

THE BLUE WAVE



Five-year plan for
Loughinisland GAC



A STRATEGY FOR OUR CLUB | 2018-2023 GAA



Index



- 1 Club Chairman's address
- 2 Message from the Ulster President
- 3 County Chairman's foreword
- 4 History of the club
- 5 Methodology
- 6 Mission values statement
- 7 Background to the club
- 8 Activity areas
 - 1 Coaching and games development
 - 2 Club structures and administration
 - 3 Finance and fundraising
 - 4 Facilities and development
 - 5 Communication, public relations and culture
 - 6 Volunteers and recruitment
- 9 Juvenile workshop day summary
- 10 Implementation and review mechanism for the plan
- 11 Delivering the vision
- 12 Special thanks





Club Chairman's address

Ar son Loch an Oileáin CLG ba mhaith liom cuireadh a thabhairt dóibh go léir an Plean seo a léamh. Tá súil agam go mbeidh an Plean mar eolaí dúinn as seo amach ar son forbairt ár gCumann stairiúil is bródúil. Chomh maith leis sin, ba mhaith liom buíochas ó chroí a ghabháil le gach aon duine a chabhraigh linn an Plean seo a chruthú.

I am honoured, on behalf of Loch an Oileáin CLG, to invite all members of our club and the wider community to review the contents of this ambitious and comprehensive club and community five-year plan. This plan will provide us with a structured approach to the development of our club, games, culture and community over the next five years through to 2023. Loch an Oileáin CLG has always been an ambitious club, striving for excellence in everything that we do. We commend the previous generations who have delivered their vision for the future of our club and have handed down a legacy of success on the pitch and excellent facilities off it. Now is our opportunity to write a new chapter in our club's history and hand over an enhanced legacy to the generations who come after us.

The Blue Wave title of our plan captures the essence of what this plan and our community is all about – working together we will be a powerful force delivering significant benefits for all of our community.

This plan belongs to the club members and the community. It is a collaborative effort based on engagement with the members and community to identify our key priorities, to set realistic goals and objectives and to agree appropriate time frames for the delivery. I would like to thank all those who attended the community workshops, those who acted as facilitators and, in particular, our juveniles who opened our eyes to new thinking on how we do things. A great deal of work has gone on behind the scenes by the Plan Steering Committee and by the numerous women and men in the focus groups whose work and creativity contributed hugely to the formation of the final plan. We are indebted to them for their great work in this regard.

This plan, *your plan*, is a working document which will be subject to annual monitoring and review. Working groups are being established to deliver the action plans for each of key themes identified. I would encourage you to get involved and assist in whatever way you can. Our club is fully inclusive and no offer of help will be turned away.



An aerial view of our club grounds, Macartan Park, with the Mourne in the background

“If we all do a little then no one will have too much to do.”



#YourClubYourCommunityYourFuture

Is mise le meas,

Séamas O'Fiáich.

Message from the Ulster President



A club development plan is an invaluable guide for club officers and committee members as to the intended direction to navigate their club in the years ahead.

I congratulate Loch an Oileáin CLG in producing a club development plan which indicates a most positive approach to ensuring the future well-being of this well respected East Down club. It's my honour as Uachtarán Chomhairle Uladh CLG to contribute to it.

This development plan that Loch an Oileáin CLG have produced will guide the club over the next five years and continue the good work that presently takes place.

I commend the work of the club management committee in seeking widely the views of all interested parties prior to producing an ambitious plan.

The plan confirms the intentions of a well-informed club committee, committed to good structures within the club and ensuring the talents of all members are availed off, for the benefit of the Loughinisland community in the years ahead.

Administration, Finance, Coaching and Games, Facilities, Fundraising, Communications, Culture, Volunteer recruitment and an appetite to succeed are all well addressed within the plan. I welcome the emphasis on accountability, a review mechanism and the importance attributed to all club members or volunteers.

Pride in being a member of Loch an Oileáin CLG takes its rightful place as a priority in the plan and is a principle that cannot be overvalued.

Guím gach ráth ar CLG Loch an Oileáin lena bplean (plean forbartha cúig bliaina) a chuir i bhfeidhm agus táthar ag súil go mbeidh seo ina sheirbhís do'n chlub.



Micheal O'Donovan



The men's senior side who were Ulster Club Intermediate champions in 2015



County Chairman's foreword

Congratulations to Loughinisland GAC on the production of this five-year plan. It is an extremely useful tool to have in place and it gives the club a focus and a set of targets to work towards which are realistic, achievable and ambitious. It will create a sense of belonging to all the club members as it evolves and grows to meet the targets and aims.

It also has a set of timescales which will enable everyone to measure and monitor the progress of the club as it works its way through the lifetime of the plan. It has been drawn up with the input of as many club members as possible which, I am delighted to say, will create the necessary buy-in and ownership to bring the targets to fruition.

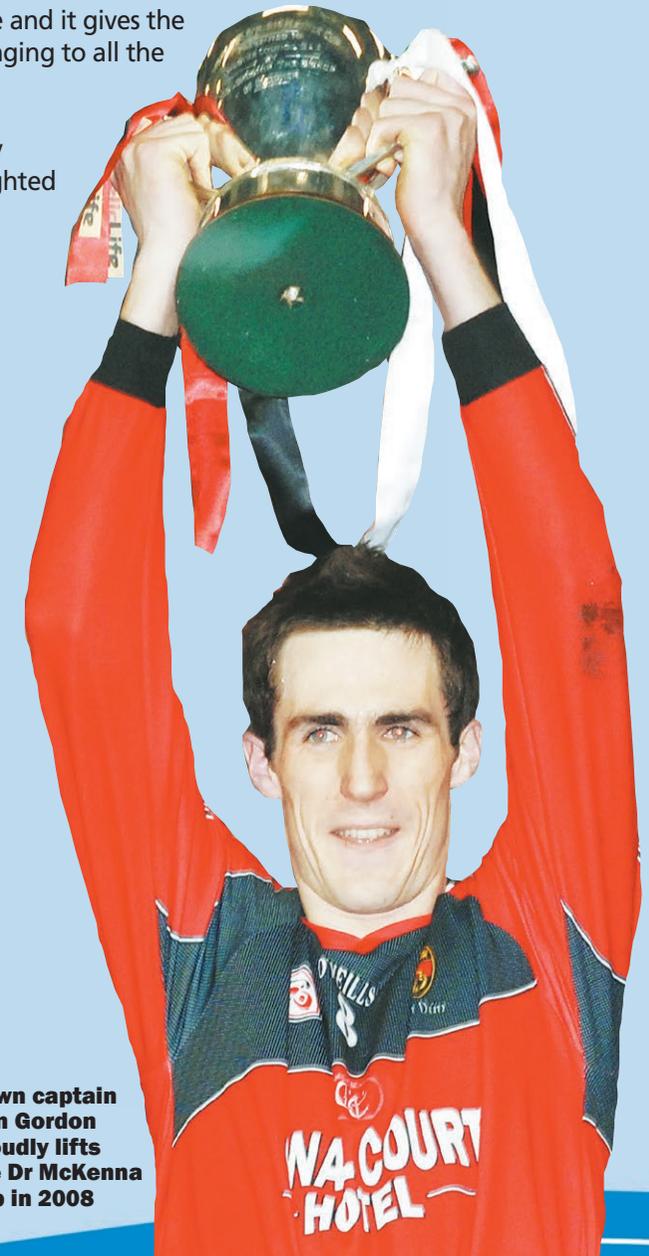
I wish Loughinisland GAC every success in the years ahead.



Sean O Ruaidh.



The Loughinisland side who lifted the Down Ladies Junior Football Championship title in 2014



Down captain Dan Gordon proudly lifts the Dr McKenna cup in 2008



Loch An Oiléan C.L.G

est. 1906



A brief history of our club

In the winter of 1906 a group of Gaels gathered at the local meeting place "The Stick" to form a Gaelic Athletic Club in the parish. The club became affiliated to the Down County Board in December of the same year and participated in the Upper Iveagh League. However, the games of hurling and football were played in the area much earlier than this and a ballad of the time describes a hurling game in the 1860s between two local teams.

The club participated in the Upper Iveagh League until the formation of the East Down League in 1916 at which stage the club fielded both football and hurling teams. Political unrest in the early 1920s saw the club fortunes on the wane, but in 1925 a renewed interest in Gaelic games was generated with the result that two teams from the parish participated in the 1926 East Down League. The difficult economic conditions of the 1930s along with World War II resulted in Loughinisland being absent from many competitions. By 1943 the fortunes of the club had risen again but within four years the club had disbanded. It reformed in 1950 with a senior team that was described as a team of "Schoolboys" but this group were to provide the backbone of successful teams for the next decade.

In 1952, after 46 years of competitive football, the club won the East Down League and the minor team won the County Championship. In 1954 the success continued with their first senior county title by winning the Junior Championship, a feat that was repeated in 1958. The club had to wait until 1968 for their next title by winning the East Down Intermediate League, which secured promotion to the All-County senior leagues.

By 1971 the senior team were in the All-County Senior Division 1 and so commenced one of the most remarkable periods in the club's history. In 1975 the senior team won the Senior Football Championship, after three consecutive final defeats, and one year later won the Division 1 League. During this period the reserve team won four league titles and the U-14 team won the club's first juvenile title since the early 1960s.

Since the club's foundation there have been various fields used for playing from McMullan's Meadow, Doran's Marsh Bog, Tooley's Field and The Bog at Rosconnor. In 1979 the club moved to its current home at Sevaghan. On August 5 GAA President, Paddy McFlynn, formally opened the pitch and clubrooms at Macartan Park.



Loughinisland GAC have used a number of areas as their playing fields during the years. Included are (from left) Murray's Big Meadow, from around the 1920s; The Scrog, used mainly by the camogie and underage teams, from around the 1940s; and The Bog at Rosconnor, used from the late 1960s to early 1970s

A brief history of our club



The 1980s saw further success for the club with a Senior Football League title in 1986 (county final defeats in 1985 and 1988) before winning the Senior Football Championship and League in 1989. In 1990 the team again reached the county final only to be defeated by their great rivals of this period, Burren. In 1991 the reserves won the county football league and championship. By the middle of the 1990s the stock of men's football was dropping with relegation to Division 2.

With the popularity of ladies football growing throughout the GAA world, the Loughinisland females formed a team in 1995. With great enthusiasm and good structures in place, they went from small beginnings to achieve great success, providing sporting opportunities across a range of ages. County junior titles were won in 1998, 2000 and 2013 as well as the Intermediate League in 2000 and Intermediate League and championship in 2002 and 2004, respectively.

By the mid-2000s the senior men's team had established themselves in Division 1 and were defeated in back to back county finals in 2008 and 2009. Following relegation in 2013 the team lost their senior status but in 2015 they won the Down and Ulster Intermediate Championship only to be defeated by Hollymount Carramore from Mayo in the All-Ireland semi-final.

Though predominantly a football club, hurling and camogie were played at various periods during the club's history. Hurling was played in the area from early times and Loughinisland fielded teams in various competitions with the club last participation being part of a regional team in the 1960s. Camogie teams were fielded off and on from 1945 to the late 1960s.

In the 1990/2000s the club was a strong supporter of the various Scor competitions and county and East Down titles were won in a variety of different categories. Interest in Scor has waned in recent years but the club is very aware of its cultural responsibilities and it is hoped to see a revival in the club's participation.

Our centenary was celebrated in 2006 by various events throughout the year, culminating in a formal banquet in the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle, where the guest speaker was former GAA President, Peter Quinn. In 2008 the club published its history in a 600-page publication "Ar Scéal Fein – Stair CLG Loc An Oiléain" (Our Story – The History of Loughinisland GAC), *left*, which achieved the optimum accolade by being presented with The McNamee Award at a function in Croke Park for being the top GAA club publication of that year.



In 2007 Phase 1 of the current clubrooms were constructed with Phase 2 being completed in 2010. They were officially opened by the GAA President, Christy Cooney, in 2013.

A Loughinisland football team from the 1920s. Included are (back, from left) H Rice, P Mason, J White, J McCormick, F Croskery, P Killen, P Walsh and H Quinn. Front: H McKee, S McCabe, J Cranney, unknown and B Kerr





Methodology

The Executive Committee decided to engage in the club planning process set out by Central Council on August 5, 2017, and requested the Development Committee take up the task of acting as Steering Committee for the plan. Planning began in earnest in early August last year with the Steering Committee being made up of eight members with assistance from other members as required.

The plan called for a community workshop day on the areas identified within this plan to set an action plan for all areas of club activity to give fresh impetus to the membership. Invitations were sent to all groups who use the club facilities and a leaflet drop carried out across the locality to ensure that the club could gauge the views of all in the community, whether affiliated to the club or not. This was in the hope that we can engage more people in the use of our facilities and assist in reducing social isolation which is recognised as a significant problem in rural communities.

Considerable effort was made to ensure publication to the wider community as the club values its position in the community as being a main hub for social events in the locality and for drawing local people from all walks of life together. It wishes to build on its position in a constructive and inclusive way, assisting old and young alike, engaging with the community as a whole to broaden its appeal on a social and cultural basis and to encourage the volunteer spirit among the membership for the benefit of the whole community.

The Executive Committee decided that as part of this process the juvenile members should also have their say in the running of the club. Workshop days were held for the juveniles on the October 8 and adults on October 15, 2017.

Six areas of work were identified that would cover all aspects of the club. These were: Structures and Administration, Coaching and Games Development, Finance and Fundraising, Communications and PR, Facilities and Development, Volunteering and Recruitment.

Each area of work was chaired by a member of the Steering Committee with assistance from other members and in the weeks that followed working groups were established for each of the areas to formulate a five-year plan.

These plans took some eight weeks to finalise as identifying the central points to be addressed in each area and setting a realistic time frame for each objective required a good deal of time and thought.

On behalf of the club and its membership the Steering Committee would like to thank all those who gave their time and effort to make this plan happen. It is now up to the membership working co-operatively to make it work.

Loughinisland: Stronger together.

Methodology



The Steering Committee

Paul McMullan (Co-ordinator), Seamus Fay, Gerry Morgan, Gerry Toman, Benny Corrigan, Raymond McClements, Jonathan Turley and Liam McDonald.

Working Groups

Structures: Gerry Morgan, Aaron McKeown, Gemma Gibney-Lawlor and Rebecca McKelvey.

Coaching: Gerard Colgan, Gary Mason, Alan Molloy, Helen Rice, Laura Mason, Rory Mason and Declan Murnin.

Facilities/Development: Raymond McClements, John Killen, Claire Kennedy, Vincent McGlew, Gerry Toman and Bronagh Murray.

Volunteers: Liam McDonald, Barry Smyth, Louise Smyth, Grainne Fay and Siobhan McMullan.

Finance: Benny Corrigan, Jonathan Turley, Martin Molloy and Sean Digney.

Communication, Public Relations and Culture: Bronagh Mason, Donna Boyd, Julie Digney, Seamus Fay, Peter Fitzpatrick, Hugh Carville, Christopher Turley, Peter Cochrane, Michael Cochrane and Hugh Dornan.

Consultees

St Macartan's Primary School, La Lantern Rouge Cycling Club, Scoil Rince an Chroí Irish Dancing Group, St Macartan's Bowling Club, Loughinisland Youth Club and Loughinisland Drama Group.



Junior (left) and senior members at the workshops in the clubrooms to discuss the five-year plan for the club



Mission values statement

The GAA's values are the heart and soul of our Association. In every club around the world they are what binds us, what makes us unique and what attracts more and more players, members, volunteers and supporters.

Mission

"The GAA is a community based volunteer organisation promoting Gaelic games, culture and lifelong participation."

The GAA is a volunteer organisation. We develop and promote Gaelic games at the core of Irish identity and culture. We are dedicated to ensuring that our family of games, and the values we live, enrich the lives of our members, families and the communities we serve. We are committed to active lifelong participation for all and to providing the best facilities. We reach out to and include all members of our society. We promote individual development and well-being and strive to enable all our members achieve their full potential in their chosen roles.

As an affiliated member of the GAA, Loughinisland GAC promotes Gaelic games and Irish culture with a focus on the principles of respect and inclusiveness through activities that facilitate life long participation. We seek to enrich the lives of our members, families and the community we serve through active life long participation and the promotion of individual development and well-being.

Vision

Our vision is that everybody has the opportunity to be welcomed to take part in our games and culture, to participate fully, to grow and develop and to be inspired to keep a lifelong engagement with our Association and we strive to develop and inspire our membership and the community at large to develop their personal skills on every level for the good of all.

Values

Community Identity

Community is at the heart of our Association. Everything we do helps to enrich the communities we serve and we play an integral role in the enrichment and well being of our community.

We foster a clear sense of identity and place.

Mission values statement



Amateur status

We are a volunteer-led organisation.
All our members play and engage in our games as amateurs.
We provide a games programme at all levels to meet the needs of all our players.

Inclusiveness

We welcome everybody to be part of our Association.
We are anti-sectarian.
We are anti-racist.
We believe the promotion of diversity will enrich our club in a way that encourages openness learning and success on and off the field of play.

Respect

We respect each other on and off the playing fields.
We operate with integrity at all levels.
We listen and respect the views of all.
Our club operates in a way that promotes the principles of respect and tolerance for all members of the club and broader community in everything we do and say.

Teamwork

Our success as a sporting, cultural and community organisation is dependent on our ability to work together in a way that is consistent with the mission vision and values of our club.



The Down panel lined up for the pre-match photo in the 1994 All-Ireland final against Dublin. The Mourne men, captained by DJ Kane, beat the Dubs by 1-12 to 0-13. Included is (front, seventh left) Gary Mason



Background to the club

Our club currently has:

- 380** full members made up as follows:
- 116** adult non-playing members
- 64** senior playing members, ladies and men
- 178** juvenile playing members, boys and girls.

A senior men's football team, senior ladies' football team, senior men's reserves team and, at juvenile level representation, from Under 8 through to minors – in juvenile boys' and girls' football.

Our facilities at this point in our development consist of our pitch at Macartan Park, the recently-built clubrooms and licensed social facilities allied to access to the 3G pitch at St Macartan's Primary School, Loughinisland, but subject to payment for its use. It is acknowledged by all that the demand placed by all these teams in terms of training and matches creates an intolerable demand on our pitch.

This is clearly a good complaint to have and addressing this is at the centre of our Facilities action plan. We need to be creative and thoughtful but, above all, positive in terms of how we address this issue. If we can address this objective our teams can train more regularly, develop at a greater rate and achieve more for themselves and the club thus projecting a positive image of a vibrant club always striving to improve itself and its members.

Our community is in a constant state of flux and growth. Loughinisland has always been welcoming to new people moving into our community. In common with the rest of Ireland, we have witnessed an influx of families from outside the country in recent years. Our club and community will continue to welcome all new arrivals. We will seek to embrace their culture and develop their participation in our club and cultural activities to assist their integration into our community.



The Loughinisland squad who defeated Saul 4-11 to 1-14 to win the East Down U-16 B Football Championship last year

Background to the club



The Loughinisland squad celebrate after beating Clonduff to win the Down Ladies Intermediate Football Championship in 2004



Coaching and games development

In five years we will be able to say:

“Our underage teams are highly regarded and we provide the support for continuous development for our players. We have achieved excellence in coaching standards and continue to develop our coaches. Our adult teams perform to their full potential because we have the best coaching and games development structures in place at all levels.”

Our overall aim for coaching and games development in Loughinisland GAC is to have structures in place to cater for players from Under 6 to adult level to ensure that players will be provided with regular coaching and games to develop all the skills necessary to excel in their sport.



Children enjoying the activities at Cúl Camp training last year

Coaching and games development



Coaching and Games Development Working Group

We will appoint a Coaching and Games Development working group to oversee all aspects of games development in the club. This will include identifying new coaches in the community, encouraging parents to become involved in coaching and ensuring that all our club's coaches have GAA Coach Education qualifications. The committee will also ensure that a balanced programme of games is in place and that all players get an opportunity to play and participate. The chairman of this committee will sit on the Club Executive Committee and will provide a report to each meeting.

Club Coaching Officer

We will appoint a club Coaching Officer, who will be chairman of the Coaching and Games Development working group. He/she will have responsibility for managing the affairs of the committee and for overseeing all coaching and games development related activities and policies.

Underage games programme

We will put in place a programme of games for all players involving Go-Games and Super Touch blitzes within the club and with other clubs. This will ensure that all players get meaningful activity in an environment that promotes skill development.

Coach education

We will put in place a programme that makes sure that every player is coached by a person qualified to the appropriate level. All club coaches will receive GAA coach education qualifications. Each coach will have a minimum of a Foundation Award coaching certificate. We will aim to have all coaches at Award 1 level over time. We will also identify new referees, who will receive referee education and assistance from the County Board.

GAA Code of Best Practice and Code of Behaviour

We will put in place the GAA Code of Best Practice and Code of Behaviour. Everyone in the club will show due respect to each other, to club officers, to team mentors and to the match officials. We will ensure that all our volunteers working with children are Access NI cleared and that our children participate in a safe environment. This will be supported by the club's Children's Officer.

Club/school link

We will develop close links with our local primary and second level schools. We will provide support and advice to the schools in promoting our games and give the schools access to our facilities.



Some of the children who took part in last year's Cúl Camp



Coaching and games development

Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Establish a club coaching and games committee	To ensure our club has a clear coaching structure and to oversee all aspects of games development. Committee in place to provide clear direction of all coaching and games activity in the club.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of a working group, with a volunteer to chair and be the point of contact Regular coaching meetings Draft a coaching strategy to be used at all age levels Annual review to update strategy. 	Executive Committee Coaching Committee
Appoint a Club Coaching Officer	Appointment of a club coaching officer to oversee all coaching and games development in the club.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officer appointed. 	Executive Committee
Appointment of coaching teams	<p>To ensure each juvenile team has a head coach in place with assistant coaches/ volunteers.</p> <p>Ensure we have suitable and willing coaches for all players in club.</p> <p>Provide each team with a coaching team that has a mix of ideas, knowledge, and personalities to bring out the best in both players and coaches.</p> <p>Encourage senior players to become involved in coaching.</p>	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one coach per team qualified at Foundation level All coaches to be encouraged to avail of provided courses Coaches to be provided with a "skills checklist" for each age level and drills resource information (links to websites) Identify and recruit new volunteers within the club (past/present players and parents) Senior player rota to attend/take juvenile training sessions/matches at least once a month Club gear to be worn by coach at training and matches, provided by the club Records to be kept and updated in respect to coaches' qualifications and contact details Coaching working groups to support coaches in organising and participating in blitzes, challenge games, Feile, etc. 	Coaching Officer Coaching Committee
Code of conduct	To ensure all players, coaches and parents are aware of appropriate conduct at training and matches. As well as parents and coaches on GAA safeguarding legislation.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent(s)/guardian(s), child and coach all to sign and keep individually tailored Code of Conduct and a record of this to be kept Meeting for parents, children and coaches regarding conduct at the beginning of every season Annual review of codes Juveniles to create own code to allow ownership and responsibility All coaches to be Access NI vetted, completed before starting to coach and a record kept Club to host GAA child protection course as needed. 	Coaching Committee Children's Officer
Coach Education	<p>To ensure all coaches have a minimum of Foundation Level coaching and to provide opportunities to further their expertise.</p> <p>To ensure there is a Level 1 coach involved with all underage teams.</p> <p>To have a number of Level 2 coaches involved in the clubs underage teams.</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 2-Year 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club to host Foundation Level coaching course as needed Club to host various coaching courses as needed Club to organise specialists in specific coaching, both internally and externally. 	Coaching Committee

Coaching and games development



Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
School link in place	To ensure close links between the club and the primary school. To engage with the secondary schools in the local area.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a School Liaison Officer • Appointment of "club person" to take training sessions after school • Work with the school to promote Gaelic games and to help organise school matches • Club will provide pitch and hall for school use if needed • Club noticeboard in the school • Senior players to attend school assemblies (once a term) • Keep school informed of new GAA initiatives (such as 5*). 	Executive Committee Coaching Committee School Liaison Officer
Club Brand	To develop the 'Club Loughinisland' brand image in a way that welcomes, values and retains all children, young people, parents and coaches.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underage games at half-time of home senior game • "Trainer of the week" to hand over match ball and be pictured with the captains at home senior men's games • Every team to have a full set of jerseys before the season starts • Players encouraged to wear club gear at training and matches. Socks and shorts compulsory at games • Coaches to develop passion for club at training • Appreciation night/perk for coaches (eg free entry to club night, free drink etc) • Creation of a club spreadsheet to keep all coaches informed of training and match dates/times for all teams • Website to be kept up-to-date with all training and fixtures • Early date for registration which is advertised and compulsory. 	Executive Committee Coaching Committee coaches





Club structures and administration

Our vision

Our vision is that in five years' time our club will be able to say:

Loughinisland GAC will be administrated efficiently and with transparency that will match any other GAA club in Ireland. We will have structures in place which are effectively managed to support all of our club activities in a manner that meets every aspect of good practice within the GAA. We will have a vibrant and highly motivated Executive Committee, which will be supported by a number of Working Groups that will increase the number of people volunteering in the club.

Chairperson

Seamus Fay

Vice-Chairperson

Gerard Martin

Public Relations Officer

Peter Fitzpatrick

Secretary

Gerard Morgan

Ass Secretary

Michael Cochrane

Treasurer

Brendan Corrigan

Ass Treasurer

Jonathan Turley

Registrar

James Campbell

Cultural Officer

Jean O'Neill

County Board

Vincent McGlew

Development Officer

Gerard Toman

Healthy Club Officer

Pat McGreevy

Children's Officer

Bronagh Mason

Culture Working Group

Communications Working Group

Facilities and Development Working Group

Coaching and Development Working Group

Finance and Fundraising Working Group

Volunteers Working Group

Club structures and administration



Key Projects

1 Club Constitution

On a regular basis we will check and update our constitution so that it is administrated in accordance with the GAA Constitution. This constitution will be adopted annually at the Club AGM.

2 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee will be elected annually at the Club AGM and will be appointed in accordance with the club's constitution. The Executive Committee will appoint a number of working groups to deal with Finance and Fundraising, Coaching and Games Development, Public Relations and Communication and any other groups that are identified as being required for the efficient running of the club. In order to improve the working of these groups we will endeavour to recruit new volunteers to sit on these Groups who have particular talents for these areas.

3 Sub-committees/working groups

At our open meeting with the community it was raised on several occasions that the term sub-committee puts a lot of people off from becoming a member. There are a number of club members who are very willing to do voluntary work for the club but the word "committee" puts them off. Therefore, it was agreed that rather than using sub-committee we will in future call these "working groups", which is viewed to be a more "softer" title for the group.

4 Plan and Implementation Working Group

We will appoint a working group to regularly monitor the implementation and continual adherence to the club plan over the five years. The working group will include the club Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, PRO and Coaching Officer as well as others as required.

5 Health and well-being and alcohol and substance abuse

In light of the Government's drive to improve the health and well-being of society and to deal with the huge problem of alcohol and substance abuse the club will appoint a Health and Well-being Officer who will be responsible for all aspects in these areas of life and will on a regular basis give advice and seminars to all our members.

Our Alcohol and Substance Abuse policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with GAA best practice.



Club structures and administration

Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Club Constitution	To ensure that our Club Constitution is in accordance with GAA recommendation.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our Club Constitution to ensure that it is in accordance with GAA recommendations Adopt the Club Constitution at every AGM Make our Club Constitution readily available at all Executive Committee meetings. 	Executive Committee
Club meetings	To ensure that our Club hold its AGM, general meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting in accordance with GAA rules and regulations.	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and implement the holding of our special meetings in accordance with GAA recommendations Make all of the Executive Committee aware of the rules and regulations regarding the holding of these type of meetings. 	Executive Committee
Annual General Meeting	To ensure that our AGM is being held in accordance with GAA rules and regulations.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold our Club AGM in November each year Make sure that all club members are informed of the holding of the club AGM at least one month in advance of it and are asked to submit nominations, motions and regulations in advance of the meeting Have a detailed review of the club position and finances at each AGM Elect an Executive Committee at the AGM. 	Executive Committee
GAA Club Advice Manual	To help all club officers understand all aspects of club administration.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct all club officers on how access the GAA club advice manual online Encourage current and potential club officers to make themselves aware of the contents of the manual Have a detailed review of the club position and finances at each AGM Elect an Executive Committee at the AGM. 	Executive Committee
Healthy Club Officer	To ensure that the club is following best practice regarding health and well-being and the misuse of alcohol, drugs, etc for all club members.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint a Healthy Club Officer at our AGM Ensure that this Officer has all the tools to carry out their duties effectively. 	Executive Committee
Property vesting documents and club trustees	To safeguard all of the club's property.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Club Property Vesting document and update if necessary Ensure that our club trustees are properly affiliated and up to date at all times. 	Executive Committee
Club Working Groups	Ensure that the various Working Groups have sufficient members to carry out their work efficiently and effectively.	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately after each AGM the Executive Committee shall appoint members to the various Working Groups To delegate the day to day running of the club to various different Working Groups that have specialised knowledge in their areas and to reduce the huge workload on the Executive Committee. 	Executive Committee

Club structures and administration



Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Implementation of the five-year club development plan	To ensure the delivery of our club plan within the timescale specified and be the responsible body as stated in the club plan.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Executive Committee shall immediately after each AGM appoint members for the working group that will monitor the implementation of the club development plan This working group shall include the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, PRO of the Executive Committee and others as required This working group shall monitor the implementation of the club plan on a regular basis and at least every three months. 	Executive Committee and Development Working Group
Club policies	To ensure that our club policies are readily available for use in relation to specific cases.	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all club policies and amend or draft as necessary to ensure that they comply with GAA best practice A complete set of hard copies of all club policies to be held by the Executive Committee. 	Executive Committee
Cultural Working Group	To broaden the activities of the club beyond playing games so that all of our members feel welcome and find a role within the club that satisfies their interests.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cultural Working Group that will deal with all cultural aspects within the club Ensure participation in Scor each year. 	Executive Committee
Delegated authority to all Working Groups	To assist the speedy implementation of minor decisions relating to the day-to-day running of the club.	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft and approve a paper that gives delegated authority to each Working Group on expenditure and other aspects relating to their day to day running of the club Working Groups to report to the monthly meeting of the Executive Committee on any delegated expenditure or work they have undertaken in the previous month. 	Executive Committee
Working group meetings	To make our Working Groups available to participation by all members of the club and in particular members with young families who find it difficult to attend due to the time of the Working Group meetings.	Year 2-Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the timing of working group meetings to find out if it is possible to hold them to coincide with some of the underage training sessions To explore the provision of tea, coffee, etc at the same time as underage training so that parents will stay at the Club throughout the duration if the training. 	Executive Committee and all working groups
Youth Forum	The voice of the youth in our club should be heard to ensure their views and opinions are considered by our Executive Committee.	Year 2-Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a Youth Forum that will meet at least four times a year and report through the Youth Officer to the Executive Committee. 	Executive Committee
Succession Planning Programme	Prospective officer bearers will be identified in advance of the AGM so that our five-year maximum post holder rule is complied with.	Year 2-Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify members who have the future potential to fill Executive Committee posts Implement a succession planning programme to enable these prospective officers to develop the competence and skill to fulfil post holder roles in the Executive Committee Ensure that all post holding Executive officers are replaced at least every five years. 	Executive Committee



Finance and fundraising

Our vision

Our vision is that in five years' time our club will be able to say:

"Our club is successful in fundraising and in financial excellence in supporting the continued development of our club. We are constantly adapting our approach to fundraising by being innovative in our fundraising efforts ensuring that the club has a sound financial base."



The participants from our first Strictly Come Dancing event in 2013. It has been a popular event each year and has helped generate much needed funds for the club

Finance and fundraising



Key Projects

We will appoint a Finance sub-group to take on responsibility for the management of club funds. They are to be responsible for the recording of all income and expenditure. They must have the ability to record all financial transactions, control expenditure in the club, plan and assist in fundraising and provide regular reports to the club Executive.

The Finance sub-group must not commit the club to any expenditure for which prior approval has not been given and in all cases look for best value. Each month a report on the financial position of the club will be presented to the club Executive Committee.

We will appoint a Fundraising sub-group to take on responsibility to develop a fundraising strategy to meet the club's budget projections. All fundraising activities are to be coordinated by this committee. Focus group findings highlighted deficiencies in the way we manage/promote our established income streams, such as Lotto, Premium Blue, club membership, sponsorship, club gear sales and social club.

The Fundraising sub-group will carry out a review of these income streams and implement change where possible as per the focus group findings. Also this sub-group will oversee funding opportunities for the club's development projects. Each month a report of their activities will be presented to the club Executive Committee.



The participants in the hugely successful Island Games fundraiser last year

REWARDS SCHEME
Premium Blue
Membership 2016/2017

Your Premium Blue Membership Card guarantees you the following benefits:

Direct Loughinisland GAC benefits:

- Free entry to weekly Friends of Loughinisland GAC club lotto draw
- Free entry to monthly Friends of Loughinisland GAC club draw for 2 prizes of €100
- Free entry to all Loughinisland GAC home games
- 10% discount on all club merchandise purchased through Loughinisland GAC
- 10% discount on all bar purchases in Loughinisland GAC
- Free entry in Loughinisland GAC draw for All Ireland SFC tickets

Additional Benefits from Premium Blue partner businesses:

- Special discount on all purchases from Strangford Fuels
- 10% discount on all purchases from JJ Donnelly Menswear Downpatrick & Ballynahinch
- 10% discount - Brian Feeney Solicitors Downpatrick
- 10% discount on all purchases from McCartans Sports, Downpatrick
- 10% discount on all purchases from Docs Fish 'n' Chips, Downpatrick & Newcastle
- Free property valuation Peter Fitzpatrick and Sons, Estate Agents & Chartered Surveyors & Auctioneers Downpatrick
- €10 Voucher for Denivirs Hotel Downpatrick

7 Teconnaught Road | Loughinisland | Downpatrick | BT30 BQE
T: 028 4421 8050
www.loughinislandgac.com
LoughinislandGAC
@LislandGac

NOTES:

- (i) All benefits are subject to production of a valid & signed Premium Blue membership card.
- (ii) Lost or damaged Premium Blue membership cards will be replaced at a cost of €10 per card.
- (iii) Your club committee will seek to add further Premium Blue partner businesses & will update you as soon as new partners join the scheme.



Finance and fundraising

Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Fundraising working group	To organise and oversee the preparation of accounts and fundraising in the club.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of a sub-group reporting monthly to the full committee. 	Executive Committee
Annual club budget to be prepared	To help the club prepare for the year ahead and to help plan for fundraising.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual budget to be adopted by full committee each year. 	Finance Committee
Club accounts to be audited each year	To ensure best practice is followed.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited accounts to be presented to full committee within three months of club year end. 	Finance Committee
Promotion of lotto	Revamp of lotto – review point of sales, introduce online sales, minimum jackpot review.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in Lotto sales. 	Finance and Fundraising committees
Increase membership base	Return of lapsed members Introduce on line registration Review membership categories.	Year 1-Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership numbers to show annual increases. 	Finance and Fundraising committees and Club Registrar
Maintain and develop relationships with existing and new sponsors	Secure longer term sponsorship Acknowledge sponsors annually.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure main sponsor is secured by December each year and secondary sponsors in place by March each year. 	Club Executive and Finance and Fundraising committees
Launch of Health and Well-being Centre	Growth in membership utilised by all sections of the community Promote healthy lifestyle.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have secured sufficient membership income in Year 1 to meet all liabilities Year-on-year membership growth. 	Finance and Fundraising committees
Premium Blue membership	Review benefits Growth in membership.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase income year-on-year. 	Finance and Fundraising committees
Maximise use of clubrooms	Promote community awareness of club facilities Monthly cultural/music event.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in club usage reflected by increased income. 	Fundraising Committee
Funding opportunities/ grants	Be aware of all funding opportunities/grants and actively pursue those that meet our development plans.	Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end of Year 5 – further club facilities development has taken place. 	Fundraising Committee



Our vision for the future

Loch an Oileáin CLG is a modern, forward-thinking and well-governed club that effectively promotes our Gaelic games, Irish identity and culture in modern facilities.

The environment allows our young people to develop to be the best that they can be. The club will enrich the lives of our members, families and the communities we serve, promoting active lifelong participation for all.

The environment will foster individual development and well-being to maximise community participation and enable all our members achieve their full potential in their chosen roles.



Facilities and development

Overarching aim: To provide facilities that will meet the needs of all age groups in our community.

By 2023 we intend to have facilities which will enable our club to grow and develop. The new facilities will encourage cultural and cross community social activities whilst providing all our playing members with the modern training and playing surfaces which other clubs now take for granted.

Key project: We have a state of the art clubhouse with excellent changing facilities but we need to provide safe recreational areas to include everyone from infants to pensioners.

Our club invested heavily in 2007 by providing a new clubhouse which is the envy of many clubs. However we recognise the need to compliment and surround the clubhouse with the facilities that our community really needs.



Facilities and development



New, Facilities and Safety

Finance continues to be the greatest challenge faced by every club, but with the support of our community we can meet this challenge. At the recent open day in the club, community members of all ages helped us to identify the new facilities required by all and the areas in need of improvement and upgrade.

To enable us to progress the proposals, a Facilities and Development working group will be established and report to the Executive Committee. This working group will focus on the improvement of the physical infrastructure of the club and the goals identified by the community.

The obvious need for improvement of our playing pitch is matched by the need for training and skills facilities but the safety of our members is at the very heart of everything we do. As such we will continue to work in partnership with local government representatives and agencies to improve safety in and around our club and on our roads. Footpaths and lighting will continue to feature highly in this respect and proactive steps are underway to eradicate hazards identified.





Facilities and development

Action	Outcomes sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Provide a second playing pitch for matches and training	A second pitch which will alleviate pressure on our current home pitch and facilitate training when the home pitch is being used.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a lease on one of the pitches/fields already identified. 	Executive Committee
To have a Well-being Centre which will meet the needs of the community	A separate unit within our club grounds which will facilitate our Well-being Centre.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full planning permission – outline planning and funding has been approved. 	Executive Committee
To make our club hall more amenable to a more expansive range of community activities	Encourage more community groups to avail of our fantastic club hall and social facilities.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of existing usage conducted by the executive committee, to identify opportunities for all age groups to avail of the current facilities. 	Executive Committee
Improve the entrance to the club grounds	A new entrance to the club grounds. A new entrance point which will be both practical and aesthetically pleasing.	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the Well-being Centre. 	Facilities Working Group
To provide a safer access route to the pitch for children and people on foot	A footpath on the approach to the pitch from the Crawfordstown Road junction.	Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlisting the support of elected representatives and lobbying local government bodies to recognise the dangers which exist for younger members in particular. 	Executive Committee
To have a full size pitch to facilitate championship matches and evening games	Provide a full size pitch to facilitate championship matches and evening games.	Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain suitable ground which will allow for a full size pitch. 	Facilities Working Group

Facilities and development



Action	Outcomes sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Provide appropriate dugouts for the welfare and safety of both home and away teams	Dugouts which will provide seating, shelter and suitable cover for players and management teams during matches.	Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the playing surface. 	Facilities Working Group
Enable our members and local community to walk or run in a safe environment	Provide a walking/running track around our pitch for members, the community and local running clubs.	Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the playing surface. 	Facilities Working Group
Improve child safety measures within the club boundaries	Ramps in the parking area along the pitch boundary and suitable boundary fencing to protect our children.	Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of ground works. 	Facilities Working Group
Provide floodlights around the pitch and track	Floodlight the home pitch to facilitate night training on the running track and evening matches at the close/start of season.	Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of ground works and boundaries. 	Fundraising and Facilities working groups
Provide a safe play area for the children in our community to play	A playground in the vicinity of our clubhouse and pitch which will enable young children to play in safety.	Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain grant funding and community support. 	Facilities Working Group
To have an all-weather play area to facilitate small team games and training	An enclosed 3G/4G play area with ball wall which can be used for training, skills sessions and youth clubs.	Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a suitable location within our own boundary and raise necessary funding. 	Fundraising and Facilities working groups



Communication, public relations and culture

The active support of the Irish language and culture is central to the GAA's business and our club will use its best endeavours to ensure that our culture and heritage is kept alive in our community.

We will appoint a Cultural Officer who will be responsible for the promotion of the Irish language and other cultural activities in the club.

Communication is one of the most important ingredients of a well-managed and successful club. Good communication ensures that the club operates efficiently and effectively and without this essential ingredient, it cannot achieve its full potential.



Loughinisland participants with the East Down Scór Achievement Award in 2005. Included are (back, from left) P Toman, G Fay, R Higgins, C Madine and P Russell. Third row: E Byrne, S Higgins, C Morgan, L Degan and S McLaughlin. Second row: P Byrne, R Grant, A Gallagher, A O'Toole and B O'Neill. Front: C O'Neill, C Grant, B Murray, P Murnin and C Corrigan

Communication, public relations and culture



Communication in a club takes place on two levels:

1 Internal Communication: the day to day running of the club. Club officers, committee, players, mentors, parents and members must be aware of all club activities. People in the club need to know what is happening, where it is happening and when it is happening.

Effective internal communication ensures that:

- Everyone connected with the club is aware of what is happening
- People know their roles and responsibilities ie who is to do what and when they are supposed to do it
- Everyone knows the details of the club plan and the direction the club is taking; and
- The club functions effectively.

2 External Communication: communicating with people outside the club, community groups and local businesses, people from the club living outside the locality and the wider community in general, projecting a positive image of the club and promoting the club as an “active, efficient, positive and progressive” hub in the local community.

Effective external communication ensures:

- The club is recognised as a “vibrant” activity hub in the local community
- Parents appreciate that their children will get meaningful activity and enjoyment
- Community groups are encouraged to use the club facilities and local businesses recognise the benefits in being associated with the club
- People are encouraged to become involved in club activities and administration.

The Club Vision

Our vision is that in five years our club will be able to say:

“Our club has highly effective communications systems in place reaching all of our members, at home and abroad, regularly using traditional and modern media. Information is provided to ensure our members and the wider community is continually aware of all activities (sporting, cultural and social) in a way that is attractive, interesting and entertaining. Our club excels in its participation in and promotion of Irish language and culture and is a hub of community activity through its provision of games and social activities for all ages within our society.”

Loughinisland representatives Patsy Russell (left), Patsy Toman (second right), Paddy Murray (right) receive the East Down Scór Achievement Award in 2005 from East Down’s Brian Kennedy





Communication, public relations and culture

Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Club communications strategy	To ensure our club has a clear communications strategy that enables the delivery of appropriate Communications/PR systems to enable effective internal club communication and increases awareness of Loughinisland GAC in the local community as an inclusive and diverse organisation that is central to the local community, and is welcoming of new members.	Year 1 Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish PR and Communications Working Group to support the Club PRO Draft communication strategy for agreement of main committee. Annual review of strategy. 	Executive Committee/PR and Communications Working Group
Training of Communications team	To ensure our club has a well-trained, highly motivated and effective communications team.	Year 1 Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of training needs Identification of appropriate courses. Annual review and update of training needs and delivery. 	PR and Communications Working Group
Club member database	To facilitate effective direct communication with all club members.	Year 1 Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current members database Update database to ensure accurate information and contact details held Investigate option of online registration for 2018 Access and use of database ensuring adequate controls and protocols are in place to protect integrity of data Ensure compliance with new regulations (GDPR) in relation to collecting, processing and storing of information relating to members Ensure membership forms templates reflect current legal position and latest GAA guidance. Annual review and update of database Develop database of past members and establish contact details. 	PR and Communications Working Group
Club brand	To establish a club brand that is associated with being a modern progressive club at the heart of the local community where excellence is the consistent aspiration in everything we do.	Year 1 Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider options for enhancement of club image in the community through adoption of appropriate club slogan/tag Consistent branding on club website and publications – letters, signage, posters for social events Consistent branding in club gear/merchandise from juvenile through to senior level all of which is available to purchase by all club members. 	Executive Committee/PR and Communications Working Group

Communication, public relations and culture



Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Internal communications	To establish effective systems of communication between club members to ensure all club officers, Executive Committee and sub-group members, players, mentors, parents and active members are promptly and fully informed of relevant club activities.	Year 1 Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update existing arrangements for sharing key information among committee groups utilising email, text, WhatsApp groups and personal contact Review and establish appropriate systems for notifying mentors, players and parents in relation to matches training and social events. Annual review and update of internal communications systems. 	
Club website	To have an up-to-date website that is informative and well presented and presents an image of active, progressive and vibrant club at the heart of the community and acts as a positive marketing promotional tool for the club.	Year 1 Year 2 Year 3-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current club website and explore opportunities to update and present image of active vibrant club in the community Establish up to date club information on key personnel Make effective use of the electronic diary to keep all members informed of all activities taking place in the club facilities To upload club policies so that they are readily accessible to members, parents of underage players or other interested persons involved in club Explore options for online member registration and club lotto. Integrate website with other communications media Explore options for online sale of club gear and fundraising opportunities. Continuous review and update of website offering. 	PR and Communications Working Group
Club Facebook page	To help improve communication with our members, particularly with those living outside the community including those who are abroad.	Year 1-ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to maximise club promotion on Facebook Integrate Facebook with club website and other media Examine potential of using Facebook Live for lotto draws, etc. 	PR and Communications Working Group
Weekly club notes	To inform the local community about all of the club's activities.	Year 1-ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree standard template for reports Liaise with coaching working group to establish system of match reports being fed promptly to PRO Establish link to club website and social media Establish contacts with local media outlets. 	PR and Communications Working Group
Quarterly Club newsletter	To better inform all our members and local community generally about the club's activities.	Year 1 Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a newsletter team to investigate appropriate format/style/ costings/content Develop prototype by end of Q2 2018 Publish first newsletter by end of Q3 2018. Review club/community feedback and revise publication strategy as appropriate. 	PR and Communications Working Group



Communication, public relations and culture

Action	Outcome sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Community Outreach – local schools and other groups	To ensure club remains at the heart of the community, developing effective partnerships with local schools, other community groups and the wider community.	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint schools/community Liaison Officer • Complete construction of Community Health and Well-being Centre Q3 2018. 	Executive Committee
		Year 1-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity launch re: opening of HWBC to wider community • Further develop the annual Community health and well-being programme (Island Games) to maximize community participation • Further develop and promote the annual 10k and fun run event in conjunction with East Down AC • Promote use of club facilities by other community groups. 	PR and Communications Working Group
		Ongoing		
		Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish linkage between our club, school and other community group websites • Provide community page in club newsletter • Investigate options for establishment of other community groups particularly for women and elderly – walking groups and other social activities • Develop a project plan to host a community/fun day in the club each year in conjunction with Lá na gClub. 	
Irish Language and Culture	To promote Irish music and dance, to attract new people to the club and to increase the use of our native language	Year 1 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Cultural Officer and culture sub-group • Evaluate the potential of setting up a Scór group in the club • Build partnerships with other local Scór groups • Encourage participation in adult and juvenile Scór events every year. 	Executive Committee
		Year 2-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a beginners Irish class • Encourage more young members to participate in Irish dance classes provided on club premises • Investigate potential for monthly traditional music sessions in club facilities. 	PR and Communications Working Group/Culture Working Group
		Year 3-Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage young members (9-16 years) to participate in annual local Campa Chormaic • Develop designated section on the website to attract and communicate with the community members interested in Scór and the Irish language. 	





Volunteers and recruitment

Our vision

The development plan outlines a process including milestones that will ensure a sufficient number of volunteers are available in order to support all functional areas of the club.

The recruitment process should allow for Volunteers to be allocated to functional areas that are able to benefit from any specific skills set they may have. The intention is that volunteer resources will be managed and recognised in a way that will maintain existing levels whilst also attracting additional resources.

Our vision is that in five years our club will be able to say:

We have a dedicated and organised body of volunteers who are aligned with the vision, mission and values of Loughinisland GAC.



Loughinisland GAC stalwart Vincent McGlew receives the prestigious Volunteer of the Year award at The Irish News School, Club and Volunteer Awards 2017. Presenting the accolade is Denise Hayward of Volunteer Now

Volunteers and recruitment



Focus areas

Working from the club plan workshops, several key areas of focus were identified for the five-year plan to achieve the volunteering support it needs moving forward:

1 Requirements and skill sets

- Define specific roles and what is expected of volunteers, including time commitments
- Identify skill sets available within club membership and match to requirements.

2 Effective communication

- Communication of volunteering requirements on an ongoing basis
- Promotion of the benefits of volunteering/getting involved.

3 Promote diversity within the recruitment process

- Mixed gender involvement within club structures and activities
- Ensure activity opportunities are available for all age groups
- Facilitate activities that support community initiatives.

4 Management of the volunteer base

- Ongoing management of the volunteer resources in a way that ensures continuity and consistency
- Coordination of volunteer resources through robust organisational structures.

5 Establish a recognition environment that attracts and retains volunteers

- Create mechanisms to ensure volunteers are recognised on an ongoing basis.

6 Integration of club within the community to widen potential volunteer recruitment base

- Creating a 'community club' spirit and maximising involvement in club activities by building links between the club, primary school, parish, and other community groups.

For each objective, specific actions have been identified and aligned with other areas within the development plan.



Volunteers and recruitment

Focus area	Outcomes sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Requirements and skill sets	Identify what we currently have.	March 2018	Obtain list of current volunteers and positions held.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Members know what is required and are clear on what is expected if they put themselves forward.	June 2018	Prepare list of areas where volunteer support is required and develop short descriptions for each role.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Club officials and committees know the full range of skills available within the membership and can call upon specific expertise as required.	December 2018	Generate a skills/capability database from club members.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
Effective communication	Promote benefits of why people should volunteer and how they will benefit both the club and themselves.	April 2018	Create a flyer/marketing sheet with FAQs to promote the opportunities and the benefits of volunteering.	Communication, Recruitment and Volunteering Working groups
	Grow volunteer numbers, identify areas where members are prepared to help out.	April 2018	Generate list of members/former members and send a volunteering questionnaire to all (three questions, tick areas of interest).	Communication, Recruitment and Volunteering Working groups
	Directly increase volunteer numbers and engage/re-engage membership.	July-August 2018	Follow up with a door to door visit campaign seeking support – your club needs you.	Communication, Recruitment and Volunteering Working groups
	Sign up volunteers, sow seeds for future volunteers.	February 2019	Hold a volunteer launch event for all members.	Communication, Recruitment and Volunteering Working groups
	Support recruitment drive, promote inclusivity.	April 2018	Develop recruitment marketing catchphrase for volunteering which reflects inclusive nature of the club.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Promote volunteering generally and also promote specific opportunities.	June 2018	Utilise website and social channels to advertise roles and seek support.	Communication, Recruitment and Volunteering Working groups
Promote diversity within the recruitment process	Promote female participation across club activities, including volunteering.	April 2018	Launch a ladies 'recruitment' drive/initiative (eg Women of the 'Island).	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Make the club the centre of the community, enriching lives of members and increasing warmth of feeling towards the club.	July 2018-ongoing	Recruit specialists within health and well-being to provide a range of initiatives (physical and mental health) in clubrooms or new HWB centre (eg, mother and toddler, suicide awareness, safe driving for teenagers, yoga etc) for all age and gender groups.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Enhance appeal to a broader range of people who would not otherwise be attracted to the club.	September 2018-ongoing	Develop a schedule of activities for non-playing members.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group

Volunteers and recruitment



Focus area	Outcomes sought	Timescale	Milestones	Responsibility
Management of the volunteer base	Ensure the club is a club for all, not just playing members.	March 2018	Appoint a volunteer Recruitment Officer (to work with nominated sub-group).	Executive Committee
Establish a recognition environment that attracts and retains volunteers	Members know who to speak with about volunteering.	April 2018	Enters individuals for available volunteer awards e.g. coach of the year, Irish News SCV awards, etc.	Executive Committee
	Link between membership, volunteer base and club executive.	April 2018	Annual coaches and volunteers evening.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Celebrate success, recognise contribution, attract and retain volunteers, set standards.	2018-onwards	Promote the benefits of the Gold mark scheme for younger members.	Communications and PR Working Group
	Attract and retain volunteers, grow team spirit.	April 2018	Start an annual club "register" recognising every member who contributed through the year.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
	Increase number of young volunteers.	February 2019	Volunteer of the Year award at annual dinner – voted for by all members.	Recruitment and Volunteering Working Group
Integration of club within the community	Recognise individual contributions.	June 2018	Appoint a community liaison officer(s) to work with the school and PTA with specific responsibility to develop links and relationships.	Executive Committee
	Celebrate success, recognise commitment.	June 2018-ongoing	Emphasise the opportunity to utilise club facilities for parish, school and community events.	Community Liaison Officer



Juvenile workshop day

This was held on the October 8 last year and we had 25 male and female juvenile members in attendance, with the Under 16 boys showing the best turnout with only a few team members missing. The plan Steering Committee would like to thank all who attended including the adult members who came along to help out.

The approach for the juvenile day was somewhat different to the adults with focused questions being asked on the same areas as the adults, finance excepted, but with additional youth focused questions raised and the groups split by age range assisted by an adult who recorded their answers and delivered their conclusions to the floor at the end of each segment. The day was rounded off with a very large pizza carry out courtesy of the club. Those adults who appeared were impressed at our junior member's contribution.

There is no doubt that those juveniles present made a significant contribution to the plan: their ideas were summarised and given to each of the focus groups charged with coming up with a plan for each area and we hope that those who made the effort for their club will recognise that they have been heard loud and clear. It is important to stress that this is the start and not the end of the process.

The plan Steering Committee consider that it is important to record the main issues emerging from the juvenile workshop because they demonstrate the central role the club plays in our young people's lives, and the fact that they want to increase their involvement with it can only be good for the club going forward. In the current climate, with social media and electronic games being integral to our young people's lives, it is incredibly encouraging to know that the GAA still has such a strong attraction to the youth who expressed positive enthusiasm for the future development of the club.



Juvenile workshop day



A sample of the opinions expressed is outlined below:

- 1** We are capable of doing more to help team bonding: our kids want more activities and events to build club and team spirit with a broad range of activities suggested as possible delivery mechanisms – trips to Down games and Croke Park, outdoor pursuits, mud runs and paintball outings being a few examples. They want social nights at the club, not necessarily a big night out, it could be darts, pool and other games but they want regular engagement in their own cohort and with other club members across the generations within the club environment.
- 2** It was suggested that our girl's teams and female members generally need more positive effort to encourage greater development at a young age with attendance at as many blitz tournaments and Feile as possible. Success in this area will create positive impetus across the board and encourage all teams to lift their performance.
- 3** An introductory meeting with coaches at the year start to agree basic ground rules with the teams setting high expectations of team members and coaches in reference to training, discipline and respect. The players want to train more throughout the year including winter training sessions and skills focus days with senior team members giving them positive direction on how to improve.
- 4** Target setting including advice from coaches on areas they are weak on so that they can work on their own outside of scheduled training, and focused training to bring on weaker players: no child left behind.
- 5** Man of the match and match reports published for every game on our social media and in the local papers with team photographs published regularly: our kids love seeing their efforts complimented.
- 6** Personal fitness plans for them to work on at home with more effort to educate them on nutrition and hydration.
- 7** All our juniors want the experience of attending the county Feile annually: the highs and lows of competing for their club in the county Feile will bind them to the club and the children they are growing up with and embeds the GAA ethos. What better opportunity exists to test and improve our children and their coaches?
- 8** Reward and encourage full attendance at training: everyone must attend training.
- 9** Bring back the family fun day.
- 10** Simple straightforward well publicised codes of conduct for all with encouragement to all members to come along to their games, to support them in all they do with a loud vocal positive support for them and their coaches. We have some outstanding coaches but we need many positive voices from the line to encourage the children in their development.

Our young people were also extremely positive in terms of fundraising issues. As the club hopes to rejuvenate its fundraising on the back of the club plan, those ideas have been recorded and will be re-visited by that committee. They also had a great deal to say on the facilities and those points have been addressed within the Facilities plan.

To the juveniles who attended – well done and thanks again. You are a credit to the club. We hope to keep this dialogue going with the appointment of a club youth officer who the youth of the club look up to and who has a proven record in developing our youth teams over a number of years.



Implementation and review mechanisms for the plan

This plan is a living document. It will be reviewed, assessed and adapted to ensure it facilitates the club in reaching its potential over the next five years.

The Club Executive will put in place a plan implementation working group. This group will meet on a quarterly basis and assess the progress of the plan against its stated objectives and will report directly to the Club Executive.

This team will decide on the most appropriate method to carry out a comprehensive annual review of the plan. This will involve the assessment of the current initiatives, their appropriateness for the needs of the club and the identification of additional initiatives to assist in the completion of achieving the goals and objectives.

If required, the plan will be modified and adapted as required. The group will also be responsible for communicating the modified plan to all club members.



Delivering the vision



The exercise of developing our club plan has been invaluable in re-affirming the connection between the club, its members and the wider community that we seek to serve. The plan sets out the priorities identified through engagement with our community.

Our primary concern now is to ensure that we follow through and deliver on the strategy and action plans we have agreed in this plan. In so doing we will ensure that:

- We are all working to a clearly defined and articulated strategy to ensure that our efforts are properly focused on the priority action areas identified by our community
- Everyone is on the same page working together to achieve our agreed objectives
- Simplify decision-making at committee level because our strategy has already prioritised the activities necessary for success
- Everyone understands what the club priorities are and the community are kept informed about progress in achieving those objectives
- Everyone in the community is provided with an opportunity to contribute to the delivery of this plan.

This club, *your club*, need your input to delivering this ambitious vision. We need support from a broad range of people with a broad range of skill sets. Even if the time you can offer is limited, your contribution will ease the pressure on other club members and greatly assist your club and community.

Sometimes, the smallest step in the right direction ends up being the biggest step of your life.

#YourClubYourCommunityYourFuture



Loughinisland GAC juvenile members were presented with Goldmark Programme awards last year in recognition of their voluntary contributions during the previous season from the Ulster GAA in conjunction with the Department and Education. Left: Cara McKeating receives an Award of Excellence for completing over 200 hours of volunteer work. Michael Hasson, Ulster GAA President, and Aoife Ní Chaiside, Slaughtneil All-Ireland winning camogie captain, presented the certificate at a special ceremony in the Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast, last year. Centre: Mia Carvill, centre, receives a Goldmark Programme Award for Excellence after completing 50 hours' volunteer work. Right: Gabriella Lowe is presented with a Goldmark Programme Award for Excellence in recognition of completing 100 hours' volunteering work



Special thanks

The committee would like to express a special note of gratitude to the following:

- 1 Hugh Carville, whose expertise has been invaluable to the committee in setting the layout of the club plan for publication.
- 2 Dr Mike King, from Down County Museum, who provided the old map of the Loughinisland area which serves as a watermark in the "history of our club" section of the plan.
- 3 The Down Recorder for permitting Hugh to use its equipment and software to help create the plan and using its archived images in the production.
- 4 Finally, to Raphael Mason for the use of his photographs from the juvenile and adult workshop days which are included in this book.



The researchers and compilers of "Ar scéal féin – Stair Loc An Oiléan CLG/Our Story – The History of Loughinisland GAC", Michael Madine, Donal Gordon and Tommy McLeigh – the award-winning publication which chronicled our first 100 years with the then club chairman, Gerry Toman



**A STRATEGY FOR OUR CLUB
2018-2023**