



CUMANN LUTHCHLEAS GAEL
COISTE DHÚN NA NGALL

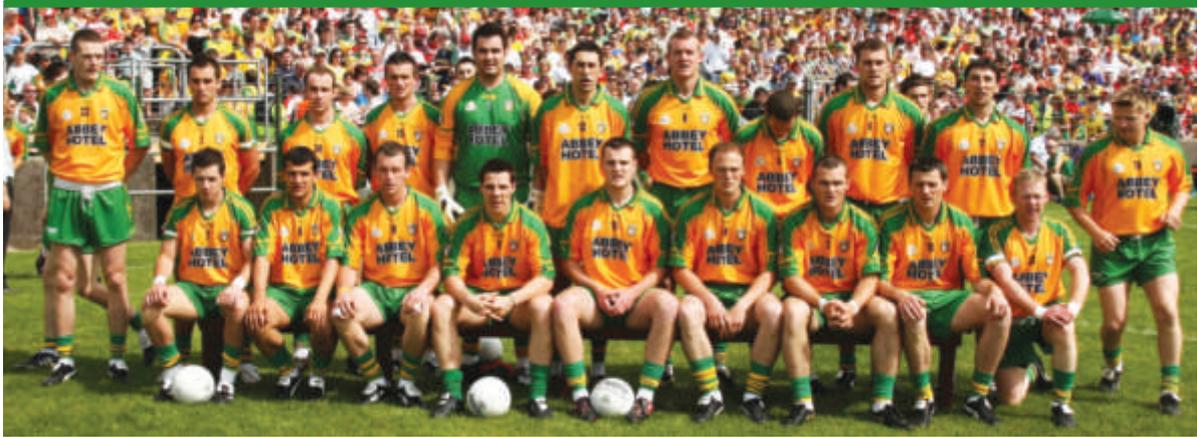


*Meitheal
Dhún na nGall*

Donegal GAA Strategy
2009 - 2014

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





Réamhrá

It is essential that any organisation takes time to reflect and review all its activities from time to time. We in Donegal have availed of the tremendous opportunity afforded to us by the Ulster Council to plan, context and outline a strategic prospective for the future of the GAA in Donegal.

This Plan is in my view the most important document to face Donegal in a long time. No part of our organisation will be left to chance, be it governance, games, fixtures, coaching, infrastructure, inclusion, community, Clubs, volunteers, youth, marketing, cultural, communication or funding.

The critical review we carried out over a period of months resulted in a Plan that is a reflection of the views and ambitions of individual members, Clubs and various sub-committees. This Strategic Plan for Donegal is “ours” and is underpinned by the clear values and views of all to want to make the GAA in Donegal better. It will provide huge challenges to us all to implement and carry out the contents of this Plan. But every challenge also presents an opportunity to improve our lot – to stand still is not an option.

Our youth are one of the core targets we have addressed: our aim is to deliver an organisation that will benefit all our children and make Gaelic games and pastimes more accessible and welcoming for all. How well we do in terms of nurturing and catering for the next generation now and into the future so that they help to build their community through their local GAA Club, will go a long way to securing the well-being of the GAA in Donegal.

Such a comprehensive document did not happen by chance, time or even effort was required from many people. I thank all who made contributions. A special thanks to the planning sub-committee chaired by Brian McEniff Central Council Delegate who was greatly assisted by Noreen Doherty, Secretary of the Strategic Planning Group. To the Ulster Council, and in particular Ryan Feeney and Mark Conway, a very sincere buíochas.

It is essential that we adopt this Strategy as the best way forward for the green and gold of Donegal. The starting point is now.

Seán Ó Ceallaigh
Cathaoirleach, Bord na Contae C.L.G. Dhún na nGall



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Executive Summary

Meitheal Dhún na nGall sets out a strategic framework for the development of the GAA in Donegal over the next five years. It is the seventh in a series of County GAA strategic plans facilitated by Comhairle Uladh. The Plan was developed on the back of widespread consultation with, and significant inputs from, the wider Donegal GAA family.

Donegal is an expansive County of almost 150,000 people. It is a County both of huge variety and substantial geographic fragmentation. Donegal also has one of Ireland's richest cultural heritages and is one of the few places where Irish survives as a living language, used on a daily basis. The County is now growing in population terms after decades of decline but issues of remoteness and peripherality still affect it.

The GAA has long been a substantive presence in the County but in the past half-century in particular it has been brought to the highest levels, both in terms of participation and achievement. The analysis which underpinned Meitheal Dhún na nGall identified twelve Themes which people felt needed to be addressed if the GAA was to be taken forward to best effect. Those Themes run right across the full spectrum of GAA activity and are:

- Managing the GAA in Donegal
- Running the Games
- Coaching and Games Development
- Club and Community Development
- Hurling and Camogie
- Infrastructure
- Irish Culture and Heritage
- Urban Donegal
- An Inclusive GAA
- Health, Wellness and Lifestyle
- Marketing, Communications and PR
- Funding Donegal

The Plan goes on to list a series of actions against each Theme. Responsibilities for the actions are allocated and a sense of when they should be carried out is given. Finally, because the whole thrust of the Plan is on outcomes or on what the

GAA in the County wants to achieve, an outcome for each action is specified.

Donegal Profile

Donegal: What and Where

Donegal is a sizeable County (4,830 sq km in area) covering the extreme north-west corner of Ireland. It brings together coasts, mountains and inland areas of great beauty, ruggedness and variety. Maritime influences are strong across much of Donegal: it actually contains about 17% of the national coastline and has a number of offshore islands, two of which, Arranmore and Tory, remain significantly populated. The Derryveagh Mountains in the north and the Bluestacks in the south comprise its main upland areas: the traditional Lagan area centred on the east of the County meanwhile provides sharply-contrasting, good quality lowlands.

Donegal's size (only Cork, Galway and Mayo are larger Counties) and geography have contributed to its clear sense of difference. It borders just one other County in the Republic and internally, physical communication has always been difficult, even along what might be expected to be basic north-south and east-west axes.

One consequence is probably a heightened sense of the local and a strong appreciation of place. These are of course core GAA dynamics.

Donegal: Creating the Modern Context

The County, mostly then the kingdom of Tír Chonaill, was a bastion of Gaelic Ireland until the Flight of the Earls in 1607. The Grianán of Aileach in its north-east corner, for example, was a hugely significant political and cultural centre during the two millennia that spanned the birth of Christ. Rory O'Donnell's departure from Donegal in 1607 formally ended the ruling sovereignty of the O'Donnell clan and ushered in the influences of the Plantation of Ulster which would do much to shape modern Donegal.



The Great Famine of the mid-19th Century came on the back of a number of earlier lesser famines and a fall in fish stocks off the coast. Its impact on Donegal was shattering, the County's population tumbling by 26% (from over 296,000 to 218,000) in the three decades between 1831 and 1871. Those joint traditions of emigration and population decline would persist for the next century and by 1971 Donegal's population had bottomed out at 108,000 ... just over a third of its pre-Famine peak.

During that time Donegal developed strong economic and cultural links with Scotland and with Glasgow in particular. Paradoxically, at the same time partition in Ireland reduced Donegal's social and economic contact with its neighbouring Derry City, Tyrone and Fermanagh. One impact was to accentuate Donegal's sense of difference. The opportunities offered by peace include options in terms of innovative cross-border working and partnerships.

Modern Donegal

Donegal today retains many significant links with its history and origins. Irish culture and heritage are particularly strong ... and not just as add-ons but as meaningful parts of everyday life. The GAA is of course part of this but Donegal also includes

a large Gaeltacht area where some 23,000 people speak fluent Irish. The County also has a strong literary tradition and Irish music, song, dance and art all continue to flourish. Finally, Donegal's island population of almost 700 sets it apart from most other Irish Counties.

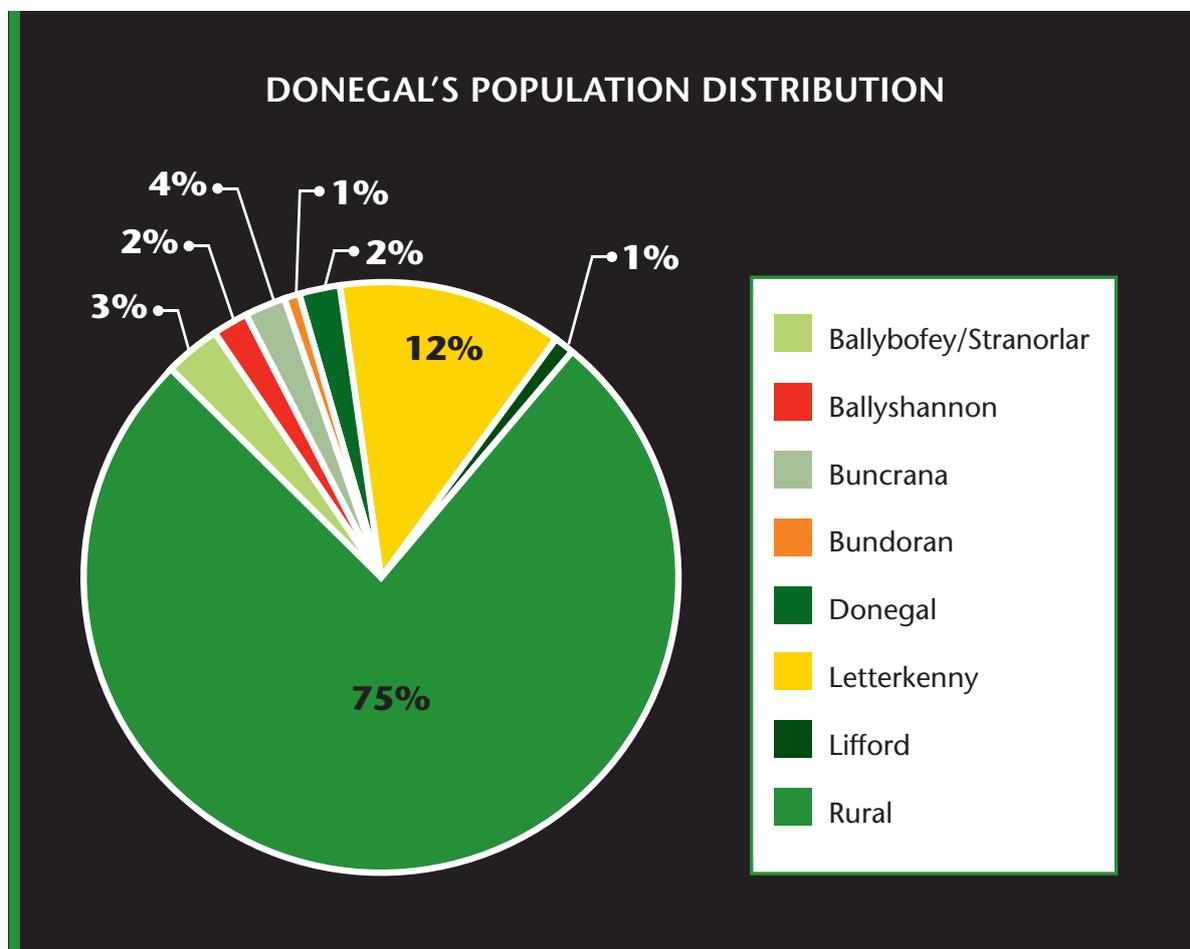
Modern Donegal is also a growing place, somewhere where people now come to ... rather than leave to go elsewhere. Between 1971 and 2006 its population grew by a very sizeable 36%, to over 147,000. In the four years 2002-06 alone, over 6,500 people moved into the County from outside. Donegal's population is also one of growing variety. Some 18,000 "non-Irish born" people now live here. About 13,000 of these were born in Britain and the remainder are split fairly evenly across Poland/Lithuania, the rest of the EU, the USA and the rest of the world.

The County's age structure is young with 30% aged 19 or under and 17% aged 60 or over. Some 75,000 people (essentially half Donegal's population) fall into the "5-to-39" age group, traditionally the target market for active participation in Gaelic Games. Providing activities which cater for their needs and aspirations – as well of course for the needs and aspirations of the less physically active sectors of the population – is a central challenge for the GAA.

Unlike most of modern Ireland, Donegal remains a largely rural County. Only one-person-in-four lives in a settlement of 1,500 people or more whereas nationally six-people-in-every-ten fall into that category. Issues of isolation, remoteness and communication difficulties therefore remain central to life in the County. Donegal County Council for example has put in place a radical and pioneering decentralisation initiative to combat precisely these issues of distance within the County.

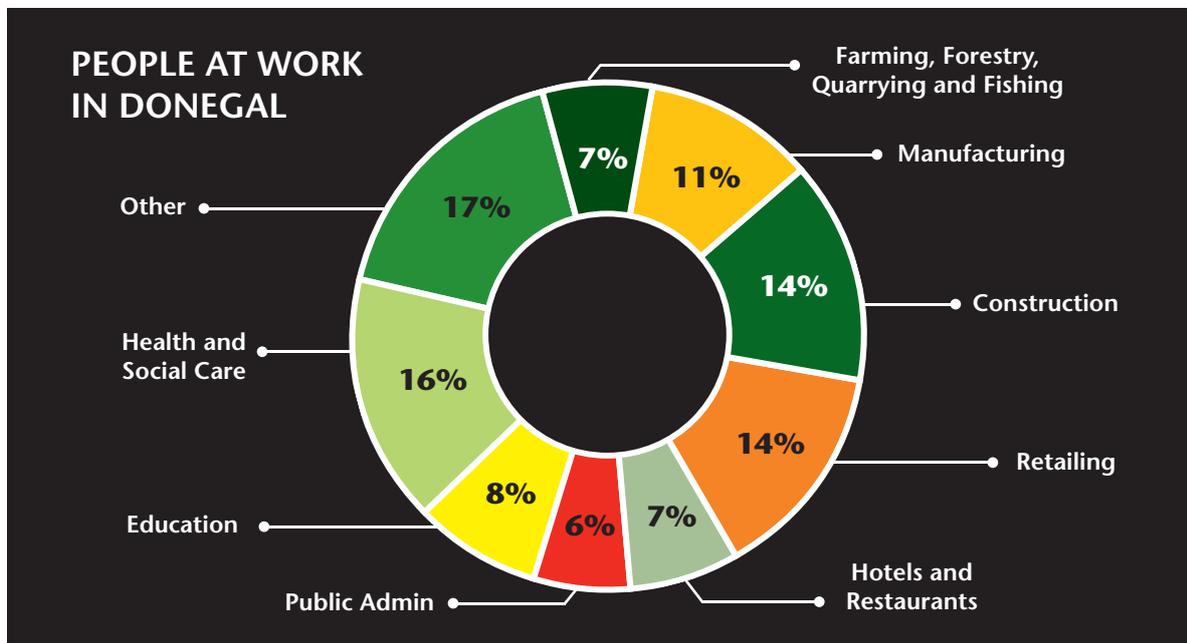
Several parts of the County accommodate substantial holiday and second home populations. These are typically “in” but not “of” Donegal and can bring in their wake significant integration and community development concerns.

Donegal’s population is distributed across the County as follows:



Improved economic times have underpinned Donegal’s recent population growth. However relative to the rest of Ireland the County still has work to do, the most recent figures showing disposable incomes in Donegal to be some 16% below the national average. Local labour force participation rates are, at 57.2 some five percentage points below the national average of 62.5. Put simply, Donegal has not enjoyed the full economic prosperity that has recently flowed across much of Ireland.

The County’s economic activity can be summarised as follows:



The education sector is always important for the GAA, and across Donegal there are 176 primary and 27 secondary schools. These attract some 17,500 and 11,800 pupils respectively. The County also enjoys a significant third level presence via Letterkenny IT. The college provides a range of degree and other programmes for some 2,000 full and part-time students.

The Future of Donegal

Donegal is not a place, or series of places, that will stand still. The National Spatial Strategy applies the classifications Strong; Remote; and Culturally Significant to large tracts of the County and proposes a number of Revitalising and Strengthening strategies in response. Letterkenny/Derry is seen as a “linked Gateway” and as such is designated as an urban area of national significance. In the same way the County sits astride a growing western transport corridor linking Derry/Letterkenny/Sligo/Galway/Limerick/Cork. Cross-border developments allied with small business growth and sustainable use of natural resources are seen to underpin the County’s future.

Donegal in Summary

Donegal is a County where:

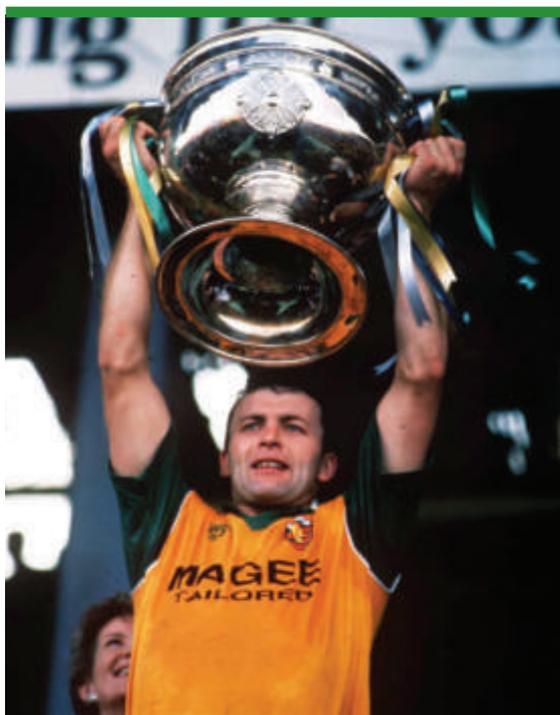
- History has had a tangible and visible impact
- Geography and distance are significant influences on social and economic life
- Growth is now the natural order after a century-and-a-half of decline
- Culture and heritage are strongly embedded in daily community life
- The levels of prosperity enjoyed in other parts of Ireland have yet to be experienced by many
- Social, community and lifestyle patterns continue to evolve and change

Donegal: The GAA County

A formal, structured GAA in Donegal is just over a century old, the first GAA County Board here having been established in 1905. Within a year the County had won its first Ulster Senior Championship title – in hurling. Despite that initial impetus, Donegal would wait many decades before the big GAA prizes would start to roll in. For the first half of the 20th Century the growth of the GAA locally mirrored that across most of the rest of Ulster, in that it was slow, unnoticed, often painful and frequently against-the-odds ... yet all the time gradual and unmistakable.

Although the 1930s were a decade of on-the-field achievement for Donegal, a momentum of success really only began after the Second World War (again something shared with a number of other Ulster Counties). By the 1960s the County had created an impetus that has been more-or-less maintained ever since. Three McKenna Cups, two Lagan Cups, three Ulster U21 Football titles, two Ulster Vocational Schools titles and a first two Ulster Senior Final appearances during that decade alone led inexorably to an historic Ulster SFC breakthrough in 1972.

In the following third of a century Donegal has gone on to win All-Ireland Football titles at Senior, U21 and Vocational Schools levels as well as in Scór.



It has simultaneously developed its GAA infrastructure, both organisational and physical, and is now firmly established as one of Ireland's leading GAA Counties.

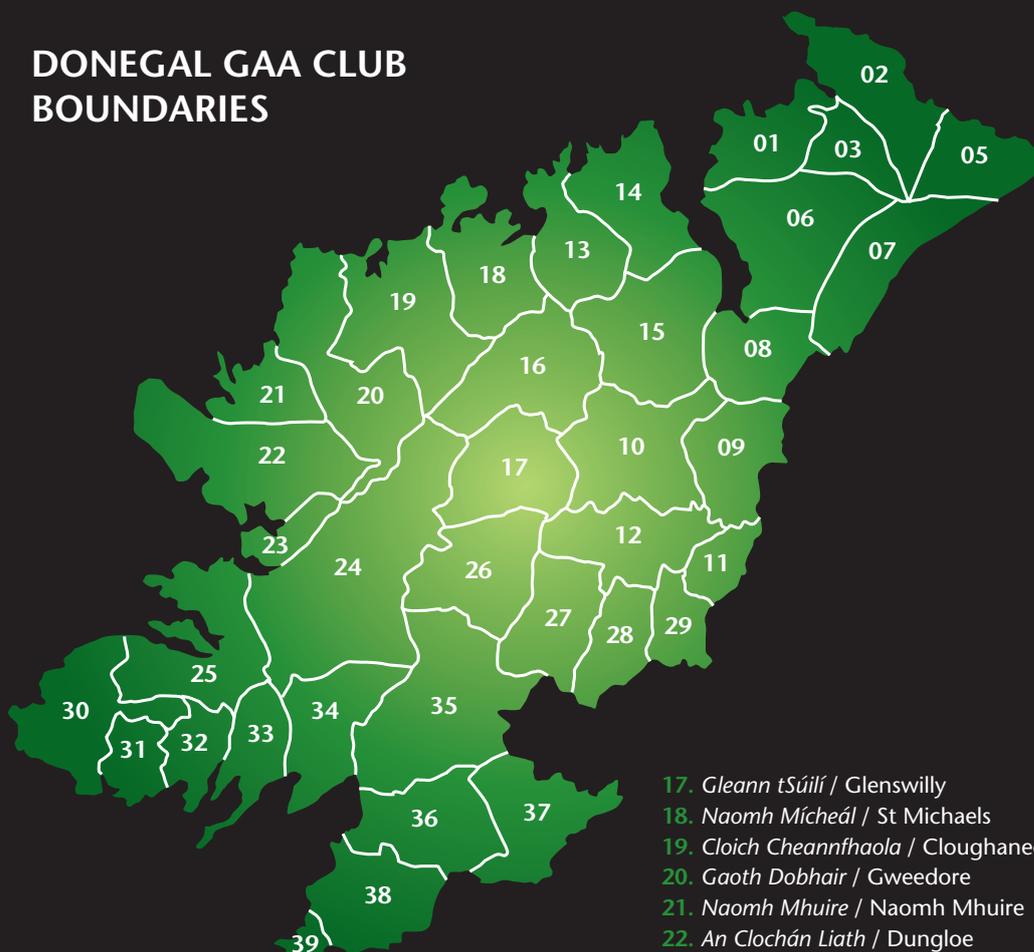
There are currently 40 affiliated GAA Clubs in Donegal, including six dual (providing both hurling and football) and one exclusively hurling Club. The football-focussed Clubs are graded between Senior (18), Intermediate (10) and Junior (11). All seven hurling Clubs compete in the Senior grade. Club League football for adults is played across four Divisions with two further Divisions providing for Club's Second and Third teams. Underage affairs are organised by Northern and Southern Regional Committees with an Inishowen Divisional Board operating under the remit of the Northern Committee: this reflects the historic strong influence of geography on the County and its activities.

The County's overall GAA business is overseen by a County Committee comprising 14 Officers elected at the annual County Convention, one delegate from each of the two Regional Committees and one delegate from each of the County's affiliated GAA Clubs. The following 18 Sub-Committees deliver the detail of the County Committee's work:

- Management
- Competitions Control
- Hearings
- Planning and Physical Development
- Coaching and Games Development
- Cultural
- Public Relations/Marketing
- Youth
- Referees Administration
- Finance
- Information Technology
- Grounds Management and Development
- County Player Panels Finance
- Referees Appointment
- Fundraising
- Integration
- Health and Safety and Events
- Financial Management and Planning



DONEGAL GAA CLUB BOUNDARIES



- 01. Iorras / Urris
- 02. Málainn / Malin
- 03. Carn Domhnach / Carndonagh
- 05. Bun an Phoball / Movice
- 06. Bun Cranncha / Buncrana
- 07. Naomh Pádaig U. Caoin / St Patrick's Muff
- 08. Beart / Burt
- 09. Naomh Colmcille / Naomh Colmcille
- 10. Gaeil Leitir Ceanainn / Letterkenny Gaels
- 10. Naomh Adhamhnán / St Eunans
- 11. Naomh Pádraig Leifear / St Patrick's Lifford
- 12. Naomh Mhuire Conmhaigh / Convoy
- 13. Na Dúnalbh / Downings
- 14. Gaeil Fhánada / Fanad Gaels
- 15. Baile na nGallóglach / Milford
- 16. An Tearmann / Termon

- 17. Gleann tSúilí / Glenswilly
- 18. Naomh Mícheál / St Michaels
- 19. Cloich Cheannfhaola / Cloughaneely
- 20. Gaoth Dobhair / Gweedore
- 21. Naomh Mhuire / Naomh Mhuire
- 22. An Clochán Liath / Dungloe
- 23. Na Rossa / Na Rossa
- 24. Naomh Conall / Glenties
- 25. Ard An Rátha / Ardara
- 26. Gleann Fhinne / Glenfin
- 27. Sean Mac Cumhaill / Sean McCools
- 28. Aodh Rua Cuill. na gCuirdin / Red Hughs
- 28. Setanta / Setanta
- 29. Roibeard Eimead / Robert Emmetts
- 30. Naomh Columba / Glencolmcille
- 31. Cill Chartha / Kilcar
- 32. Na Cealla Beaga / Killybegs
- 33. Naomh Ultan / Naomh Ultan
- 34. Naomh Náille / St Nauls
- 35. Na Ceithre Máistrí / Four Masters
- 36. Naomh Bríd / Ballintra
- 37. Paite Gabha / Pettigo
- 38. Aodh Ruadh B.A.S. / Ballyshannon
- 39. Bun Dobhráin / Bundoran

The GAA in Donegal: A Timeline

Year	What Happened
1905	First County Board established
1906	Donegal (represented by Burt) win the first of three Ulster SHC titles
1919	Cross-County revival of GAA activity begins
1927	Donegal reach first McKenna Cup Final
1930	First Ulster JFC won by Donegal
1932	Third Ulster SHC title comes to Donegal
1936	Donegal win a first Lagan Cup and retain it a year later
1940	Sean Ó Cinneide becomes Uachtarán Comhairle Uladh, the first Donegal holder of the post
1956	First Ulster Minor Football title comes to Donegal and St Eunan's, Letterkenny reach a first MacRory Cup Final
1963	Donegal win a first McKenna Cup, reach a first Ulster SFC Final and win the initial Ulster U21 Football Championship
1964	Harry Carey is elected Uachtarán Comhairle Uladh the second Donegal holder of the post
1966	A third Ulster U21 title in three years is won, the Lagan Cup is retained and a second Ulster SFC Final is reached
1972	Donegal win first Ulster SFC title: Brian McEniff becomes Donegal's first All-Star
1973	Annie Boyle, Gweedore, wins Donegal's first Scór na nÓg title (Aithriseoireacht)
1975	St Joseph's win the Ulster Club SFC title
1980	Robert Emmets win Donegal's first All-Ireland Scór na nÓg title (Ceol Uirlise)
1981	Nollag Ó Gallchoir wins Donegal's first All-Ireland Scór title (Aithriseoireacht)
1982	Donegal claim a fourth Ulster U21 FC and go on to lift a first All-Ireland U21 football title
1983	Cumann na mBunscol is established in Donegal
1984	First All-Ireland Vocational Schools title is won by the County and retained a year later: Killybegs win the Ulster Club MFC and also retain it a year later
1987	Second All-Ireland U21 football title is secured
1992	Donegal capture first All-Ireland SFC as well as seven All-Star awards: first Ladies County Board is put in place
1993	The County reaches its fifth Ulster SFC Final in a row: Martin McHugh captains Ulster to Railway Cup success
2007	Tom Daly is elected Uachtarán Comhairle Uladh, the third Donegal holder of the post.
2007	Donegal win first NFL title



Donegal: The GAA Roll of Achievement

	Ulster Titles	All-Ireland Titles
Senior Football	1972 1974 1983 1990 1992	1992
Lagan Cup/NFL	1936 1937 1952 1965 1966	2007
Under 21 Football	1963 1964 1966 1982 1987 1995	1982, 1987
Minor Football	1956 1985 1991 1996 2006	
All-Ireland Masters Football		2002, 2003
Junior Football	1930 1933 1939 1952 1954	
Vocational Schools Football	1964 1965 1984 1985 1986 1987 1992 1994 1995 1996 2002	1984 1985 1996 2002
St Eunan's College First All-Ireland B Title		1979
De la Salle Ballyshannon All-Ireland B Title		1980
McKenna Cup	1963 1965 1967 1975 1985 1991	
Senior Hurling	1906 1923 1932	
Junior Hurling	1947 1948 1972 1989 2001 2003	
Scór Sinsear (<i>Aithriseoireacht</i>)	1981, 1982, 1991	1981 1982 1991
Tráth na gCeist	1992	1992
Amhránaíocht Aonair	2008	
Scór na nÓg <i>Ceol Uirlise</i>	1980, 1982	1980 1982
Bailead Ghrupa	1992	1992
Trath na gCeist	2002	2002
Aithriseoireacht	2008	
Tráth na gCeist	2008	
Nuachleas	2008	2008
Ladies Gaelic All Ireland Junior Champions		2003

The Donegal Camogie Board was re-established in 2005 and is currently in the process of restructuring the game in the County.

Taking the GAA in Donegal Forward

The GAA in Donegal has developed into something that is robust and vibrant. But the analysis and research underpinning this plan have identified twelve themes that need to be addressed if the current strengths and vigour are to be improved even further. Those themes are summarised below:

1. Managing the GAA in Donegal

The GAA in Donegal is both important and complex. Probably no other organisation in the County comes even close to the scale and variety of its operations. These are all energised by an almost exclusively volunteer input. For all these reasons it is vital that the Association locally is managed in open, effective, efficient and systematic ways. "Good enough" isn't good enough. The GAA at County level needs structures that reflect the nature of its business and which make sure that the right balances are achieved between the strategic and the operational.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Merge the Post of County Administration Manager and County Secretary into one full-time executive post.	County Chairperson, County Executive	Year 1	Structured executive management of the County's day-to-day GAA business.
Appoint a part-time Financial Administrator to assist the County Secretary and Treasurer in the day to day governance of finance in the County. During the lifetime of this plan examine the possibility of having in place a Business / Marketing Officer.	County Secretary, County Treasurer, County Officers, County Executive	Year 1 Years 2/3/4	Improved financial management and control within the GAA in Donegal.
Change the County Bye-laws to make Club Chairpersons the Club Delegates on County Committee. Club Secretary to be sub-delegate to County Committee in the event of the Club Chairperson not available to attend.	County Management, County Board	Year 1	Key Club officers involved in County GAA governance.
County Chairperson to assume responsibility for the appointment of sub-committee membership with approval of the County Management Committee.	County Management, County Chairperson	Year 1	A clear system for the appointment of sub-committee members based on the Central and Provincial Council models.
Establish a Strategic Review Committee Chaired by the Central Council Delegate involving other relevant County officers.	County Management, Central Council Delegate	Year 1	Ongoing overview of the implementation of Meitheal Dhún na nGall over the five year implementation period.



<p>The Strategic Review Committee will conduct a review of the current County sub-committees and district boards and present a report with proposals for restructuring to the 2009 County Convention. The remit of the review will ensure that the sub-committee structure in the County meets the requirements of the GAA in Donegal and is in line with Central and Provincial structures.</p>	<p>Strategic Review Committee</p>	<p>Year 1/Year 2</p>	<p>A County GAA governance and committee structure that's fit for purpose.</p>
<p>The Donegal County Committee will establish strong and sustainable links with the relevant local and central government agencies to deliver on the "social capital" agenda.</p>	<p>County Secretary, County Management Committee</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>A cohesive approach to the development of local government and HSE strategies which are relevant to Donegal GAA and its communities.</p>
<p>Merge the role of Child Protection Officer with the County Youth Officer.</p>	<p>County Management Committee</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Designated responsibility for Child Protection within the County.</p>
<p>Design and implement a County Wide Child Protection policy.</p>	<p>County Youth Officer</p>	<p>Year 1/2</p>	<p>Consistent levels of child protection across the County.</p>
<p>Develop a County Board business template whereby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Club meetings are synchronised with the County meetings • County Committee meetings are held monthly • County meetings are time-bound • Delegates are sent County Committee agendas and papers a week in advance • County Committee meetings include a slot for Club business/issues • Sub-Committees present annual work-plans to the County Committee for approval and then report on progress at the year end. 	<p>County Management Committee, County Secretary</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Meeting practices which will provide an efficient decision making model and reduce workload on volunteers.</p>
<p>All County Committee communication will become electronic.</p>	<p>County Secretary</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Rapid, modern and consistent communication of Donegal GAA business.</p>

Establish a temporary County Office, which caters for the administrative and meeting needs of the County staff and volunteers and is open to the public at regular office hours. It is envisaged that the County Administrative headquarters will move to a permanent location either at the Centre of Excellence or MacCumhail Park.

County Management Committee, County Secretary

Year 2

Improved efficiency and accessibility of County GAA governance.





2. Running the Games

The GAA's business is complex and wide-ranging. But gaelic games lie at the heart of it. And the vast majority of those games take place at Club level. Clear needs have been identified for regular and meaningful games programmes which make full use of weekdays as well as weekends and which are concentrated in the spring and summer months. There is a consensus that true discipline is something that is voluntarily imposed from within and that any focus on the games needs to be accompanied by a parallel focus on refereeing.



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Ensure that adult fixtures provide players with a minimum of 20 matches per year.	CCC, Fixtures Secretary	Year 1	A meaningful GAA fixtures programme for Club players.
Place less reliance on Sunday fixtures and, with the introduction of floodlights and improved facilities, provide for more mid-week, Friday and Saturday night games.	CCC, Fixtures Secretary	Year 2	Schedules of games reflecting the changing lifestyle of society in general.
CCC to concentrate on providing a specific games season from March to September allowing for a defined closed season for Donegal GAA activity.	CCC, Fixture Secretary, County Secretary	Year 2/3	A defined open and closed season which again reflects lifestyle changes.
The fixtures schedule will take account of the scheduling of school/college games.	CCC, Fixture Secretary, Coaching Officer, Educational Committees	Year 2	A cohesive and balanced fixtures schedule which reduces player burnout.
The CCC will meet representatives of all Clubs in February each year to agree the annual games schedule which ensures that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One game only per team per weekend • There is clear and agreed postponement criteria for the game. The games schedule will be published by end of February each year.	CCC, Fixtures Secretary	Year 3	A cohesive and balanced fixtures schedule which reduces player burnout.

<p>Develop a Referees' Strategy which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the numbers of referees needed for Club fixtures • Rolls out a new and innovative approach to referee recruitment, including young people and women • Retains, recruits and trains referees, linesmen and umpires • Provides initial and ongoing training, ensuring the County capitalises on current best practice and incorporates referee assessment • Includes a module which updates Club personnel on the playing rules • Acknowledges and "rewards" referees for the pivotal role they play in the GAA • Promotes Young Whistlers and encourages youth players to "peer" referee Go Games. 	<p>County Referee Co-ordinator, Coaching and Games Development Manager, Coaching Officer</p>	<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Appropriate pool of match officials and better-controlled games.</p>
<p>Develop a standard advice paper for Clubs to highlight important points to prevent player burnout.</p>	<p>Coaching Committee, Coaching and Games Development Manager</p>	<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Development of a culture of good player welfare at all levels and in all codes in Donegal.</p>
<p>Link with the Ladies Gaelic and Camogie Board to explore joint fixtures (Double Headers) and to co-ordinate an overall County fixture schedules.</p>	<p>CCC, Ladies Gaelic Board, Camogie Board, County Integration Officer</p>	<p>Year 3</p>	<p>More inclusive, family-focused gaelic games in Donegal.</p>
<p>Establish a County wide code of conduct for youth mentors, parents, Club officials and all players which the County Committee includes in its Discipline Bye-laws and Discipline Code.</p>	<p>Coaching Officer, Youth Officer Coaching and Games Development Manager</p>	<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Enhanced respect, good behaviour and conduct by all GAA members.</p>
<p>Agree and implement a charter, based on central GAA guidance, which specifies Clubs' access to players involved with Donegal County panels.</p>	<p>County Committee CCC, Clubs, County Managers</p>	<p>Year 3/4</p>	<p>A working and mutually beneficial Club/County relationship.</p>



3. Coaching and Games Development

The most effective gaelic games programmes don't just happen; they are instead planned and prepared so that players are best placed to take part and to enjoy taking part in the games. Good coaching is the cornerstone of good gaelic games, regardless of the level they are played at. Donegal wants to build on its current coaching regimes and particularly to strengthen the place of coaching in its GAA Clubs. Areas such as County Development Squads and Summer Camps should be reviewed and options in terms of developing less intensive, recreational gaelic games considered.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
<p>Review the current County Staff structures and establish one Coaching Games Development Manager who will act as head of all Coaching staff and report to the County Secretary.</p> <p>Full review of our current County Coaching structures and procedures.</p>	<p>County Management, County Secretary, County Coaching Officer, County Coaching Committee</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Improved governance of games in Donegal GAA.</p>
<p>Appoint an appropriate and affordable coaching staff structure following the recommendations of the coaching staff review.</p>	<p>County Secretary, Coaching and Games Development Manager, County Coaching Officer</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>A fit for purpose County GAA coaching staffing structure.</p>
<p>Review the organisation of County Summer Camps with view to improving participation rates and securing an overall sponsor. Inclusion of County Players in coaching in the Camps.</p>	<p>Coaching and Games Development Manager, County Coaching Officer</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Increased awareness of and participation in gaelic games.</p>
<p>Investigate the feasibility of organising a central summer camp for children aged 14-16.</p>	<p>Coaching and Games Development Manager, County Coaching Officer</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Increased teenager involvement in gaelic games.</p>

<p>Establish recreational competitions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven/Five-a-side Gaelic Football/ Hurling competitions. • Over 40's "masters" matches and competitions. 	Coaching and Games Development Manager, County Coaching Officer	Year 2	A range of non-competitive fun recreational games for anyone who wants to play gaelic games at this level.
<p>Review the current development squad structure to ensure that the squads are focused on improving the development of the squad members and not focused on competition.</p>	Coaching and Games Development Manager, County Coaching Officer	Year 1	A development squad system that brings value to the players, Clubs and overall GAA in the County.
<p>Split the County into three coaching "regions" mirroring the areas of remit currently held by the Divisional Boards and organise regional Go Games blitzes in each area during the summer months with one central Go Games Blitz during August.</p>	Coaching and Games Development Manager, County Coaching Officer	Year 3/4	Improved participation by children in non-competitive GAA activity during the summer months.
<p>Publish a County Wall Calendar, which is supplied to every Club and school. The Calendar will include key planned coaching dates, youth activities and events.</p>	Coaching and Games Development Committee, County Coaching Officer, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 3	Greater awareness and uptake of GAA activity planned over the calendar year.
<p>Ensure that during the lifetime of this strategy that each Club will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching Officer/ Coordinator, who will attend County Coaching meetings and promote coaching and games development in the Club • At least two active Level 2 coaches • At least five active Level 1 coaches • At least eight active Foundation Level coaches. 	Coaching and Games Development Committee, County Coaching Officer, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 1-5 (ongoing)	A clear Club/County coaching structure and increases in qualified and active coaches in each Club.
<p>Establish a Youth and Children Protection Officer role in every Club and hold annual training events for the officers.</p>	Youth Officer, Coaching and Games Development Manager, Coaching Staff	Year 1-5 (ongoing)	Consistent levels of child protection across the County.



4. Club and Community Development

Without GAA Clubs there is no GAA. Clubs provide the infrastructure for the games, attract and nurture the players and act as powerful engines for the development and growth of their host communities. Across Ireland no other organisation matches the GAA as a creator of social capital. Within the GAA, Clubs need to be centre-stage and be equipped to deal with the complexities they face on a daily basis. Existing volunteers need to be retained and new ones recruited, particularly at officer level. Clubs also need to be aware of and implement current best practice in terms of Club management and development.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
All Clubs in Donegal achieving a level of <i>Club Maith</i> during the roll out of this strategy with at least 25% of Clubs achieving accreditation by the end of Year 3 of this Plan.	County Development Officer, County Secretary, Comhairle Uladh	Year 1 (ongoing)	Improved standards of Club governance and activity across Donegal.
Encourage use of the Ulster Council <i>Club Maith</i> website as a vehicle for Clubs to share ideas and best practice.	County Development Officer, County Secretary, Comhairle Uladh	Year 1 (ongoing)	Improved standards of Club governance and activity across Donegal and strong County/Province working links.
Encourage Clubs to adopt a five year officer turnover policy.	County Development Officer	Year 2	Structured turnover of GAA officials at all levels and new officials entering the governance system.
Organise a one day annual Club forum with workshops on the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Planning • Officer Training • Club School Links • Child Protection • Community Outreach Initiatives 	County Development Officer, County Secretary, Comhairle Uladh	Year 3	Improved standards of Club governance and activity across Donegal.
Design a resource leaflet to encourage Clubs to open up their facilities to local community groups out of peak hours. Issues in relation to GAA policy on insurance etc to be established.	County Development Officer, Comhairle Uladh	Year 3	Improved community leadership by the GAA leading to enhanced community cohesion.

<p>Establish a workgroup to review the status of rural GAA in Donegal. The workgroup will present its findings in report to the County convention with a strategy on how to sustain the rural Clubs. The workgroup will review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible merging of Clubs to sustain and consolidate the GAA in certain rural areas • Provision of facilities for Clubs • Initiatives to attract new players and volunteers from rural areas • Initiatives to establish the GAA Club the centre of the rural community. 	<p>County Management, County Secretary, County Development Officer</p>	<p>Year 3</p>	<p>A sustainable GAA in rural Donegal.</p>
<p>Establish volunteer and youth award scheme, to encourage young people under the age of 21 to volunteer for their Club for a specified period. Promotion of a “one hour, per week” programme to promote volunteering at all levels in the GAA.</p>	<p>County Development Officer, County Secretary Comhairle Uladh</p>	<p>Year 4</p>	<p>Improved GAA volunteer input.</p>
<p>Develop and implement a Volunteer Welfare Policy which outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers’, including players, rights and responsibilities • How to avoid burnout, on and off the field • Good practice in officer turnover • How to achieve a “GAA/life” balance • Good practice in recruiting volunteers, including getting parents involved • Benefits available for elite players (e.g. free admission to County leisure facilities). 	<p>County Development Officer, County Secretary</p>	<p>Year 4</p>	<p>Improved GAA volunteer capacity and competence.</p>
<p>Host an annual event for Principals and the P.E./Games Teachers in schools to brief them on GAA issues and priorities.</p>	<p>County Youth Officer, County Secretary</p>	<p>Year 2/3</p>	<p>Better understanding within schools of the role and contribution of the GAA.</p>
<p>Identify and support partnership opportunities that could provide Clubs with additional facilities, e.g. via Local Government and/or Education bodies.</p>	<p>County Secretary, County Development Officer</p>	<p>Year 1-5 (ongoing)</p>	<p>Improved Club capacity to deliver their core GAA business to local communities.</p>





5. Hurling and Camogie

Football is and is likely to remain the premier gaelic game in Donegal. Hurling has a strong tradition in the County but its critical mass needs to be increased. It is likely that this can be achieved only through new and innovative approaches: these should include cross-Club collaboration and closer working with the Camogie Association. Full value also needs to be extracted locally from the Ulster Council's strategic hurling initiatives.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Review the purpose and remit of the current Hurling Board.	County Management	Year 1	Fit for purpose governance of hurling in Donegal.
Ensure that a coaching staff member has responsibility for the development of hurling as part of the coaching staff review.	County Secretary, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 1	Fit for purpose governance of hurling in Donegal.
Establish a link with the Donegal Camogie board to run joint initiatives to develop both joint hurling and Camogie coaching initiatives.	Integration Officer, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 2	Greater integration of the two codes and improved performance and participation within them.
Establish a cross-Club/cross-school hurling team in each of the large urban areas in the County which will compete in two annual blitzes.	Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 2	Improved hurling "presence" and participation across Donegal.
Support the initiatives and programmes being developed by the Ulster Council as part of Ulster Hurling Development Strategy.	Coaching and Games Development Manager, Comhairle Uladh	Year 2	Improved hurling "presence" and participation across Donegal.
Management Committee to use monthly meetings to liaise with the management of all County teams to address any problems regarding dual players.	County Management Committee, County Chair County Secretary, Team Management	Year 2	Appropriate football/hurling balances in the County.

Organise a “twinning” programme with a strong hurling County which would involve joint hurling and football youth initiatives.	Coaching and Games Committee, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 3/4	Improved hurling “presence” and participation across Donegal.
Organise an annual hurling-only primary school-only blitz.	Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 3	Improved hurling “presence” and participation across Donegal.
Organise an annual hurling-only secondary school-only blitz.	Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 3	Improved hurling “presence” and participation across Donegal.
Establish and sustain hurling in at least four new Clubs during the lifetime of this strategy.	Coaching Committee, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 1-5 (ongoing)	Improved hurling “presence” and participation across Donegal.





6. Infrastructure

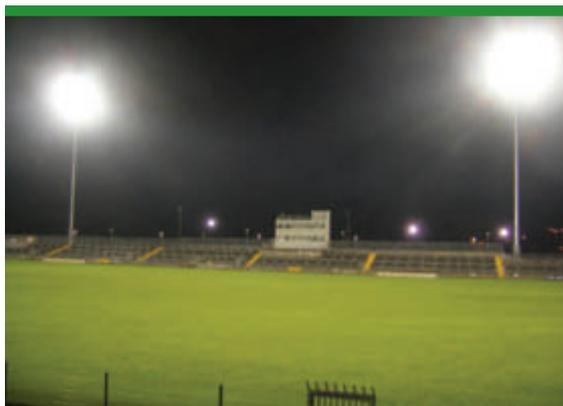
If the Clubs provide the community and organisational dynamic for the GAA, then pitches and facilities are what allow them to turn that dynamic into games and other gaelic activities. Donegal needs more GAA facilities and particularly ones that are available after dark and all-year-round. A County *Centre of Excellence*, complemented by lower-level regional centres within the County, has been identified as a particular priority if Donegal's ambitions in terms of coaching and games development are to be realised. Further improvements, especially for spectators, are required at MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey and the County also needs to develop its secondary GAA grounds, Ballyshannon and Letterkenny. The location of Ballyshannon close to the Ulster/Connacht boundary should be considered in the context of providing a regional GAA facility that could meet wider GAA fixture needs in the West/North West of the Country. Equally Letterkenny's location can provide cross border options in terms of the development of GAA facilities.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
<p>Establish a central Donegal GAA <i>Centre of Excellence</i> which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Headquarters with offices and meeting rooms for County business. (This will either be at the <i>Centre of Excellence</i> location or at the main County Ground Mac Cumhaill Park) • At least four full-size sand based floodlit pitches • At least six full-size changing rooms, with two specifically fitted for female use • One full-size floodlit third generation astroturf pitch • High performance gym • Handball court/indoor hall • Hurling wall. 	<p>County Management Committee, County Development Committee, County Secretary, County Development Officer</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p>	<p>A clearly identified GAA HQ for Donegal, acting as the centre of gravity of all County GAA activity.</p>
<p>Upgrade MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20,000 spectator capacity • Control Room for match event control and co-ordination of health and safety • State-of-the-art press facilities • Administrative Headquarters with offices and meeting rooms for County business. (If this is the preferred location). 	<p>County Management Committee, County Development Committee, County Secretary, County Development Officer</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p>	<p>State-of-the-art County Stadium available to deliver and showcase major gaelic games.</p>

<p>Upgrade Ballyshannon and Letterkenny as the County's secondary grounds to include:</p> <p>Ballyshannon Exploiting Ballyshannon's strategic position on the Ulster/ Connaught Axis, develop a Regional Development Centre at the County's Secondary ground that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12, 500 spectator capacity • 2 full size floodlit playing fields • Control for health and safety <p>Letterkenny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12,000 spectator capacity • Floodlights • Control for Health and Safety • State-of-the-art press facilities • One full-size floodlit third generation astroturf pitch 	<p>County Management Committee, County Development Committee, County Secretary, County Development Officer</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p>	<p>State of the art second-level County grounds available to deliver and showcase major gaelic games.</p>
<p>Establish three regional County GAA centres in areas which complement the location of the County <i>Centre of Excellence</i>. The new regional centres will be based at Club facilities and would be designed for shared Club use. Suggested locations include the Inishowen Peninsula, West Donegal and South Donegal. (taking account of the wider potential of the Ulster/Connacht axis). The proposed centres will include one full-size pitch with floodlights and appropriate training facilities.</p>	<p>County Management Committee, County Development Committee, County Secretary, County Development Officer</p>	<p>Year 4 onward</p>	<p>Improved gaelic games physical infrastructure strategically located across the County.</p>
<p>Establish in conjunction with the GAA Clubs in Derry City a facility on the Derry/Donegal border for shared used by all Clubs in the border areas.</p>	<p>County Management Committee, County Development Committee, County Secretary, County Development Officer, Comhairle Uladh, Derry County Committee</p>	<p>Year 4 onward</p>	<p>Improved gaelic games physical infrastructure strategically located across the County and improved GAA cohesion.</p>



<p>Provide Clubs with online support materials and advice focussing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pitch development• Spectator accommodation• Changing facilities, with a specific focus on women's needs• Floodlighting• Health and Safety	<p>Development Officer, County Secretary, Comhairle Uladh</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Improved well-being of GAA volunteers, players and spectators.</p>
<p>Examine and prioritise facilities development needs for GAA purposes in the Letterkenny urban area with an emphasis on acquisition and development of additional high quality playing space.</p>	<p>Development Officer, Secretary, Comhairle Uladh</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Improved gaelic games physical infrastructure in the County's principal and fastest-growing urban centre.</p>



7. Irish Culture and Heritage

Irish culture and heritage should form a thread which runs through the GAA at all levels. This is particularly the case in Donegal, a County that has a living Irish and gaelic culture that is possibly unequalled in Ireland. The GAA, at both Club and County level, has great capacity to increase the use of the Irish language and to improve the provision of gaelic art and signage in GAA settings. Scór remains a prime cultural vehicle and GAA Clubs are particularly well placed to foster, celebrate and document local heritage. Finally, the GAA at all levels in Donegal should seize the opportunity provided by the GAA's 125th anniversary in 2009 to focus on heritage-related issues and especially to publish GAA histories.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Review the role of Oifigeach na Gaeilge and rename the role Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, with responsibility for the promotion of Culture, Heritage and the Language.	County Management	Year 1	Improved governance of cultural and language issues in the County.
Review the remit, role and membership of the Coiste Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha to include responsibility for Scór and Cultural Activities.	County Management Committee, Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha	Year 1	Improved governance of cultural and language issues in the County.
Encourage Clubs to take part in Scór by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding and promoting Scór as exciting and modern • Seeking sponsors for Scór • Show-casing Scór champions at County GAA events • "Rewarding" Clubs which participate in Scór • Requesting Clubs to nominate a dedicated Cultural and Heritage officer • Appointing Cultural Officers at Divisional Board levels • Including a Scór, Heritage and Irish Language section on the County website. 	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Coiste Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha	Year 2-5	Increased participation in a newly-branded and vibrant Scór.
Commission and make available to Clubs Donegal GAA-branded bi-lingual signs for GAA premises.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha	Year 3	GAA premises clearly branded as "gaelic".



Ensure all new GAA capital developments across the County include a gaelic art component.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Coiste Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha	Year 3-5	GAA premises clearly branded as "gaelic".
Establish six-week beginners Irish Language courses on a regional basis throughout the County.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Coiste Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha	Year 3	Increased use of the Irish language throughout Donegal GAA structures.
Develop a Donegal GAA Irish language bursary scheme for Gaeltacht students.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Coiste Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha	Year 3	Increased use of the Irish language by young people throughout Donegal GAA structures.
Commission a history of Donegal GAA.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Public Relations Officer	Year 1	Increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the GAA in Donegal.
Encourage all Clubs to compile a Club history. Clubs could mark the 125 Anniversary by kick- starting this process on this anniversary year by hosting an information evening on how to develop such a document.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Public Relations Officer, PR, Marking and Communications Committee	Year 1	Increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the GAA in Donegal.
Run a 125th Anniversary Event and exhibition of the History of Donegal GAA in conjunction with the Donegal County Museum.	Oifigeach Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Coiste Gaeilge agus Cultúrtha, Public Relations Officer, PR, Marking and Communications Committee	Year 1	An appropriate celebration of "GAA 125" in Donegal.



8. Urban Donegal

Whilst still “less urban” than most of the rest of Ireland, Donegal’s towns continue to become more and more significant. Letterkenny is a place of rapid growth and has been identified, along with Derry, in the National Spatial Strategy as an urban complex of national significance. A quarter of Donegal’s population is now urban and a strong Donegal GAA will depend increasingly on there being a strong Donegal urban GAA. New and different ways of delivering gaelic games to the growing urban communities need to be considered.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
<p>Establish a working group to develop a plan for the overall development of Gaelic Games in Donegal’s largest urban area Letterkenny. The plan will look at the following areas of development with a strong focus on youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Participation • Coaching and Games • Club/Community Development • Cultural and Heritage • Physical Infrastructure <p>The working group to include members from Letterkenny Gaels, St Eunans, all primary schools, second level schools and the Regional Youth Board.</p>	<p>County Management, County Secretary, County Development Officer, County Youth Officer</p>	<p>Year 2-5</p>	<p>Improved physical gaelic games presence, infrastructure and participation in the County’s main and fastest-growing urban centres.</p>
<p>Develop a strategy for improving the provision for Gaelic Games in the second level urban areas in Donegal namely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballyshannon • Bundoran • Ballybofey • Buncrana • Donegal Town • Lifford <p>The strategy will involve reviewing current GAA provision and strengthening capacity by linking with schools and local authorities.</p>	<p>County Management, County Development Officer, County Secretary</p>	<p>Year 2 ongoing</p>	<p>Increased GAA provision and participation in Donegal’s urban areas.</p>



9. An Inclusive GAA

The GAA is rightly proud of its community roots and base. But this means that as those communities evolve and change, the GAA needs to reflect that evolution and change. Historically the GAA was a largely male preserve but the phenomenal recent growth in ladies Gaelic Football in particular means there is now a significant new dimension to the Gaelic Games “offer”. The GAA wants to drive forward the integration of the full family of gaelic games, especially at Club level. Being inclusive however also involves looking beyond the traditional “gaelic games family”. The GAA will work to make gaelic games and activities attractive to non-traditional GAA audiences, with the GAA’s historic connections with Scotland giving it specific possibilities here. The GAA will also develop a particular focus on responding to the needs of people with disabilities.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
<p>Review the County Bye-laws to include provision of a County Integration Officer who will be an elected member of the Management Committee. The Officer will be elected at County convention. The new officer role will include responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with Donegal Ladies Gaelic, Camogie and Handball County Boards • Attending Provincial and National Integration Events • Driving the Integration Process at County level by liaising with the other Gaelic Codes to ensure that there is a corporate approach to the promotion of Gaelic Games at all levels in Donegal • Promoting inclusion by developing initiatives to attract non-nationals and other groups who traditionally would have no involvement in the GAA. 	<p>County Management, County Committee, County Secretary</p>	<p>Year 1 and 2</p>	<p>Improved governance of the Integration agenda leading to increased Gaelic Games integration in the County.</p>
<p>Establish a County Integration Committee with representatives (Chair and Secretary) from all Gaelic Codes in the County. The County Committee will assist the County Integration Officer in driving the Integration and Inclusion agendas.</p>	<p>County Integration Officer, County Committee, County Secretary, Donegal Ladies Gaelic Football Board, Donegal Camogie Board, Donegal Handball Board</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Improved governance of the integration agenda leading to increased Gaelic Games Integration in the County.</p>

Establish Ladies Gaelic, Camogie and Handball Delegates to the GAA County Committee and County Convention.	County Committee, Donegal Ladies Gaelic Football Board, Donegal Camogie Board, Donegal Handball Board	Year 2	Improved governance of the Integration agenda leading to increased Gaelic Games Integration in the County.
Ensure that the other Gaelic Codes are represented on relevant County sub-committees.	County Chairperson, County Secretary	Year 3	Improved governance of the Integration agenda leading to increased Gaelic Games integration in the County.
The County Integration Committee will consult with the Clubs and relevant public authorities in order to draft a County equality and integration policy.	County Secretary, County Integration Committee, County Integration Officer	Year 3	A clear understanding of the integration agenda across the County.
Ladies Gaelic, Camogie and Handball Boards will submit an annual funding request outlining initiatives which the County Management Committee will consider and support if appropriate.	County Management, County Treasurer	Year 3	A more fit for purpose women's gaelic games in Donegal.
Organise at least three annual regional "have a go" events for groups who traditionally would have no involvement in the GAA.	County Integration Officer, County Secretary, County Coaching Officer, Coaching Staff	Year 3 and 4	Increased involvement in gaelic games by people from non-traditional GAA backgrounds.
Link with local schools to ensure that Donegal GAA is providing initiatives for children with disabilities and special needs.	County Integration Officer, County Coaching Officer, Coaching Staff	Year 4	Improved cohesion within an 'open' and 'welcoming-to-all' Donegal GAA.



<p>Fully support national and provincial inclusion and integration initiatives and ensure that these initiatives are implemented in Donegal.</p>	<p>County Integration Officer, County Secretary, County Coaching Officer, Coaching Staff</p>	<p>Year 1-5 (ongoing)</p>	<p>Improved cohesion within an 'open' and 'welcoming-to-all' Donegal GAA, based on established best practice.</p>
<p>Promote and encourage Clubs to integrate into one overall GAA community structure where appropriate.</p>	<p>County Integration Officer, County Integration Committee</p>	<p>Year 1-5 (ongoing)</p>	<p>Improved cohesion within an 'open' and 'welcoming-to-all' one family Donegal GAA.</p>
<p>Support the Ulster Council's NFL (No Foul Language) campaign.</p>	<p>County Integration Officer, Coaching and Games Development Manager</p>	<p>Year 1-5 (ongoing)</p>	<p>Increased tolerance and respect in all GAA activities and at all GAA events.</p>



10. Health, Wellness and Lifestyle

The notion of providing healthy activities and past-times for young people has always been central to what the GAA is about. But as strategic concerns about levels of community health and wellness levels increase there is a growing role opening up for the GAA. The provision of a variety of physical activity opportunities for a wide range of people remains at the heart of this, but new approaches also need to be considered. The GAA has an important role to play in addressing addiction issues, improving mental health levels, developing healthy eating/lifestyle patterns and encouraging people to be more “health aware”.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Merge the role of ASAP Officer into the County Youth Officers role.	County Management	Year 1	A strategic focus across the Donegal GAA on the alcohol & drugs agenda.
Develop a Alcohol and Drugs Strategy which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports and enhances the National and Provincial ASAP (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programme). • Ensures that Donegal GAA has no alcohol related sponsors. • Donegal GAA ensures that National GAA policy is being adhered to in having no alcohol in GAA Cups. • Emphasise (positive) well-being aspects rather than (negative) “anti-drink/ drugs” aspects. • Organises three regional alcohol and drug awareness nights on an annual basis in the County. • Establishing an Alcohol and Substance Abuse Co-ordinator in each Club trained by the Ulster Council. • Develops a County “role-models” scheme where County players attend events to promote the GAA alcohol and substance abuse programme. 	Youth Officer, County Secretary, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 2	A strategic, structured approach across the Donegal GAA to alcohol and drug abuse issues.
Enhance and support the Ulster Council’s lifestyle programme by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing advice to Clubs on health and wellness issues • Organising an annual County-wide ‘Health and Wellness Morning’ for Club Volunteers in conjunction with the HSE • Organising Cluster Club Volunteer Lifestyle nights throughout the County. 	Youth Officer, County Secretary, Coaching and Games Development Manager	Year 3	Improved health and well-being awareness within Clubs and their communities.



Run two annual first-aid courses for Club Volunteers and Coaches.	Youth Officer, County Secretary, Coaching and Games Development Manager, Development Officer	Year 3	Improved first-aid capacity within Clubs.
Equip each Club with a Defibrillator and support the training of Club members in it's use.	County Development Officer, County Secretary, Coaching and Games Development Manager, Development Officer	Year 1-5 (ongoing)	Improved emergency first-aid capacity within Clubs.



11. Marketing, Communications and PR

Whilst for many years the GAA sold itself (and usually to a series of “captive audiences”), it now works in a hugely competitive arena. Gaelic games compete with other global sports which enjoy immense commercial and promotional power. But at the same time the GAA offers an integrated and community-based product that few others can match. Among the resultant priorities for the GAA in Donegal are the development of it’s unique brand; the effective promotion of it’s games and activities; and the growing use of IT/ICT at the heart of it’s business. The focus of this work is not exclusively external: better internal communication with its own members remains a GAA priority.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Establish and develop a strong Donegal GAA brand linking with the new National GAA Brand and identity.	PRO, PR and Marketing Committee, County Secretary	Year 1	A clear distinctive brand for Donegal GAA which helps make Gaelic Games the first choice sport for people in the County.
Review the operations of the Current PR and Marketing Committee to ensure the committee remit and membership is fit for purpose.	County Management, PRO, PR and Marketing Committee	Year 1	A ‘fit-for-purpose’ functioning committee delivering on the objectives set out in this strategy.
All Clubs using the GAA brand in their title and PR and marketing ventures.	PRO, County Development Officer	Year 2	Increased presence and awareness of the overall GAA brand.
Produce and implement an annual costed PR and Marketing work plan.	PR and Marketing Committee	Year 2	A structured approach to GAA PR & Marketing within the County.
Produce a full colour programme for all Donegal home National League games.	PR and Marketing Committee, PRO	Year 3	Improved brand image for Donegal GAA and improved communication with members and spectators.
Produce a full colour programme for all County semi-finals and finals.	PR and Marketing Committee, PRO	Year 3	Improved brand image for Donegal GAA and improved communication with members and spectators.



Review the current Donegal GAA website integrating the new Donegal GAA brand and ensuring the website is easy to use and up to the appropriate standard for the County's leading sporting and cultural body.	PR and Marketing Committee, PRO	Year 3	Improved brand image for Donegal GAA and improved communication with Clubs, members and others.
Produce an annual Donegal GAA yearbook for sale in November/December each year.	PR and Marketing Committee, PRO	Year 3/4	An annual historical record of the events of Donegal GAA.
Host a meeting with local newspaper editors as a group once a year and work positively with the media and journalists at all levels to best promote games and events.	County Secretary, PRO, PR and Marketing Committee	Year 3	Improved mutual understanding between the media and the GAA in Donegal.
Ensure that all Clubs have a Public Relations Officer and host an annual training night for all Club PROs (Public Relation Officers).	County Secretary, PRO, PR and Marketing Committee, County Development Officer	Year 4	Improved use of the media by GAA Clubs.
<p>Increase the usage of IT/ICT in Donegal GAA communication by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basing all communication on email • Developing text-messaging services • Encouraging all Clubs to develop active websites <p>Providing Clubs with advice in these areas.</p>	County Secretary, ICT Committee, PRO, Development Officer	Year 4-5	All County and Club communication conducted using ICT.



12. Funding Donegal

Although avowedly amateur, the GAA is increasingly demanding of resources. The development and delivery of Gaelic Games, and the provision of a fit-for-purpose gaelic games infrastructure, requires large sums of money. The County already enjoys the benefits of Corporate Dhún na nGall and Club Dhún na nGall, two successful planned giving initiatives. It plans to sustain and grow these and also wants to maximise its income from sources such as gates, sponsorship and government grants, both capital and revenue. The County also wants to have in place best practice financial management systems and procedures.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE	LED BY/ INVOLVING	TIMESCALE	OUTCOMES SOUGHT
Appoint a part-time Financial Administrator to support the work of the County Secretary and Treasurer.	County Secretary, County Treasurer	Year 1	Improved day-to-day financial management of the GAA in Donegal.
Review the membership and remit of the County Finance committee to include responsibility for fundraising. The new committee will be named the Finance and Fundraising Committee and will be chaired by the County Treasurer.	County Management Committee, County Treasurer	Year 1	A more strategic and more effective approach to financial planning and fundraising in the County.
Conform to the accepted auditing and accounting principles and standards as laid down by Croke Park.	County Chairman, County Secretary, County Treasurer	Year 1	All GAA accountability and probity standards met by Donegal.
Develop a five-year financial plan for Donegal which outlines the County's planned activities and projects and gives an overview of their costs, both revenue and capital. The plan should outline how the costs of County activity over the next five years will be met.	Finance and Fundraising Committee, County Treasurer, County Secretary	Year 1	A sound, agreed and widely-understood financial footing for the GAA in Donegal.
Review the brand and operations of Club Donegal to attract more members and sustain the "buy-in" from Current Members by ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Donegal has a recognisable and distinctive brand in the County • Club Donegal members are invited to two open nights were they are updated on the County Development Strategy 	Club Donegal Committee, Finance and Fundraising Committee, County Treasurer, County Secretary	Year 1-5	An effective, widely recognised and accepted distinctive brand for Donegal GAA fundraising, one which promotes "buy-in" from the wider GAA family within the County and beyond.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Donegal members are sent annual reports of how their money was spent • Club Donegal organises one annual members event in Dublin each year to attract membership from Donegal people now living and working in Dublin • A 50% increase in its membership. 			
<p>Develop and implement a five year County Sponsorship Strategy which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximises income for the County whilst reflecting core GAA values • Ranges across all aspects of the GAA at County level • Complements the Donegal GAA brand. 	Finance and Fundraising Committee, County Treasurer, County Secretary, PRO	Year 2/3	A sponsorship regime which contributes to Donegal GAA's financial well-being and which equally reflects core GAA values.
Maximise income from games and events under the management of the Donegal County Board.	Finance and Fundraising Committee, CCC, County Treasurer, County Secretary	Year 1-5	Improved County GAA income.
Establish an ad-hoc workgroup of relevant personnel with experience in grant aid and government funding to assist the County Management Committee in securing both revenue and capital funding.	County Secretary, County Chairperson, County Treasurer	Year 2	Donegal GAA making best use of non-traditional sources of income.
Lobby local public representatives and Local Government in order to secure funding for Donegal GAA infrastructure and development projects.	County Secretary, County Chairperson, Comhairle Uladh	Year 1-5 (Ongoing)	Development of strategic partnerships which contribute to the development of the GAA across the County and which improve cohesion within the County.
Take advantage of appropriate cross-border and other initiatives outlined in the National Development Plan.	County Secretary, County Chairperson, Comhairle Uladh	Year 2-5 (Ongoing)	Development of strategic partnerships which contribute to the development of the GAA across the County and which improve cohesion within and beyond the County.
Investigate the feasibility of merchandise retailing at the new County Centre of Excellence.	County Secretary, County Treasurer	Year 5	Increased promotion of Donegal GAA brand and improved County GAA income.

What Gets Measured Gets Done

The success of Meitheal Dhún na nGall depends on its effective implementation.

To ensure that such implementation occurs, it is vital that a robust monitoring strategy is devised. This will allow regular monitoring and evaluation of progress regarding the actions and targets contained within the Plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) proposed in this Plan will be appointed and ratified by County Committee: it will be established at the 2008 County Convention. The SPC will present an annual work programme setting out objectives, targets and outcomes as per the plan to the County Committee in January each year. It will then provide a progress report to the County Executive/County Committee four times a year and an overall report at each County Convention. This will ensure transparency and accountability.

The SPC will consist of the following:

- Central Council Delegate (Chair)
- County Chairperson
- County Secretary
- County Treasurer
- Four additional members independent of the County Committee

The SPC will meet with representatives of Comhairle Uladh twice yearly for a progress report on the implementation of Meitheal Dhún na nGall.





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- **Terence McGinley**
- **Crona Regan**
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Meitheal Dhún na nGall



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