure in this regard. A former winner of the prestigious GAA MacNamee award in 1993 for his journalism, he now receives further recognition for his lifetime of service.

### **Pattie Stundún Uí Aodhagáin, Connacht**

Pattie Stundún Uí Aodhagáin is the heartbeat of her local club CLG Thuar Mhic Éadaigh which is located in southwest Mayo. Her father Micheal was a founder member of the club in 1965 and she has embraced this GAA inheritance by dedicating herself to the promotion of Gaelic games and also our native language.

Under Pattie's direction, the club very successfully hosted the national finals of Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta 2017, in preparation for which a major capital development project was completed.

She is an inspirational and very dedicated woman who is highly respected within her community for the outstanding work she does to advance the objectives of the GAA.

### **Jack Napier, Leinster**

Bray Emmets Club President Jackie Napier has been instrumental in the promotion of hurling in Bray and Wicklow for some

60 years. In 2013 those efforts were rewarded with the Wicklow Senior Hurling Championship coming back to Bray Emmets after a hiatus of 59 years. It was a very proud day for Jackie who had kept hurling going in Bray Emmets through some very lean years.

Jackie has held many positions at club level including secretary and chairman, as well as positions on the Wicklow County Board including Leinster and Central Council delegate, and he also served on National Committees. Jackie was also a referee and a selector on numerous Bray Emmets and county hurling teams. His passion and enthusiasm are an example to all.

#### **Marie McAleer, Ladies Football**

The phenomenal growth and success of Ladies Gaelic Football traces its roots back to the pioneering visionaries who played and promoted the sport and Marie McAleer is central to this work. An outstanding player, she was the first Chair of the Roscommon Ladies Gaelic Football county board while still active on the field when

it took shape in 1974 and was a founder member and first Vice President of the Ladies Gaelic Football Association.

Her passion and drive for the sport has continued ever since and has been put to good use on several national and county board committees while she was also instrumental in the establishment of the Roscommon Gaels Ladies Gaelic Football Club in 2000.

#### **Margaret O'Leary-Lacey (Wexford) Camogie**

Margaret began her career with the Buffers Alley club, where she won three club All Ireland Championships to add to the one she won while playing with Eoghan Ruadh, Dublin in 1967. When Wexford brought the O'Duffy Cup to the Model County in 1968 and 1969 she made a big contribution to those victories. In 1975 Wexford won again when she starred at full back against a star-studded Cork forward line.

A player of remarkable all-round ability, she holds eight Gael Linn medals. Margaret was selected as the Gaelic All Star Player of the Year in 1968. Twice voted Wexford Powers Sport Star of the Year 1966 and '68. Dedicated to the promotion of Camogie for more than 50 years and now Chairperson of her club, Margaret still plays junior camogie at club level. Her daughters Mary and Una are current Wexford stars, with Mary captaining the side to All Ireland glory in '07 and Una following this up in 2010.

#### **Sean McEntee, Handball**

Sean McEntee has had several careers in Irish handball – as player, coach and administrator. He first became involved as a player in the two courts at Queens University, Belfast in the early 1970s. He was a founder member of Belfast Central Handball Club and Belfast Handball Association which eventually grew to become Antrim Handball Committee. Sean joined with the late Sean Boyle to put together a vibrant and successful St Paul's club which amassed innumerable national titles.

He conceived of the idea of The Golden Gloves tournament which he ran with great success for 15 years and which attracted players at every level from all over Ireland for a wonderful playing and social weekend and as well as his playing success he has been an excellent coach.

Sean was Chairman of the National Coaching Council and became President of the Irish Handball Council from 1993 until 1996.

#### **Mary Kelly, Rounders**

Mary Kelly has enjoyed a lifetime of enjoyment from Rounders and has been a passionate advocate of a game that helps drive inclusiveness in the GAA. She started her schools participation in competitions in the early 80's and continued till her retirement in September 2017.

A proud member of Tusk GAA Club, she has won County Titles 15 times with her school girl's team and this year her school boy's team are county champions. Under her watch the game of Rounders has grown in Co Roscommon and following coaching by Croke Park the number of schools competing in the National Schools Day in June has risen to 16.

#### **Ger Murphy, Education**

A proud Galway man, Ger Murphy began teaching in St Olaf's in Sandyford 39 years ago and has been instrumental in the growth and development of Gaelic games in this area of the Capital. From humble beginnings Ger and a couple of teaching colleagues introduced hurling and football in 1980 with only a half-dozen hurls and a few adult sliotars. Two years later they were in their first Cumann na mBunscol final at Croke Park.

Since then Scoil Olaf have competed in Cumann na mBunscol hurling, camogie and football competitions every year reaching 27 finals and winning 13 titles. The fruits of this work led to Naomh Olaf GAA Club being founded in the school in 1981 and he was soon coaching club as well as school teams, playing hurling with the club up until 1998 and was central to securing the first Games Promotion Officers to all the local schools in this thriving locality and linking them back to the Club.



The mighty Meehan family from Caltra in Galway – winners of the prestigious family award

**Dickie McAllister, International**

He is based in Buenos Aires but Dickie McAllister Lynch is a proud Dub and his family is originally from of Turvey Hill, Donabate, Co Dublin.

Like so many others of Irish descent in the Argentine capital, he was raised at the Hurling Club in Hurlingham, Buenos Aires. They grew up watching their fathers and uncles play Hurling and recalling what once was the sport that gave identity and shape to the club.

At the end with his own active sports career he became involved as a volunteer working for the club as well as for other Irish associations around the country, fuelled by his infectious enthusiasm.

He has been President of the Hurling Club, and has been the driving force behind two visits by the All-Stars hurlers to Argentina which rekindled the playing of Gaelic games at the Hurling Club.

**The Meehan Family, Caltra**

The Meehan family of Tycooley, Caltra is synonymous with the GAA both in Galway and at national level.

Michael (Snr) won an All-Ireland Minor medal with Galway in 1960 and has served his club Caltra in various roles as a player, officer, football board delegate and devout supporter. His brother Tadhg (Snr) while based in Manchester was a delegate to the Central Council of the GAA as well as being voluntary pay master of the Coaching staff in

England for many years.

Michael and his wife Ann have seven children also steeped in Gaelic games. Tomás and Declan won All Ireland senior football medals with Galway in 1998 and 2001 while Michael (jnr) won All Ireland under 21 titles with Galway in 2002 and 2005. In 2003 all six sons Seamus, Enda, Declan, Tomas, Noel and Michael (Jnr) helped Caltra to win a first county final and went on to win the provincial crown and the 2004 All Ireland club final, with Noel as captain.

At colleges level Declan, Tomás and Michael have won Hogan Cup medals with Michael being the last winning captain for St. Jarlaths College. Declan and Michael have also won Sigerson cup medals. They have received many other individual awards

at various levels throughout their careers including All Stars, Texaco footballer of the year and several man of the match awards at both local and national level.

Declan, Tomás, Noel and Michael also set a unique record with all four of them lining out for Galway in a senior championship qualifier against Louth.

The late Mairead was a top class dual player with Ahascragh/Caltra and Galway camogie and also with Caltra Cuans and Galway Ladies Football teams until her untimely passing.

This award recognises a family who have left an indelible mark on the GAA and have always been something special.

**Seán Ó hEarcáin, Irish Award**

Rugadh Seán Ó hEarcáin i nGlascú i lár na gcaogaidí, áit a raibh a athair Seán agus a mháthair Sorcha Nic Aoidh, as an tSeanbhaile, Fálcarach ina gconáí ag an am. I ndhiadh tamall, d'fhill an teaglach go Gaeltacht mhór Chloich Cheann Fhaola agus tógadh Seán agus a dheartháireacha, Peadar, Niall agus Gearóid ar an tSrúthán, tuarim is leath bealaigh idir An Fhálcarach agus Gort a'Choirce. D'frestal sé ar Scoil Mhíndoire, ag siuil síos an Mhullaigh Ghárhbh agus trasna an phortaigh go doras na scoile. I ndhiadh scolaíocht mhaith ar an bhun scoil, chuaigh sé siar an bealach mór go Árd Scoil Mhúire 'sna Doire Beaga. I ndhiadh an tÁrd Teist, chuaigh sé go Ollscoil na Gallimhe áit ar bhain sé céim amach mar mhúinteoir dara leibheál.

Nuair a bhí Seán ag éirigh aníos i gCloich Cheann Fhaola, d'imir sé peil faoi aois agus sa ghrád sóisireach fosta ar feabh cúpla blain eile indhiadh a cheantar dúchais a fhágáil. Cé go raibh a shuim sna cluichí gaelach láidir i gconáí, 's nuair a bhí sé ag múinteoireach i gContae Mhaigheo a thainic a chuimseach mar riarthóir, mar réiteoir, agus mar cheannaire C.L.G chun tosaigh.

Chaith Seán na blianta fada ag múineadh i gClochar Íosa agus Mhúire, Crois Mhaolíosa i gContae Mhaigheo agus páirt mhór aige leis an pheil 'san scoil agus 'san chumann áitiúil. Bhí postanna áirithe aige le CLG Chrois Maolíosa ach 's mar oifigeach caidrimh poiblí is mó a tharraingt sé cliú ar féin. I measc dualgaisí eile agus rud a bhí neamh iontach ag an am, d'foillsigh Seán leabhar bliantiuil don chlub ar feadh deic mbliana ar a laghad. Thosaigh sé ag réiteoireach fosta agus rinne sé móltoireacht ar chluiche ceannais sinsireach Mhaigheo chomh maith le go leor cluichí eile. 'Sé a bhí i gceannas ag an chluiche ceannais nuair a h-imríodh Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta i mBéal an Mhuirthid sa bhlian 1987 agus ceithre bliana indhiadh sin, i bPáirc an Chróchaigh a bhí a shiúl agus é ag rith an líne i gcluiche ceannais na bliana sin idir An Dún agus an Mhí.

Nuair a bhí a chosa ag éirigh tuirseach, thiontaigh sé chuig an riarthóireacht agus a pharóiste dúchais aríst agus ról aige anois mar ionadaí Chloich Cheann Fhaola ag cruinnithe Peile na Gaeltachta. Sar a bhfad, chonaic a chomrádaí a chumas agus roghnaíodh é mar Chathoirleach ar an eagraíocht naisiúnta I 2001. Anois agus é ins an chathaoir sin le sé mbliana déag, is mó atá an gradam seo tuille ag Seán Ó hEarcáin. Cé go bhfuil sé ina gconáí i gceantar Béal Átha na Muike, Contae Mhaigheo in aice le baile fearainn a dtugtar Lár na Páirce ar ó 1974, an cineál áite a chaith Seán a shaol i stair Chumann Lúthchleas Gael go h-áitiúil agus go naisiúnta "Conallach ar Deoraíocht mé" adeir sé!"

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN THE GAA – AN IMPORTANT Q&A

**A** number of follow up questions arose following last month's Q & A on Safeguarding Children in the GAA. Some of these questions are addressed below:

**As your Club Secretary recently received the draft Risk Assessment document and the Child Safeguarding Statement what do we do now?**

As previously clarified completing these documents, by 11 March 2018, is a new requirement in the GAA and must be adhered to in accordance with legislation. Completing these documents will assist your Club in identifying how children attending our games or activities are safe from risk in your Club. It will create an awareness as to what is in place and what assistances are available from the GAA so as to enable your Children's Officer and those working with children to ensure as far as is practicable that we put our best practices in place each and every day that we work with children.

These two documents are already drafted and it is recommended that the Club Executive Committee discusses them at a scheduled or special meeting, with much of the direction and assistance provided by the Club Children's Officer.

Once the Risk Assessment has been completed and amended, depending on the circumstances of each club, the

Child Safeguarding Statement may be downloaded. Legislation requires of us to put the Child Safeguarding Statement on display for members of the GAA and for the public and it has been designed so that Clubs may sign it and also insert their Club logo on the Statement.

The Risk Assessment document plus the Child Safeguarding Statement may be downloaded at <http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/children-first>

**Do County Committees and the National Safeguarding Committee also have to complete the Risk Assessment and the National Safeguarding Statement?**

Yes, County Committees (Boards) and the National Safeguarding Committee are also obliged in law to carry out this process. A County template is available for both documents at <http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/children-first> and again it shall be directed by the County Children's Officer at County level.

**Can we clarify what are the GAA Child Safeguarding training requirements for coaches or others in the GAA who work with children?**

The GAA (as does the LGFA and Camogie) provides three levels of Child Safeguarding (Protection) Training. Such training is mandatory in all jurisdictions in which we



work and is provided by GAA volunteers in each County and Province. All training is delivered in workshop format and all are of three hours duration each and are endorsed by agreement with Sport Ireland.

**Safeguarding 1** - Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshops relevant to coaches and others who work in a regulated role or role of responsibility with children in the Association.

**Safeguarding 2** - Club Children's Officer Training for Club Children's Officer

**Safeguarding 3** - Designated Liaison Person Training for DLPS in Clubs

The above training is based on the key elements of Child Safeguarding legislation

and on our joint Code of Behaviour (Underage) as agreed by GAA, LGFA, Rounders, Handball and Camogie.

Training provide by Local Sports Partnerships can be recognised by Clubs provided the applicant undertakes the equivalent Gaelic Games Safeguarding training within an agreed period of time. Other than that exception we cannot accept training that is specific to other organisations as the contents will differ greatly from the Gaelic Games Associations' safeguarding procedures or practices.

**Do we require people to repeat the Safeguarding Training?**

The Child Safeguarding Training Committee has upgraded the three child safeguarding

training workshops and minor amendments will now be required in light of the recent Children First Act.

Once a person has attended their relevant workshop it is envisaged that they should not have to attend it again, unless for specific reasons.

To avoid any such any such repetition on-line refresher training will be launched later this year for those who attended Safeguarding 1 - Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshops within the last three years. Similar on-line programmes will be developed for both Safeguarding 1 and 2 workshops as well.

***Do coaches of underage teams have to possess a Coaching Qualification?***

Yes they do. GAA safeguarding codes have for a number of years promoted the practice that all coaches who work with children must have a minimum coaching qualification. It a matter of common sense and such practices have benefitted not just the coaches but also the children and the Clubs with whom they play. Given the standards now required, where people should be adequately trained to fulfil whatever role they agree to undertake, this requirement is again enshrined in our Code of Behaviour (Underage). Coaching personnel at Club and County level should ensure that all 'underage' coaches have at least fulfilled the minimum Foundation level qualification.

***Can the same person be appointed as Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person?***

It should be noted at the outset that these

are two distinct roles of responsibility when we look at the safeguarding of children and the promotion of good practice in the GAA.

Such a decision at Club level needs careful consideration where both roles are not subject to election but to appointment only. The Children's Officer will on appointment become a full member of the Club Executive/ County Committee as appropriate.

Please also note that the Chairpersons at Club and County level automatically assumes the role of DLP unless another person is chosen and ratified by the relevant Club Executive Committee or County Committee to undertake the role. Please also note given that the GAA is only required to appoint one Mandated Person (Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl. [mandatedperson@gaa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@gaa.ie)), that it is now a mandatory requirement on us to have a DLP at both Club and County levels.

Whatever about the perceived need to appoint the same person as Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person at Club level there is no reason to make any such consideration at County level?

The GAA Mandated Person is Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl. [mandatedperson@gaa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@gaa.ie).

***Why can't we accept the vetting of other non-Gaelic Games Associations?***

Vetting legislation unfortunately does not allow us give carte blanche recognition to the vetting of individuals by organisations except for that carried out by ourselves and by LGFA and Camogie.

In accordance with the Acts organisations

must be involved in specific joint work to enable mutual recognition to take place. This is what prohibits us from recognising vetting from other sports organisations or from youth services or Church groups. As the GAA, LGFA and Camogie all engage in the promotion of Gaelic Games this enables us to recognise each other's vetting and we have signed an agreement for that purpose.

\*The GAA carries out the vetting for both the Handball and Rounders Associations.

***Can a GAA coach use their vetting when coaching in schools?***

A clause exists in the Vetting Acts that permits schools to accept the GAA vetting of

a coaches so as to enable them to carry out GAA coaching in schools. What is required is that a coach may enter into an agreement with a school and provide them with a copy of their GAA Vetting acceptance letter and their vetting disclosure. This will eliminate the need for a school to re-vet our coaches who engage with schools for the purpose of coaching Gaelic Games. This agreement can apply to Club and County coaches.

The GAA is pursuing the possibility of extending the vetting agreement to Cumann na mBunscol teachers who engage in promoting Gaelic Games at Club and County level.



# GAA INJURY BENEFIT FUND – CLAIMS REPORTING

**The GAA's Injury Benefit Fund applies to current registered Players as per the Official Guide who play on a team registered with the GAA Injury Benefit Fund, who incur accidental bodily injury while playing Hurling, Gaelic Football, Handball or Rounders' only, either in the course of an official competitive Fixture or an Official Sanctioned challenge match or the course of an official supervised training session.**

The Injury Fund is not an Insurance Scheme as payments from the fund come directly from GAA funds. It is only in place to provide cover for unrecoverable losses up to the limits specified in the GAA Injury Benefit Fund Summary document which should be referred to at all times. The playing of our national games involves the risk of Injury and it is each individual registered player's responsibility to familiarise themselves with the terms and benefits of the GAA Injury Benefit Fund.



**It is now compulsory to log all Player Injury Claims online at the following address –**

<https://gaa.willis.ie>

This is all clubs step-by-step guide for registering, logging in and completing the online claim form.

## Registering

Any club that has not registered must go to <https://gaa.willis.ie> as above. On the home page, under the sections for logging in, there are 2 options – 'Forgot Your Password' and 'Register New User'.

Click on 'Register New User'.

Fill in the club details required. Please note – owing to data protection an official club

email address must be used ([secretary.club.county@gaa.ie](mailto:secretary.club.county@gaa.ie)).

Once all details have been entered and registered you will be requested to check your email account for an activation email. This email will contain a link which you must click on to complete your registration.

## Logging In

Now that your account is registered and activated, you will be redirected to the original homepage on <https://gaa.willis.ie>. On this screen, enter the club email address and password you choose at the

registration. Tick the box to confirm you accept the Terms & Conditions and click 'Log In'.

There is a link for the Terms & Conditions on this screen. Please take the time to read these when registering.

Don't worry if you have forgotten your password, you can now reset it yourself by clicking the 'Forgot Your Password', entering your club email and using the re-activation link which will be sent to your email account.

### Registering A Claim – All injury claims must be notified within 60 days of the date of injury

Once logged in, your home screen will show all previous claims logged online by your club. If this is your first-time logging in your screen will be blank except for the options at the top – '+Add New Claim' and 'Export to Excel'.

To register a new claim, click the '+Add New Claim' option at the top left of the screen and complete all of the requested information.

Once all details have been inputted you will receive a 4-digit web reference which must be put on all documentation sent to Willis Towers Watson in relation to the claim.

### What Happens Next?

Once the claim is online, Willis Towers Watson will review the details and acknowledge the claim, changing the status from "Willis Approval" to "County Secretary Approval".

Your County Secretary will then log in, review the claim details online and acknowledge the claim.

This will move the claim from "County Secretary Approval" to "Documents Required" allowing you to go into the claim and download the documents which must be provided to Willis Towers Watson for assessment. This replaces the letter Willis Towers Watson would have issued acknowledging receipt of a paper claim notification.

\*Please note, copies of all documents are available for download under the 'Library'



tab on the top right hand side of the screen. Documents can be scanned and uploaded to the 'Attachments' section of the claim record. This allows the claims assessors to pre-assess the documents however original copies of all the documents required must be received by the Willis Towers Watson office prior to payment being issued.

### Club Claims Records

As previously noted, there is the option to download the list of the clubs online claims by choosing the 'Export Excel' option on the main screen.

This allows clubs to keep an offline record of their claims on an excel which can be updated once they have received payments and issued payments to players.

### The Future

Much future development is planned for the Online application in that as we see it as a very important tool in assisting club officers manage the club's Injury fund claims and also in particular, it will assist new into the role who will be able to see all claims at a glance as opposed to currently being handed a load of paperwork.



### Further Information

A full on-line training manual is available on the Library section of the application and also by contacting Ciara Clarke, GAA Injury Fund Manager, email [ciara.clarke@gaa.ie](mailto:ciara.clarke@gaa.ie) phone 01 819 2347

# GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE & SAFE TRAINING FOR GAELIC GAMES

## Guidelines for **Appropriate & Safe Training** for Gaelic Games



Prepare



Perform



Recover





# GAA DATA PROTECTION

**N**ew Data Protection legislation, called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), is coming into effect in May 2018. This legislation will have significant implications for GAA Clubs and it is important that all of us are aware of our responsibilities regarding data protection.

In order to assist GAA Clubs to understand specifically what they must do to comply with the legislation, a number of Data Protection seminars are scheduled during March, one in each Province. The seminars will start at 7:00 PM and will last approximately 2.5 hours. Attendees can choose to attend the session that is closest to them.

Please note that the Seminars are a repeat of the one held in Croke Park at the end of last year - if you attended that session, you do not need to re-attend, but you are welcome to do so if you so wish.

This Seminar is intended for Club officials who will be actively involved in the process of collecting, processing and storing information relating to members on an on-going basis. This may be the club Registrar or the Secretary or another volunteer and it will vary from club to club. **Please bring this event to the attention of the relevant person in your club.**



It is hoped to have as many GAA Clubs as possible in attendance and delegates interested in attending should reserve their place using the links below. The **events are free but places are limited and you must reserve a place if you plan to attend.**

**Seminar Details:** Data Protection Seminar - An overview of the implications for GAA Clubs of new Data Protection legislation called GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) which is coming into effect in May 2018.

### When is it on?

Province	Date	Venue	Start Time
Connacht	March 1st	Connacht Centre of Excellence, Ballyhaunis	7:00 PM
Leinster	March 8th	Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise	7:00 PM
Ulster	March 15th	Tyrone GAA Centre, Garvaghey	7:00 PM
Munster	March 22nd	Mallow GAA Club, Cork	7:00 PM

### Who should attend?

The person in your GAA Club who is responsible for collecting and managing Membership Information is the most appropriate person to attend. If clubs wish to send more than one delegate, that's fine.

### What will be covered?

The agenda will cover a range of topics and will specifically address the following:

- An overview of Data Protection legislation
- Specific changes arising from GDPR
- Tools and supports available to help Clubs:
- Data Protection Officer

### How do I book my place?

You can book your place by completing the reservation form available at these links:

<https://eventgen.ie/gaa-data-protection-seminar-ulster>

<https://eventgen.ie/gaa-data-protection-seminar-leinster>

<https://eventgen.ie/gaa-data-protection-seminar-connacht>

<https://eventgen.ie/gaa-data-protection-seminar-munster>

We look forward to seeing you there!

# DRAFT MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING AGREED

**The GAA, Camogie Association and Ladies Gaelic Football Association (LGFA) are pleased to announce that draft memorandums of understanding have been agreed between the GAA and the Camogie Association, and between the GAA and the LGFA.**

The proposed memorandums seek to establish stronger links between the three organisations and are the result of over six months of separate discussion by the GAA with both organisations.

The memorandums will become effective only when they have been approved by the Central Council of each organisation. In the case of the Camogie Association, a proposal to approve the memorandum will be discussed at its meeting on Wednesday March 14th, by the GAA on Saturday March 24th and by the LGFA on March 26th.

The memorandums reflect the shared vision of the three organisations for a new overall organisational model within which the games, ideals and aspiration of all three Associations are equally developed

and promoted. They recognise areas of common interest and give the Camogie Association and the LGFA representation on GAA committees, and vice versa. The memorandums have been drafted to a similar template but differ in that they reflect the different stages that the organisations have reached in discussions on developing a new relationship.

While the proposals in these memorandums aim to strengthen the links within the family of Gaelic Games at national level only, they also commit the three organisations to explore a framework for further integration at provincial, county and club level.

Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Aogán Ó Fearghail said: “I am delighted to confirm that draft Memorandums of Understanding have been agreed with both Cumann Camógaíochta and Cumann Peile na mBan and the closer worker relationship that these arrangements will give rise to is to be warmly welcomed.

“We are all part of the same Gaelic games family and although we have our own

identities within that family, we have so much in common.

“Working together we can truly claim to be a fully inclusive family organisation offering a sporting and cultural outlet for all members of the family.

“I’d like to acknowledge the co-operation of both organisations for the progress we have all made and I look forward to all three organisations working together in the months and years ahead.”

Speaking at the announcement, Ladies Gaelic Football Association President Marie Hickey said: “We are hugely enthused by these developments, which will foster an even stronger working relationship with the GAA.

“We have been engaged in detailed discussions over a prolonged period of time and we are now pleased to bring this proposed memorandum to the table.

“We have increased co-operation with each other at national level over the past number of years and we will effectively pool

and use the resources available to our great Associations.

“The LGFA will soon reveal details of its new strategic plan, mapping out the future of our sport up to 2022.

“Working together in even greater harmony with the GAA will play a key role in our future plans.”

Camogie Association President, Catherine Neary added: “Strengthening relationship between the Camogie Association and the GAA is one of the headline targets in the Camogie Association’s National Development Plan Our Sport, Our Future 2016-2019 and I am therefore very pleased and excited with today’s announcement which marks a significant milestone in this process.

“The Camogie Association enjoys a long and historical relationship of co-operation and collaboration with the GAA and this Memorandum of Understanding provides the basis to further strengthen and formalise this relationship.”

# FOR A SCHOOL TOUR THAT'S ALWAYS A WINNER

**C**roke Park is the ultimate destination for school tours, bringing together our national sport, heritage and living culture in one inspiring location.

Our expert and experienced guides bring the stadium, its stories and the surrounding cityscape to life, offering unique insights on Irish history, culture and sport.

## Stadium Tour

Be inspired with our access-all-areas guided stadium tour. Walk in the footsteps of legends and learn about defining moments in Irish history.

Visit the team dressing rooms before going pitchside via the players' tunnel.

Includes 'September Days' a short film capturing the magic of All-Ireland Final day and exclusive 'Get in the Zone' footage from top GAA players.

## Ericsson Skyline Tour

The perfect tour for thrill-seekers, the Croke Park rooftop tour offers unmatched panoramic city views and insights into Dublin's celebrated landmarks, combined with the thrill of walking 17 storeys high on the roof of one of Europe's largest stadiums.

Learn about Dublin's history while getting a truly bird's-eye view of our capital city.

## GAA Museum

Immerse yourself in the spine-tingling and completely unique story of Gaelic games. Then feel free to burn up some energy in the Interactive Games Zone.

The museum's collections and interactive exhibits vividly illustrate the story of our national games from ancient times to present day.

## School Tours Made Easy

- One teacher free with every ten students
- Free parking
- Free tea/coffee for teachers
- Free WiFi
- Wheelchair accessible
- Gift shop
- Irish language tours on request
- Interactive Games Zone
- Large groups facilitated

For more information on school tours to Croke Park, visit [crokepark.ie/schools](https://crokepark.ie/schools)



# DEVELOPMENT NEWS: MUNSTER CHILDREN'S OFFICER TRAINING AND MORE!

**T**here was a full house for the **Munster Childrens Officer Training workshop (Safeguarding 2) at the Charleville Park Hotel on Tuesday 13th February.**

This was the second of four Officer Training Workshops organised by the Camogie Association for Munster as part of our commitment to supporting the development of clubs and counties, in addition to the General Officer, Registrar/Treasurer/PRO and THDC workshops (please note these workshops are now full).

For more information on any of the training workshops please contact Munster Participation and Growth Co-ordinator Stuart Reid on [stuart.reid@camogie.ie](mailto:stuart.reid@camogie.ie)



**Milestone at O'Dwyers Camogie Club**  
O'Dwyers Camogie Club of Balbriggan reached a milestone last weekend, playing their first challenge match in u10 Camogie against Craobh Chairain. A club already strong in the other codes, O'Dwyers have been working hard to get players out onto the Camogie field in the past couple of months and it is exciting for them to achieve this in their centennial year.



This enthusiasm showed in the faces of the girls at the weekend, with O'Dwyers hosting on their all-weather pitch overlooking the sea, you couldn't but enjoy the game. 27 girls took part on the morning from the two clubs and O'Dwyers look forward too many more challenge games ahead of the Go Games kicking off.

Off the field, the club have made a presentation to the parents for the start of the year introducing the Camogie structure, player pathway, social activities and plans going forward. They also have a long-term Camogie roadmap of where they aim to be in 2021, providing for a new age group year on year. Congrats to all on the work done so far and on the first game of a new era.

## **Carlow Foundation Coaching Course**

Carlow Camogie held a successful Foundation level coaching course on Saturday 10th February in Kildavin GAA. 24 coaches from 8 clubs were in attendance. On the day these coaches were instructed on the role of the coach, fundamental movement, skill development and planning a session. Carlow recently also completed a Level 1 and have a further foundation course coming up on March 10th. It is great to see such work being done in the county and bodes well for the coaching standards that players will experience within their clubs. Many thanks to the participants on

the day, tutors and Kildavin GAA for the use of the facilities.

Westmeath Camogie also held a foundation level course in Ringtown Hurling club in Whitehall on Saturday 10th February with 19 willing coaches from 4 clubs in attendance here also. Westmeath are actively working on increasing their coaching expertise being delivered at club level and will also be hosting a Building Rapport and Communication workshop on Monday 23rd April. This is aimed at informing coaches about the importance of communication in retaining the player as they progress from u8 to adult. Again, many thanks to Ringtown for the use of the venue and congrats to all who took part.

Further coaching courses are continuing to run across Leinster, please check with your county development officer or county secretary to enquire if your county is hosting a course.



# HANDBALL ALL-STARS ANNOUNCED

**T**he Handballing community turned out in style for the 2017 O'Neills GAA Handball All-Stars at a Gale Ceremony at Croke Park on Saturday night.

The night was all about rewarding excellence and an exciting new format saw awards for Players, Volunteers, Administrators & Clubs alike. Finalists in every category were in attendance, with winners announced on the night, after a mixture of public, player and committee vote, by esteemed friend of Handball & RTE New Reader Eileen Dunne.

GAA Handball would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all finalists and winners, and to thank our various sponsors O'Neills, Together Digital, Macsports, Advertees & MMI.

The main POTY Awards went to Armagh's Charly Shanks, (40x20 All-Ireland Champion & Current Irish #1) and Cork's Catriona Casey (40x20 + 60x30 All-Ireland Champion & Current Irish #1)

## 2017 All-Star Winners:

**Male POTY** - Charly Shanks (Armagh)

**Female POTY** - Catriona Casey (Cork)

**Young Male POTY** - Tadhg O'Neill (Cork)

**Young Female POTY** - Fiona Tully (Roscommon)

**Club of the Year** - Moycullen (Galway)

**Venue of the Year** - Kingscourt (Cavan)

**Administrator of the Year** - Joe O'Connell (Galway)

**Volunteer of the Year** - Gavin Buggy (Wexford)

**Club Person of the Year** - Michelle Warren (Tyrone)

## Hall of Fame Inductees -

Tim Healy RIP (Cork),  
Seamus O'Fathearta (Galway),  
Joe Masterson (Offaly),  
Billy Silcock (Antrim)



## 'TOUR DE THURLES' RAISES €25,000

In April 2017, the idea for 'Tour de Thurles' was born. The 'Tour de Thurles' cycle was a GAA and Croke Park staff led initiative which brought staff members 166kms from Croke Park to the birthplace of the GAA; Hayes Hotel in Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

On September 28, 2017 the five-county spin was completed and a phenomenal €25,000 in sponsorship was raised for the GAA's five official charities: The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Asthma Society of Ireland, Breakthrough Cancer Research, Cystic Fibrosis Ireland, and Make A Wish Ireland.

The event was in keeping with the GAA's 'Aims and Ethos' outlined in the GAA Official Guide, as it sought to "promote community spirit" and act as a leading light to GAA clubs nationwide. The event needed to be fitness/health based, but also achievable and enjoyable from a social aspect. Event Organiser, Kevin Sexton said he "also wanted to strengthen staff relations, promote healthy activities and encourage camaraderie along the way"

On the 30th of January 2018, a gathering was held in Croke Park where €5000 was donated to each of the five charities by Ard Stiúrthóir, Mr. Páraic Duffy, who said the initiative showed a great a level of leadership and

compassion on part of the GAA staff - that was very much in keeping with the GAA's core values. He also acknowledged how important it is for the GAA to raise awareness for the official charities and expressed confidence in the staff committee to continue to work closely with them to achieve their goals going forward.

Kevin Sexton, who is also chairman of the GAA Sport and Recreational committee, outlined that there is a strong link between the GAA and its five official charities. Notably, that the charities fundamentally exist to help communities and people in need at large, and that - from a GAA perspective - community is the very heartbeat of the organization; where members well-being is paramount. It was therefore important that the GAA recognize the valuable work that the charities do on a daily basis, and how extremely important that work is to our society as a whole.

Managing this national event took an exceptional collective team effort in terms of event preparation. This is an important point to note, as it shows the level of openness, encouragement and help that exists within the GAA and Croke Park staff body. Logistically it was challenging but, all in all, - it was a roaring success. The committee's main objectives were to ensure that everyone was safe and comfortable along the way - and



GAA staff members raised €25,000 for five charities.

thankfully everyone made it the full distance unscathed.

The feedback received from those who took part in the cycle was very positive and highlighted the benefits of holding activity based events. Several different people commented on how the cycle had re-lit a fitness flame that they thought had long since blown out, or how they now feel invigorated and inspired to reconnect with

movement, healthy eating, and fitness. Others loved the training aspect of it and surprised themselves by completing the full distance. Furthermore, the staff group received a huge level of support online via social media as well as numerous (and generous) sponsorship donations. This all bodes well for future events, and the GAA Sport and Recreational committee are already underway with plans of another outing in April 2018.

# DEVELOPMENT FUND OPEN FOR DEPOSITS FROM CLUBS

**T**he Development Fund is a Deposit and Loan Scheme which was set up to help provide finance for Clubs when purchasing and developing grounds and facilities.

**Clubs should be aware that the Development Fund is open for deposits.**

- Interest is 1.9% on Deposits and Loans
- No DIRT (Deposit Interest Retention Tax)
- Lotto Jackpots would be a good place for Clubs to start when depositing into the Fund

The fund is not currently open for loans but efforts are underway to reopen it with the help of deposits from Clubs. A separate sterling Development Fund will also be set up in the near future, to help combat exchange rates.

Clubs which have deposited money into the scheme will have priority when it comes to obtaining loans from the fund.

Deposit Forms are available from GAA National Finance in Croke Park, to request one, please email [kathy.slattery@gaa.ie](mailto:kathy.slattery@gaa.ie) or [rebekah.evans@gaa.ie](mailto:rebekah.evans@gaa.ie)



## A NEW OPTION FOR YOUR GAA CLUB TRUSTEE

The Corporate Trustee is now an option for Clubs, when considering appointment of Trustees of Clubs.

“*Iontaobhas Corparáideach Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Teoranta*”

The Corporate Trustee is a separate legal entity, a Trust Company, called “Iontaobhas Corparáideach Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Teoranta”, set up by the GAA. The Trust Company holds the property for and on behalf of the Club.

Clubs can now opt to hold property through the Corporate Trustee. Holding property through the Corporate Trustee does not affect the ownership in any way but can have advantages in the way of continuous amendments to the title is avoided when trustees die or retire. This will save on legal costs to the Club. This also takes the pressure off of individual Trustees and avoids the publishing of names should court proceedings take place. The Corporate Trustee is optional.

There are three options available to clubs:

**OPTION 1** - Clubs may elect to do nothing and to continue to hold Club property through personal Trustees.

**OPTION 2** - Clubs may elect to introduce a partial change in that case property is held by a combination of personal trustees and the Corporate Trustee.

**OPTION 3** - Clubs may elect to have property held only through the Corporate Trustee.

**Should Clubs want to know more information or wish to appoint the Corporate Trustee, they should contact the National Finance Department of Croke Park, Tel: 01 8363222**





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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