**Secretary’s Report to the Carryduff AGM 2018**

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**Foreword**

Domsa féin, cuireann an Cumann Lúthcleas Gael paisean, grá an pharóiste agus an chontae, a chuid agus a chomhroinn do gach aon duine agus obair foirne, cairdeas, meidhréis, bród, áthas agus briseadh croí i mbeart comhionann, cuimhní cinn spraoi agus mór, ach ciallaíonn sé fosta fás cathartha, oideachas, ceannaireacht, meas, smacht, obair dheonach agus tógáil airgid, flaithiúlacht spiorad, dea-thoil, tiomantas, uaillmhian agus aisling fís.

Míceal D Ó hUiginn, Uachataran na h-Éireann

For me, the GAA embodies passion, love of parish and county, sharing and teamwork, friendships, exhilaration, pride, joy and heartbreak in equal measure, fun and great memories but it also means civic growth, education, leadership, respect, self-discipline, volunteerism and fundraising, generosity of spirit, goodwill, commitment, ambition and vision.

Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland

**1 Introduction**

I have great pleasure in presenting my Secretary’s Report to Carryduff GAC’s AGM..

**Acknowledgements**

As another year comes to a close Carryduff GAC and wider community are indebted to the many volunteers who continue to contribute so tirelessly to the running of the club.

On behalf of the Executive Committee and the wider membership of the club, I extend a huge thank you to the many volunteers who continue to give up their time so generously and without whom the club would simply not exist.

A particular word of thanks to all the Executive Committee and Sub-committee members, managers, mentors, parents, sponsors, friends of the club, players young and old and anyone else who helped in any way.

Developing our facilities remains a priority. In 2018 our Development Sub-Committee have continued to work behind the scenes to secure grants and funding in face of on-going and increasing financial constraints. The main fundraising has been towards the provision of floodlighting on Pitch 2.

A word of thanks to the wider parish for its support throughout the year and thank you to Fr. Michael and Fr. Conor for their support and encouragement throughout the year. Thank you to Fr. Brian, one of our regular sideline influences of calm and decorum.

A particular thanks to those members who have remained committed to Club Carryduff. Their contributions have continued to provide the ‘life blood’ necessary to sustain the club; their contribution to our development fund have undoubtedly kept the club and its future plans alive.

On behalf of the Executive and club membership thanks to Paul McConville our chairman.

**2 Executive Committee (EC)**

The 2018 EC was comprised of 17 members who met on a monthly basis throughout the season. Attendance at the meetings was variable as a consequence of work commitments and family issues.

Extensive and varied discussions took place on numerous issues relating to the running of the club.

All codes within the club were represented on the EC with some of the EC members also acting in the role of Chairs of various sub-committees and County Board representatives. In addition to attending the club EC meetings these representatives also chaired regular meetings within their various codes. I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by EC members to the maintenance and running of the club and for their generosity with their time and efforts to deliver of club business throughout the year.

**3 Financial Management**

Our club treasurer Paul Lavery has continued to diligently manage club financial affairs in challenging circumstances.

As the club’s growth continues we have operated in a climate of ever increasing costs, a lack of available grants and limited income opportunities. Funding the club relied heavily on members, sponsors and family and friends for support. It is self-evident that Carryduff GAC will face strident financial challenges, not only to realise the ambitions for continued future growth of our club, but indeed to survive and maintain the assets the club has progressively developed.

Membership fees did not increase in 2018 year and the costs have remained at the usual level.

As our accounts indicate, the club relies heavily on our own internal fundraising to secure the income that is vital to keep this club alive.

2019 will undoubtedly require a major and significant fundraising effort that will require the commitment and contribution from all who genuinely have the interests of Carryduff GAC at heart. Whilst we will continually strive in our efforts to obtain funding from various sources, contribution is a collective responsibility for us all. I would urge everyone to support allsocial and fundraising events during the forthcoming year.

Club Carryduff continues to raise vital revenue for the future development of our club. We now face the challenge of maintaining assets and further development.

The sale of advertising boards around the pitch continues with each board generating £200 per year in revenue.

The Lottery is a regular source of income and numbers have increased during the year. It is vital that this regular source of income continues and I would encourage new members to become involved.

We remain grateful to all who have provided the club with sponsorship.

Thank you again to everyone who has supported the club financially in any way.

**4 Membership**

Membership of the club stood at 1,095 at 31 October 2018 as against 1,003 members at 30 October 2017.

**5 Communication**

Our club website and social media presence continues to be a key means of cascading information to members. We thank Philip Loughran who has contributed to the success of the online presence.

**6 2017 Male Football Reports**

**U6.5 GAA Academy**

This was a record year for the U6.5 GAA Academy within the club with over 250 children having attended a training session at this age group over the 25 week programme which ran between April and September.  There was a maximum attendance of over 200 people at an individual session with an average attendance of over 160 children at each session.

The programme offered both boys and girls the opportunity to try and practice football, hurling and camogie along with very important fundamental movement skills which are vital for the children’s development at this age.  There were also 5 opportunities for the older children to try out their new skills in development blitzes involving different clubs in East Down and also our neighbours St Brigids in Antrim.

The ethos of the Academy centred on providing children with a structured, safe and fun environment in which the fundamental elements of Gaelic games could be introduced to them. I wish to thank the many parents who helped out this year as they were instrumental in making this an enjoyable and fruitful experience for the children as well as all the coaches/helpers involved.

The numbers involved both from a child and helper perspective (which are growing every year and will hopefully continue to grow) presents the club with a challenge as the U6.5 GAA Academy has outgrown its present format and requires an immediate fundamental review.  Rather than being a male football led activity, it needs to be an overall club activity as it now incorporates all codes within the club.  Furthermore with the population in our area continuing to grow and as this Academy is the gateway to the club, we need to be able to accommodate this growth if we want to continue to be a main pillar in the community and leave this Academy fit for purpose over the next number of years.

Andrew Moohan

**U8.5 Football 2018**

We trained weekly starting in February at Lough Moss, Tuesday nights for the majority of the year then we took part in the Autumn Football academy to round off the year on Saturday afternoons. We began the year with 50 boys registered which had grown to 67 by the end of the season. We were fortunate to be able to rely on a very dedicated and experienced band of coaches to aid us with training, we owe these people a great deal of gratitude.

Throughout the year, the boys worked on the key Go Games skills for their age group – body catch, low catch, hand pass, fist pass, bounce and punt kick. There was a wide difference in the range of abilities we had to work with so the boys were split largely in ability based groups – seniors, intermediates and juniors.

We participated in all but one East Down Blitz and they were organised much better this year. We would like to put on record our thanks to Simon Francis for his tireless work to ensure this was the case. There was some opportunity to participate in competitive tournaments, including a narrow defeat to Saul in the East Down Superblitz final. We struggled to get friendlies organised due to the boys having other commitments or if a hurling weekend blocked out Saturday and Sunday morning.

Overall, the boys have had a great year and we have been greatly encouraged by their progress. Thanks are due to the boys for their great discipline throughout the year and to the parents who have supported us so well throughout the year.

Sean Spillane & Ed McQuillan

**U 10.5**

U10.5 Boys training commenced at the start of April with 37 registered players with all playing regular football throughout the season.

 Over the course of the season the boys have had over 25 training sessions, with a few cancellations due to weather, and have participated in 12 fortnightly East Down Blitzes between April and September, with several challenges games and tournaments.

 On the field, the boys accounted themselves well in all of the u10.5 East Down Blitzes and tournaments. I was fantastic to see how the boys dealt with the games that they won but also more encouraging in showing the comradery and passion in handling the games that weren’t won.

 The trip on the bus to Clones in June, to play a challenge game against  Kileevan Sarsfields, Ed’s home club, in Monaghan, the hospitality and lunch after from Killeevan and onwards to Clones to the Down V Donegal championship was a fantastic day out for all of the boys, coaches and parents that went. The lads certainly had a ball that day.

 At the end of August the club hosted the U10.5 Tournament. We hosted 32 teams from across Ulster including 4 Carryduff teams. Everybody had a great day of football and all enjoyed the experience.

 The East Down U11 league was played in September and October. We fielded a team in Division 1 and a team in Division 3 of the league.

The older team won 4 of their 5 league games, drawing only to local rivals Bredagh in the last match of the league and topped the League table. It was unfortunate that the League Final was played in such blustery conditions to allow the boys to show their football skills, as they narrowly lost to Bryansford, whom they had beaten earlier in the league section.

The younger team had some tough games, coming up against older and stronger U11 players from smaller clubs but generally they competed well and fought hard.

 The Head Coaches, Rowan, Conor & Ed would sincerely like to thank our fellow coaches for all their support. Their dedication throughout the year has ensured every boy has progressed a little bit further along their football development pathway.

Our jobs in coaching is only made that little bit easier with the help of others, no matter how small.

 Finally, many thanks to all the parents for their continued support during the year. Your children are individually unique and collectively can be a joy to watch and coach.

**U12 Male Football Report**

Training for the U12 session began on Sunday 4 th March and continued either on Sundays or Wednesdays until the end of August. We had two teams which I named Hogans and Cusacks. The Hogans played in a very competitive A league and the Cusacks were placed in the B league. I had felt that they would have been better placed in the C league. The first league matches for both teams commenced on Sunday 8 th April. The Hogans won five of their fourteen A league games and the Cusacks won two games in the B league. The players improved in all aspects of their football as the year progressed and this was evidenced by narrower defeats in some of the return fixtures. The Cusacks managed to win two games in the B section having not won a single game in the C section in the previous year’s U11 league.

Our year culminated at the Terry Lawlor U12 Tournament on 18 th August. The Hogans got through to the Shield Final beating Bellaghy, Watty Grahams and Bredagh (who had won the U12 league) and drawing with St Brigids Belfast and Eaglais. The Cusacks also had some tremendous performances against some well-known teams.

We had approximately 29 players at the start of the year and finished with 32 players. In March I encouraged the players to respect all match officials and members of other clubs as well as their coaches. I am happy to report that we did not have a player sent off throughout the year and I had no difficulties with discipline. My aim was to improve the technical skills of each player as well as their resilient attitude. I’m delighted with the progress each player made in this regard and most seemed to enjoy themselves during the process.

One difficulty experienced was the number of coaches available. I had great support from James McKernan and Niall Boyle. Having two U12 teams however meant that one team often only had one coach on match days. I did approach a number of individuals and asked all parents, but this remained the situation throughout the year.

I was aware that very few U12 players turned up at last year’s end of year presentation. To reinforce how well each player did during the year I presented each one with a personalised certificate after our tournament and final training session in August.

Is mise le meas,

Enda Cunningham

U12 Head Coach

**U14 Boys Football End of Season Report**

Season Summary:-

 Joint top in ED League Div 1 with Bryansford, losing playoff

 Bottom ED League Div 2 (despite many great performances and close contests)

 Won ED championship beating Bryansford in the final

 Lost All-county championship final to Burren

 Participated in Div 1 and Div 11 of Feile

 Season ran almost 10 months 4 th February to 21 st October with 54 training sessions, 39 matches,

8 Feile fixtures and a number of social events.

 51 players and 5 coaches contributed

**Head Coach Summary**

This particular group have been together now since start of last September, taking only a short break over the New Year. They have worked exceptionally hard throughout the year and enjoyed a good degree of success.

From the outset our approach to coaching this team was to use the league as a build up to championship. The squad has always been recognised as having a strong spine however in order to compete against the best teams we needed to place greater emphasis on the development of the wings and more peripheral / younger players while also developing an effective style and speed of play. To achieve this, 31 players were given an opportunity to play division 1 league football during the year. Similarly, anyone not tied in the first 13 were asked to contribute to the division 2 team at different stages giving them an opportunity to take more responsibility for the team performance or to play in different, central positions. This worked well both in improving the overall squad performance in key championship matches, it covered us for injuries in the early championship rounds but most importantly it developed a single squad mentality and a humility in the boys which is very much their hallmark now. To demonstrate these points, 4 of the starting team for the all-county final began the season as so-called “B” players while 9 of the match day squad vs Burren were U13 including 5 starters – vs 2 Burren playing squad members.

When we look back on this season, it will be memorable for the character that the boys showed. They had absolute belief in themselves and the ability of their team to play good football, play with aggression, not be intimidated and never ever give up. In the modern era of football, this cannot be taken for granted. The boys should understand that the coaches, parents and club are immensely proud of their effort and performances this year, they have represented the club superbly throughout the season and every single time they pulled on the jersey. With continued development by the club and the appropriate and realistic support from the families, this squad can continue to develop and achieve success into the future.

It is appropriate to finish this note by acknowledging the huge contribution of each of the coaches. We were very fortunate this year to have a group of coaches who had considerable coaching experience, ability to take a team or squad and commitment to follow through. They also to a man demonstrated leadership in putting team and club before personal interests, sometimes leaving car journeys to or from training and matches very difficult for them personally. On behalf of the players and myself, a huge thank you to Conor, Aidan, Eugene and Phil.

Shane Donnelly

**U16**

The under 16 boys started the year in the East Down Preliminary league and comfortably finished top of our group to qualify for the A Division of the All County league alongside Kilcoo, Burren and Ballyholland. In a very competitive league we finished top and qualified for the league final against Kilcoo.
The championship however did not go to plan with preparation hampered by holidays and injuries. Losing the first match to Burren left us needing a win against Clonduff. Despite scoring 1-18 we lost by a point following a slow start and the concession of early goals. A big win against Shamricks was not enough to qualify for the semifinals.
The absence of competitive matches did not help in the lead up to the delayed county league final which we narrowly lost to Kilcoo.
The B team were very competitive in the 13 aside league winning two matches against Drumaness who went on to win the championship. In the championship we were competitive but did not qualify from the group for the semifinals.

Thanks to all the players for their efforts and to the parents for their continued support.

**7 2017 Ladies Football Reports**

Intermediate Ladies Report 2018

Carryduff remain the only Club in County to enter two teams in the ladies adult leagues. After an impressive 2nd place in the Junior league in 2017 we received an unexpected promotion to the Intermediate League.

A significant step up in standard and a challenging season was to be expected.

Impressive early league wins against St John's, Newry Bosco and particularly against Intermediate league and championship double winners Saval, were followed by a run of tough games and league defeats leaving the team bottom of the Intermediate league by the end of August. The final league position doesn't do justice to the team's improvement and competitive spirit in the majority of games.

A tough first round championship draw against 2nd in the league Kilcoo would see an early exit.

Despite their finishing league position, a first ever campaign in the Intermediate league saw a steady improvement in performances and sets the Clubs second ladies team in a stronger position going forward.

**2018 Carryduff GAC U12 Ladies Season Review** Planning for the U12 girls 2018 season began in early February and our first training session took place on February 18th at Lough Moss Leisure Centre. The coaches initial plan was to commence the season by focusing on a review of fundamental technical skills, however during the first session it quickly became apparent that the girls had hit the ground running and that we would have to revise our plan to keep pace with their ability and development. It was great to see familiar faces returning from last year’s U12 team and moving up from the U10s, however we were also delighted to welcome several newcomers into the team. We continued to train twice per week, Friday evenings at the 3G ball-wall and Sunday mornings at Lough Moss, in preparation for the league season ahead, that was due to start on April 4th. During this time we arranged challenge matches against Bredagh at Home and, memorably, away to St Galls in Milltown on a bitingly cold Sunday afternoon in the snow! After a delay to the first round of league games, due to waterlogged pitches, our season got under way on April 11th 2018. We entered two evenly split teams into the U12 ladies East Down and Mid Down leagues, respectively. The East team faced stiff opposition throughout the season from RGU Downpatrick, Bredagh, Saul, Teconnaught, Dundrum and Bryansford, while the Mid Down team were to encounter Kilcoo, Clonduff, Castlewellan, St Johns Drumaquoile, Bredagh and Ballymartin. The girls acquitted themselves superbly throughout the season. Our league campaigns were supplemented by participation in Ulster blitzes in O’Donovan Rossa, Magherafelt on July 21st and in Scotstown Co. Monaghan on August 11th. These away days played a fundamental role in bonding the group, as was apparent by the sing song sessions at the back of the coach! We entered three teams in each of these blitzes, a remarkable effort, and faced opposition from around the Provence including Gaoth Dobhair, Moortown and Clann Eireann. At the end of the league season, both the East Down team and Mid Down team finished joint top of their standings. The East team were level on points with Bryansford and the Mid Down team were level with Clonduff. To achieve this feat with both teams represented an outstanding effort by the girls. We continued to train twice per week throughout the season. These sessions were intense and the matches at the end were among the most competitive that the girls played all season long. This hard work led to a steady increase in the girl’s skill levels and this was to become apparent as the season progressed and they developed the confidence to display their skills on the field. What was evident from the start was the hard work, intensity and sheer effort that this group of girls put into every game. The girls all played for each other. There were no egos in this group and if a girl was in a better position on the field, more often than not, she got the ball. As the season drew to a close the coaches made a decision to change up the teams with a view to developing the girls leadership and positional skills further and to prepare some of the older girls for the competitive matches that lie ahead at U14 level. We entered two teams into our own U12 ladies tournament on Sat 25th August and in the St Mary’s Burren GFC U12 ladies tournament on Sept 1st. Our teams acquitted themselves superbly in both tournaments. Our Gaels team won the Shield in our own tournament and were disappointed to be pipped by a point by Moortown in the final of the Cup competition in the Burren tournament. However, these tournaments were huge successes for the entire squad. All of the girls stepped up for these matches. Players that had previously played as full forwards or corner backs reveled in midfield and, in the absence of some of the older girls, our younger players accepted the responsibility of leading the team. Perhaps one of the most pleasing aspects of the season was the development of friendships and team comradery that is certain to keep them in good stead, on and off the field, in the years ahead. To cap off the year we entered the Scullion Cup, hosted by Con Magees, Glenravel on October 6th. This was a very competitive tournament with teams including Gort NaMona, St Pauls, Lavey and Moortown all in attendance. The girls were exceptional on the day, winning every match and bringing the Scullion Cup back to Carryduff. A fantastic way to finish the year. This is a special group of girls. All of the coaches are very proud of them and feel lucky to have had the pleasure of coaching them this season. Their conduct at training and matches has been exemplary and we could not ask any of more of them. They are a credit to the Club, their Families and themselves. We hope that they enjoyed the season as much as we have. Finally, thank you to all the parents who have supported us throughout the season. It simply wouldn’t have been possible for us to coach the girls without your support. We wish all the girls the very best in the off season and urge them to stay active and be ready to go again in 2019. Go raibh maith agat, Gerard, Noel, Steven, Aine and Johnny

**Carryduff U10 Girls – Season Summary**

The U10 girls commenced training on Wednesday 28th March 2018. We had our first training session in the Club 3G pitch/ball wall. Our second training session reverted back to our usual Friday evening slot (6.15 pm to 7.30 pm) and was held in Loughmoss on Friday 6th April 2018. Throughout April the U12 girls allowed us to share their weekly Friday evening training slot in Loughmoss, up until we moved back to the club training pitch on Friday 4th May 2018. Our weekly average attendance at Friday evening training ranged from twenty five to thirty girls. The girls thoroughly enjoyed these training sessions, they learnt a lot and gave one hundred percent. Throughout the 2018 season the U10 girls took part in various games and blitzes. These were as follows;

1. We took part in an Ulster LGFA U10 development blitz in Carrickcruppen (Co. Armagh) on Saturday 2nd June.
2. We travelled to Bredagh to take part in an invitational blitz on Sunday 17th June.
3. We travelled to Teconnaught on Friday 31st August to play a friendly game.
4. We travelled to Moneyglass (Co. Antrim) to take part in an invitational competitive blitz on Saturday 1st September.
5. We took part in an Ulster LGFA U10 development blitz in Killyclogher (Co. Tyrone) on Saturday 8th September.
6. Our last training session concluded with a pizza party (courtesy of Domino’s Pizza) and presentation of football competency certificates to all players on Friday 21st September. Thank you to the coaches who covered the cost of the pizzas.
7. We took part in an Ulster LGFA U10 development blitz in Clonduff (Co. Down) on Saturday 22nd September.
8. We travelled to Cliftonville playing fields to take part in the Belfast Community Sport Development Network blitz on Saturday 4th November.

A big thank you to our coaches (Garry Mc Caul, Damian Horisk, Orla Meehan, Declan Quinn, Louise Mc Mahon, Ciara Mc Kenna, Niamh Meehan and Anna Quinn) and all the U10 parents, without whose effort, time and assistance the U10 girls football would never have been such a success.

The Carryduff u16 ladies had a very enjoyable season. We had strong representation at county level with 6 girls on the u16 squad and 5 girls on the u15 squad that made the Ulster Final.

The evidence of their efforts and commitment of this group of players shone through their league performance and the girls were well deserved of the second place finish, a marked improvement on how they fared two years ago. The championship performance, while the result wasn’t as we would hope, was by far the best this group of players have ever played together. The management were extremely proud of the girls in the championship and would hope that the girls themselves will have gained the belief in their own abilities and will come back again next season with ambition.

Other highlights of the year include our participation in Belfast Winter League and reaching the semi-finals of the Aodh Ruadh Anniversary Tournament. One of our proudest moments was the success of our own Carryduff tournament, which saw 16 teams from all over Ulster and Leinster come to Carryduff on a beautifully hot day and showcase some excellent football. The cherry on top was of course Carryduff lifting the shield!!

**8 2017 Hurling Team Reports**

**Hurling 2018**

2018 was a year for consolidation and growth for hurling in Carryduff. Recruitment of the youngest players has been a priority, and at the lower end of the underage teams, attendance at training and games has continued to increase as per recent years. U8 and U10 had up to 30 hurlers attending while U6 had 30+ on occasions. And at U12 we are now seeing the numbers coming through due to the hard work of our coaches in the younger age group.

At U14, U16 and Minor we have struggled for numbers, starting from a low base and continuing to lose players as they progress through these years. At U14 and U16 we fielded for most games, helped by the rule that allows teams to field with 11 players as a minimum.

At Minor level we amalgamated with Newry, Warrenpoint and Clonduff who are in a similar position.

At U21 we have amalgamated with Bredagh for the late season Championship.

At Senior level, we retained our Div 3 status in Antrim, ensuring another season of competitive hurling next year. Our Intermediate Championship campaign was disappointing. Competing in both the Down and Antrim leagues provided plenty of games throughout the season.

The senior panel increased this year with a number of returning players plus some of our minors progressing into the senior squad. Although this was offset by some long-term injuries.

Many thanks to all our coaches and volunteers in all the teams from U6/Nursery up to Senior level for all their time and effort during 2018. We have had some new recruits during this year which is great to see for the future.

Thanks and credit is also due to Liam Quinn from Down CCC who has made innovative changes to many of the leagues and championships in recent years to ensure that games are played by allowing fewer than 15-a-side, and by increasing the number of games through ideas such a round robin groups in championship.

**Team Reports**

**Nursery / U6**

Our U6/Nursery programme continues to flourish with a great number of pre-school and P1/P2 children getting an introduction to Hurling at our Tuesday evening Nursery sessions and the Sunday morning hurling training.

The coaches have planned and followed a skills-based programme, following the player skills pathway.

The work done at this age group over recent years is now apparent to see in the older age group with the increasing numbers of children playing hurling and the overall improvement in skill level.

**P4 / U8**

January started with the well worn trek to Eddie Irvine’s for the indoor blitzes before the outdoor season began.  We consistently brought 2 teams to the blitzes where the teams had some great battles and victories.

For a few months the skill of the week was awarded and it was great to see all the players practicing at home and honing their skills.

A rare trip to Ballinascreen was well attended and it was refreshing to play different teams. We finished the season with our own Carryduff blitz where we had 3 teams which was great to see.

Training numbers around the 25-30 mark.

**P6 / U10**

The P6 group has seen the skills development plan come to fruition this year. Our goal was to see player development with fun and intensity. This goal has been achieved as we continue to develop our next generation of hurlers in the club.

The teams have played in a number of tournaments and competed at the best grades – being involved in cups and shield semi finals. The enthusiasm for hurling has grown with numbers in the mid - twenties on a Sunday morning and mid teens on a Tuesday evening for additional practice. We are really using the ball wall as intended and this facility has allowed us to remain outside much longer into the Autumn.

We are delighted to see the children playing at a great intensity with their skills improving through-out the year. This could not have been done without the efforts of many of the parents and the enthusiastic coaching team, Declan, Ollie, JP, Niall, Robert and Niall.

**U12**

The U12 Hurlers commenced practice in January with their initial outing of the year in Magherafelt in early February. Our planned trip to Kilkenny and Wexford was cancelled due to heavy snow in March.

The boys then competed in the Northern section of the league finishing second behind Ballygalget. Subsequently we competed in the All-County league again finishing second, this time behind Bredagh.

In the top four cup competition we lost out to eventual winners Ballygalget. The boys also competed in challenge matches during the year against our near neighbours in South Antrim.

In August we had a well-attended Hurling Skills week at the club pitches. All in all, a largely fulfilling year for the boys

**U14**

The under 14 hurlers had a small squad this year but managed to take part in all competitions including the league, championship, Down Feile and Ulster Feile. We had some great successes in each competition with every game competitive. We were unlucky in the Ulster Feile missing out on a spot in the final with a 1 point defeat in the semi.

Our aim at the start of the year was to improve each player and I think we have achieved this hopefully setting the foundations of their continued involvement in hurling within the club.

We also had a number of players involved the Down U14 development squad including Patrick Brady, Fearghal Casey, Oran McMeel and Oran Donaldson with a number of these winning an All Ireland competition with the county.

**U16**

The low numbers in the U16 hurling group in 2018 continue to make it difficult to keep a squad together, where injury or non-attendance have a major impact on ability to field and compete against stronger opposition.  However, with a core 10-11 players engaged and supplementing the squad with a few willing and very able U14’s we did manage to put a number of good performances together in Division 2 league in Down. On the downside we did struggle against the strongest teams at that level and suffered some heavy defeats which did not do anything for team moral.  The championship Shield competition was run in a mini league fashion and finishing second in our group we faced an amalgamation team of Newry/Warrenpoint (Padraig MacRaing) in the semi-final but were well beaten by a team who were simply much stronger than us.  The biggest positive to be had though was that we asked the lads for full commitment and effort from the start of the year and with the rare exception we generally received that commitment.

We did have representation at county level with Matthew Peake and Tony Loughran representing the club, well done lads!

We also had Daire Haigney, Conall Watson, PJ Brady, Odhran Sherry and Matthew Peake stepping up to play at minor level in a blitz recently which was a great experience for them.  In fact, on this occasion we had 3 Haigney brothers all fielding together!

Our hope that all the lads will continue to develop their hurling and keep playing in the coming years, whether it be at U16 for their second year or in their move to minor grade.

**Minors**

The lack of numbers available at minor level meant that we again played in an amalgamation in 2018. As in 2017 we amalgamated with Newry Shamrocks, and this year Warrenpoint also joined the Michael Cusacks team. This arrangement has provided competitive games for the boys involved, and provides a path into Senior hurling with Carryduff. The minors trained with the Carryduff senior team and a number of them made their Senior debut in 2018.

Michael Cusacks played in the Minor Shield final and lost out narrowly to Ballygalget.

**Senior Team**

Ten years ago this year, the Club AGM heard of plans to enter a Senior Hurling team into Down Adult Leagues. This year, the Clubs senior hurlers fielded in Down League and Championship and in the Antrim Hurling League, a sign of the progress that the last decade has seen. It is however also fair to say that 2018 has been one of our most difficult seasons in adult hurling.

The year began well with two players - Donal Og Rooney and Conall Early –training with the Down Senior squad. However subsequent serious cruciate injuries to both players were a sign of things to come as our own Senior squad was ravaged by a succession of injuries to key players as the season progressed. These injuries added to what was always going to be a challenging campaign as the team sought to secure their place in Antrim Division 3, having gained promotion last year. However, Carryduff ultimately rose to the challenge, narrowly avoiding relegation in the last game of the year. The campaign also allowed a number of our ‘fringe’ players to develop and progress their skills under the expert coaching of our senior manager, Antoin Mc Caffrey. Many of these players had a core role in our Down Division 2 team who finished in a respectable fourth spot in the league. In this respect, special mention should go to our most senior player, Kevin Neill, who retired after well over 30 years of adult hurling.

The Intermediate Championship brought no success although our cause and that of hurling was not helped by the farcical last minute rearranging of our round robin game against eventual IHC winners, Liatroim.

Thanks are due to our Manager Antoin for his perseverance during the year, to the Ivanhoe Hotel who provided much appreciated sponsorship for the team and to other club managers and codes for their co-operation during 2018. Best wishes for a continued recovery goes to all our injured players.

In conclusion, 2019 will mark a decade of competitive adult hurling in Carryduff. This is a cause for celebration but also an opportunity for renewed commitment from all our members, mentors and players. Many of our senior squad had hugely successful underage careers. With the right attitude and effort, these players can enjoy similar success at adult level and rise to the challenge of bringing hurling silverware back to club to help celebrate our tenth anniversary next year.

**9 Club Coaching Report.**

The club continued to promote coaching qualifications in 2018 and increased the number of coaches with Foundation, Level 1 and Level 2 as well as Child Protection.

**10 Cultural**

Cultural life in Carryduff GAC is coming on slowly in 2018 as it was in 2017.

Irish language and Music classes run weekly from October to May and are held in the Parish Centre. Music classes are provided in Fiddle, Whistle, Junior Session Class and Senior Session Class. New musicians and Gaelgoirí off all ages and stages are always welcome.

We have continued to promote Gaeltacht Scholarships to our juvenile members and we have endeavoured to promote the use and visibility of our language in and around the Club. It is central to the ethos of the GAA that we continue to promote use of Irish as much as possible.

The Club is taking part in Scor and Scor na n-Óg again this year and we wish the best of luck to all representing our club.

**11 Fundraising Sub-Committee Report**

The committee were drawn from all corners of the club with the vision of bringing the membership together to help foster a more collegiate approach, giving every code ownership of fundraising for the voluntary organisation that we are. We would like to put on record our thanks to all those who supported our events throughout the year.

**12 Lottery Report.**

The Lottery is a main income source for the club and 2019 should see a concerted effort to promote its growth.

**13 Club Carryduff**

We are grateful to those members who continue to contribute monthly to our club development fund. Club Carryduff has enabled us to progress the developments outlined throughout this report. We would encourage new and existing members of the club to demonstrate their commitment to the future development of our club and facilities from which everyone will benefit.

**14 Development**

The hub and the Multi-Function Ball Wall are being used at a high level and contribute to the atmosphere around the club. We are still working of getting a floodlighting system for Pitch 2.

**15 Club Maith Registration**

Work is still ongoing regarding this.

**16 Sympathy**

The Club and community were deeply saddened by the deaths of family members of Club members throughout 2018. Our club is indebted to many who have gone to their eternal reward and it is only right that we acknowledge their memory. All those club members who lost family and friends during the year will be remembered in our thoughts and prayers. Our sincere sympathy and condolences are extended to all those families who have been bereaved during the year.

**Patrick Rice**

**Runai**

**18 November 2018**