



# Cumann Lúthcleas Gael Cheathrú Aodha Dhuibh

# One Club



# Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028

2024





# Fáilte



## **BRENDAN SLOAN** Breandán Ó Sluáin

Chairperson

Cathaoirleach

GAA clubs have long been a focal point in the lives of Irish people, and Carryduff GAC is no exception. Where we are exceptional, is in the progress and growth we have experienced, particularly in more recent years. Still a relatively young club in GAA terms, we are fortunate to be building on strong, stable and well-maintained foundations for which we remain forever indebted to our predecessors.

But we cannot stand still. We understand the need to plan for the future; to stop, take stock of where we are now and drive forward, anticipating the changes that will be needed to further build on these successes. We are an ambitious, diverse and outward-looking club and I believe we are ready to tackle the challenges and exploit the opportunities that lie ahead.

As an organisation the GAA offers a unique brand. With a golden thread running from the grassroots to national level, it is a volunteer-led association of excellence. It is no exaggeration to claim it as one of the world's finest examples of an amateur sporting and cultural organisation. Its contribution has been and continues to be immeasurable, and we are privileged to be a part of it.

And so, I am setting out this 5-year plan knowing that it may well be a different group of people taking the reins as the years progress, adapting and refining the specific actions to suit changing circumstances in changing times. But, whatever the changes, we can be assured that with your support, our hopes and aspirations, our motivations and ambitions, will continue to stand the test of time, as they have done since the birth of this great association 140 years ago.

**Ní neart go cur le chéile – Stronger together**



# Context

## Cumann Lúthcleas Gael Cheathrú Aodha Dhuibh



*The GAA is nothing without its people.  
The people make the clubs, the clubs make  
the counties..*



Ciarán Mac Lochlainn, Uachtarán, Comhairle Uladh  
Ulster Strategic Plan 2023-2028

The 2023/24 Carryduff GAC [Constitution](#) states that the Object of the Club shall be the promotion of the aims of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) as outlined in the Official Guide.

The Official Guide of the GAA (parts [1](#) and [2](#)) outline the constitution, rules, and regulations of the Association and serves as a reference for players, officials, and enthusiasts involved in Gaelic games.

- ❑ The [GAA](#) is the International Governing Body responsible for the promotion of Gaelic Games and the aims and ethos of the Association
- ❑ The [LGFA](#) (Ladies Gaelic Football Association), Cumann Peil Gael na mBan, serves as the primary governing body for ladies' Gaelic football.
- ❑ The [Camogie Association](#) is the official governing body for the sport of camogie in Ireland and globally.

It is intended that all 3 Associations will fully integrate at a national level by 2027. Carryduff GAC already operates a One Club ethos with a single constitution and governing body for all three.



# Preparing for our Future

## Cheathrú Aodha Dhuibh

*“ Whatever the future may hold...it is unlikely to bring progress and success without a clear plan... ”*

John Devaney, Cathaoirleach, Cumann Luthchleas Gael and Dún Down GAA Strategic Plan 2023-2026

We have developed this Strategic Plan to provide a blueprint for Carryduff GAC for the next five years. It reflects the views of members as they have been discussed and disclosed, formally and informally, at various events and activities throughout 2023.

We listened to what people told us. We spent our first year in office ‘taking the temperature’ of the organisation.

We did this to gain a better understanding of our strengths and weaknesses, our opportunities and threats and to get a sense of what drives us and how we can become a modern, innovative and inclusive club that delivers excellence on and off the pitch

Aware that we are not a single unit operating in isolation, this Strategy is also embedded in, and strongly aligned with, the ambitions and priorities of the Association at National, Provincial and County level.

The timeframe of our Strategy therefore reflects that of Ulster GAA’s Strategic Plan so that we can remain in step with the ambitions of the provincial body of our organisation. It incorporates the values and visions of the National, Ulster and Down Strategic Plans.

To remain relevant and responsive to changing times we will review and refresh the programmes and plans that emerge from this Strategy annually.

In a changing world we want to be ready for the challenges ahead.

# Strategic Alignment

## National GAA 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

### Focus of Activity

Maximum participation among players, coaches, referees and officers;  
A sustainable Association with thriving Clubs at its core;  
Six codes, One Association;  
A connected and inclusive Association;  
Good governance.



## Ulster GAA 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

### Focus of Activity

Coaching and Games;  
Club and Community;  
Governance and Safeguarding;  
Communication and Branding;  
Infrastructure and Sustainability.



## Down GAA 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

### Focus of Activity

Increase participation among players;  
Transforming Coaching and Games Development;  
Building a sustainable financial model;  
Enhance Facilities to support Down GAA;  
Good Governance and Communication.



## Carryduff GAC 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

### Focus of Activity

Ensure our governance arrangements are 'best in class';  
Deliver excellence in coaching and player development;  
Offer quality cultural, social and health related community activities;  
Provide facilities that reflect membership numbers and needs.



# Purpose and Vision

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**There is no strength without unity  
Ní ceart go cur le chéile**



## **Purpose**

Carryduff GAC in County Down is a GAA club that operates with a ‘One Club’ ethos.

The club creates and sustains a vibrant community of people who share an appreciation of our national sport and culture, and recruits and retains a stream of committed players, officials, volunteers and other members to support this purpose.

## **Vision**

Success on and off the field of play through the provision of high-quality coaching at well-maintained facilities and a strong sense of community cohesion, belonging and pride.

# Carryduff GAC

## In Numbers



Social & Cultural Events  
Annual Estimate

12



Playing members

1,102

- ✓ 7 Adult teams
- ✓ 5 Adult social teams
- ✓ 26 teams from U12-minor
- ✓ 21 teams at U10.5
- ✓ 33 teams at U8.5
- ✓ 4 cohorts at U6.5
- ✓ 2 Nursery Academies



Volunteers  
(excl. coaches)

400

(plus 30 U18 volunteers)



Total underage Players

898



Registered members

1,802



All Males  
(player and non-player)

1,010 (56%)



All Females  
(player and non-player)

792 (44%)



Outreach  
Primary Schools

3



Members with GAA and  
Access NI Safeguarding

314



Qualified Coaches  
(across all codes)

228



Nursery Academy  
participants  
– U6s

191



Coaching Mentors

50



Club Referees

4

Social Media  
Followers

4,300 (FB)

3,500 (x)

2,000 (insta)



# SWOT Analysis

## Understanding Ourselves



### Strengths

- ✓ Excellent Numbers and strong growth trajectory
- ✓ Ownership of our own facilities
- ✓ High quality coaching numbers and standards
- ✓ Good governance, compliance and financial stability



### Weaknesses

- Insufficient facility provision and continued need to access/pay for external venues
- Income generation – fundraising efforts often poorly supported
- Community Cohesion – relatively fragmented membership vis-à-vis more rural clubs



### Opportunities

- Significant potential to build on successes on the field of play at Senior, Minor and Underage level and in terms of representation at County level
- Scope to continue to access funding opportunities with excellent track record to date
- Positive reinforcement from external sources indicate ability to stand as a 'best in class' club on and off the field of play



### Threats

- ⚠ Challenges in balancing facility development with increasing running costs
- ⚠ Competing Interests locally detracting from potential membership - including alternative GAA clubs
- ⚠ Member disengagement if needs are not met





# Who We Are

## Results from April 2024 Survey of Members



### Number of Respondents

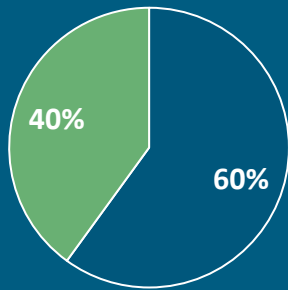
**224**

(35% of adult membership)



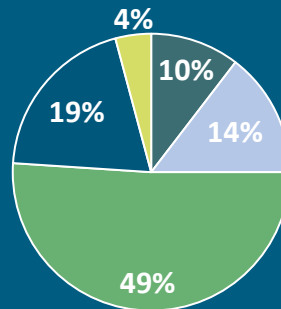
### % of respondents who are Playing members

**39%**



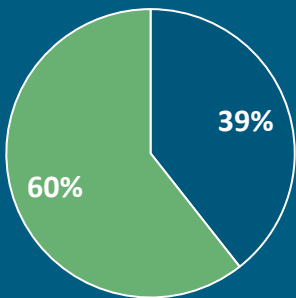
### Gender

Male Female



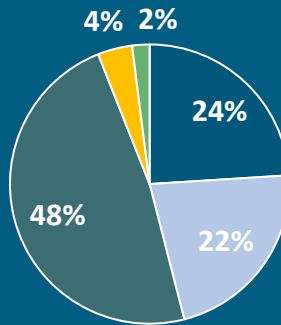
### Age Profile

18-29  
30-39  
40-49  
50-59  
60-69



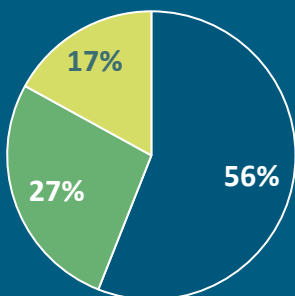
### Playing Status

Player  
Non Player



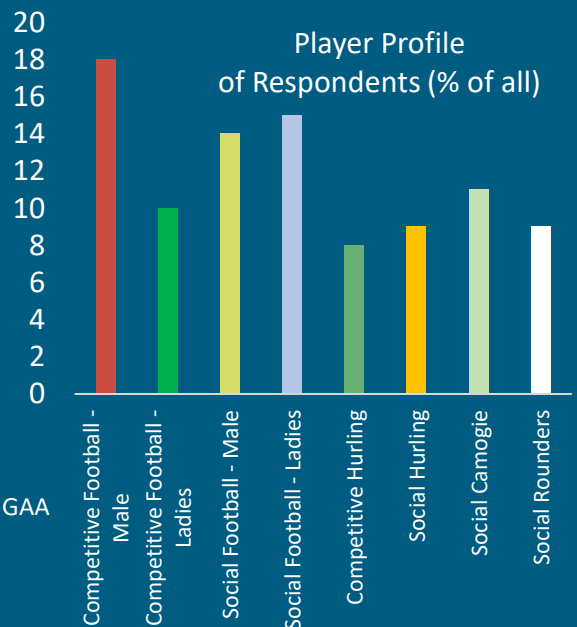
### Background

Born and bred in Carryduff  
Elsewhere in County Down  
Elsewhere in Ulster  
Elsewhere in Ireland  
Another part of Europe



### Previous Exposure to the GAA

- I come from a background where I was steeped in the GAA
- I come from a background where I had some experience of the GAA
- I come from a background where I had no exposure to the GAA



### Player Profile

of Respondents (% of all)

# Delivering Our Vision – Strategic Goals

Because we understand who we are and what our Vision is, we have agreed four 'Strategic Goals' that we believe will take us there.

The remainder of this Strategy describes each of these goals in terms of what they mean to us, where we currently are on the journey towards them and what actions we will take to reach our destination.



**Build our reputation to be a 'best in class' club in all its aspects**



**Deliver excellence in coaching and player development**



**Offer quality cultural, social and health related community activities**



**Provide facilities that reflect membership numbers and needs**



# Build our reputation to be a ‘best in class’ club in all its aspects

## What We Want to Achieve

*To know GAA clubs is to see the country differently. Their deeds redraw the map and touch the most apparently mundane locations with magic cut-out.*

Eamonn Sweeney  
Irish Independent, Feb 2016

Gaelic Life Ulster Club

# ALL-STARS

## 2023

### Club of the Year Carryduff GAC

### Golden Thread of Alignment

The ambition within this strategic goal is to continue to improve all aspects of the club to offer a full range of sporting, social and cultural opportunities to our members in such a way that everyone feels a connection to, and affinity with, this great club.

This will include remaining ‘on the front foot’ in terms of what good looks like on and off the field. It will involve maintaining and exceeding all expected standards, engaging widely to understand and respond to member needs and reaching out to the wider community to address any misconceptions and improve relationships.

- **National Alignment** – Objective 5 Governance and Operations
- **Provincial Alignment** – Theme 3 Governance and Safeguarding
- **County Alignment** - Good Governance and Communication, Building a Sustainable Financial Model





# Baseline



**97%**

Are confident about the Club's  
Financial stability



**94%**

Would recommend  
Carryduff GAC to a friend



**96%**

Are confident that the Club  
will continue to comply with  
governance and safeguarding standards



Coaches' Rating for  
Support they receive from  
Club

**4.4**

With 55% scoring 5 stars



Members' Overall Rating for  
the Club in the last year

**4.3**

With 53% scoring 5 stars

Strategic Goal  
Reputation – our baseline position





## Operationalising these Objectives

- GAA Official Guide
- Club Constitution
- Codes of Conduct
- Club Work Programmes
- Financial Guidelines and Protocols
- National, Provincial, County Rules and protocols
- Club policies and procedures
- Social Media Protocols
- Club Compás Scoring Matrix
- Insurance policy / Player Injury Funds
- Safeguarding Statement and protocols



# Deliver excellence in coaching and player development

## What We Want to Achieve

*..there is nothing else in sport anywhere to match it...It is...the centre of communities, the defining feature of parishes, the bringer of joy and heartbreak, the focus of unbending loyalty, the giver of pride, an immutable part of Irish existence, a little unit which both preserves the best of the past and moves with the times.*

Eamonn Sweeney, Irish Independent



### Golden Thread of Alignment

We understand that we are primarily a sporting organisation and we are committed to recruiting and retaining playing members as they represent the future of the club. To do this successfully we need to offer a high standard of care and coaching.

We will implement our coaching policy and charter, designed with input from our coaches, players and parents in 2023, to ensure all players have an opportunity to grow and develop to their best ability in a safe and welcoming environment.

We will listen to the needs of our players and coaches and work together with the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association to support integration by 2027.

- **National Alignment** – Objective 1 Games and Objective 2 People
- **Provincial Alignment** – Theme 1 Coaching and Games Development
- **County Alignment** – Transforming Coaching and Games Development

Strategic Goal



Coaching and Player Development - what we want to achieve



# Baseline



74%

Are parents of juvenile players



89%

Are clear about Carryduff GAC's Safeguarding processes



42% Are coaches

89% coach juveniles

31% coach male Football

26% coach Ladies Football

21% coach Camogie

19% coach Hurling

## What matters most about the playing experience of juveniles at Carryduff GAC – how parent and coach opinions compare % ranking



### Strategic Goal

Coaching and Player Development – our baseline position





**88%**

Are confident about the Club's ability to deliver improved 'on the pitch' performances



**88%**

Are confident about the Club's ability to maintain high quality coaching



**13%**

Are likely to attend A Handball game



**34%**

Are likely to attend an underage Camogie match



**69%** Are likely to attend A senior male Football match



**54%** Are likely to attend a Senior Ladies match

**51%** Are likely to attend An underage male Football match

**54%** Are likely to attend An underage Ladies match



**45%** Are likely to attend A senior Hurling match



**15%** are likely to attend a Rounders game

**33%** Are likely to attend An underage Hurling match





## Operationalising these Objectives

- Coaching Charter – The Carryduff Way
- Volunteering Policy
- Safeguarding Obligations
- Training Opportunities – Coaches
- Training Programmes – Players
- Player Pathways for each Code

Three

# Offer quality cultural, social and health related community activities

## What We Want to Achieve

*“Through its community initiatives, the GAA extends its reach beyond sports, addressing social issues, promoting education, and fostering a sense of belonging among marginalised groups.”*

Leo Varadkar, Former Taoiseach

The GAA is about more than just training and matches. It is a part of the fabric of Irish society that we are preserving so that future generations, in a changing world, can continue to enjoy the benefits of being part of a community.

We will continue to support delivery of a range of high quality cultural and social events that align with our ethos and ambitions, in particular in relation to promoting our language and culture, health and well-being and inclusion.

As well as offering competitive and social games, we are keen to provide a wide range of opportunities to become involved with the club. We will engage regularly to provide a programme of events that reflects members' interests and our commitments to inclusion and outreach.

### Golden Thread of Alignment

- **National Alignment** – Objective 3 Clubs and Communities
- **Provincial Alignment** – Theme 2 Club and Community
- **County Alignment** - Increase Participation in Gaelic Games



# Baseline



**97%**

Support the additional  
social and cultural activity  
at Carryduff GAC



**50%**

Are likely to attend  
A Cultural Event organised  
by the club



**68%**

Are likely to attend  
An Information Evening  
About the Club's  
Development Plans



**77%** Are likely to attend a small-scale fundraising event

**76%** Are likely to attend a mid-range fundraising event

**71%** Are likely to attend a large-scale fundraising event

Strategic Goal  
Culture, Social and Health – our baseline position



1

Develop and deliver an annual programme of Irish language and Cultural events

Culture &  
Language  
Officer

2

Develop and deliver an annual programme of Health and Well-Being initiatives

Health & Well-  
Being Officer

3

Develop and deliver an annual programme of events and fundraising activities

Events & Fund-  
raising Officer

4

Establish a strong volunteer base and a calendar of activities to maximise participation

Volunteer  
Officer

5

Develop and maintain relationships with local schools to promote and profile the club and its activities

School Liaison  
Officer

### Operationalising these Objectives

- Annual Events / Fundraising Calendar
- School Liaison Plan – programme of engagement
- Health and Well-Being Annual Programme/Calendar
- GAA All Stars Programme for inclusion of people with disabilities
- Culture and Language Annual Programme/Calendar
- Volunteer List
- Volunteer Audit

# Four

## Provide facilities that reflect membership numbers and needs

### What We Want to Achieve

*“From rural pitches to urban stadiums, GAA facilities are not just venues for sporting events; they are symbols of community pride and resilience, reflecting the spirit of the people they serve.”*

Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland

As a GAA club your membership helps to pay for the everyday running of the club and its facilities. However, with finite resources it will continue to be important that we identify and source additional funding so that we can deliver the type of facilities that reflect the high standards we are adopting on the field.

To this end we will put in place a Development Masterplan that will outline our needs in terms of facilities and consider how these might be prioritised over the next number of years. We take on board the views of our members and our Heads of Code to ensure that we put in place facilities that meet both current and expected future needs.

### Golden Thread of Alignment

- **National Alignment** – Objective 6 Resources
- **Provincial Alignment** – Theme 5 Infrastructure and Sustainability
- **County Alignment** - Enhance Facilities to Support Down GAA

Strategic Goal  
Facilities – what we want to achieve



# Baseline

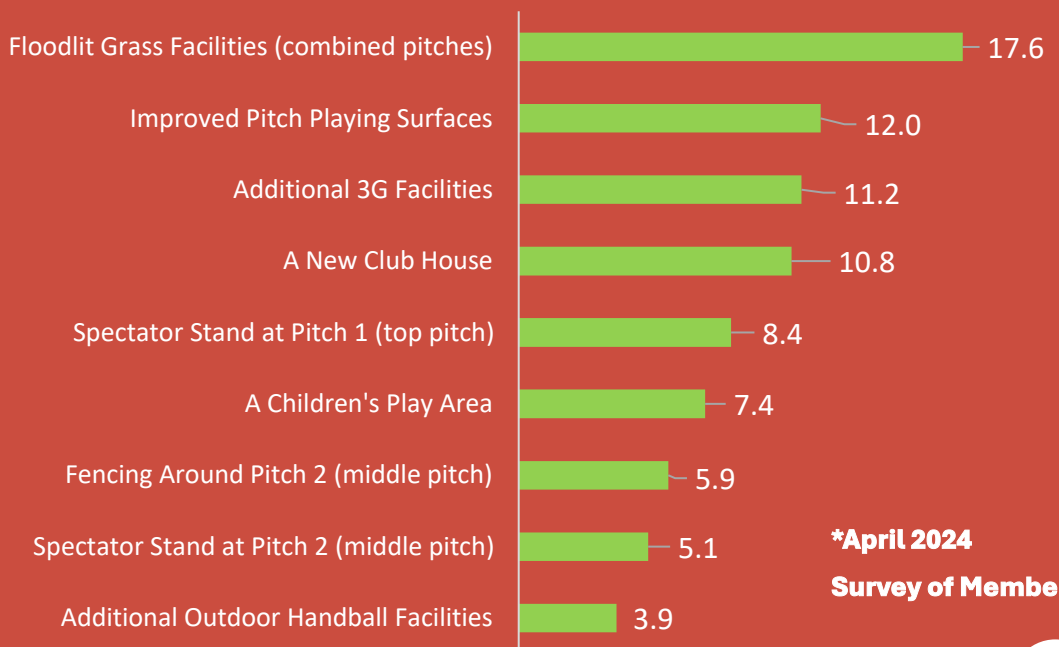
## Most Important Priority - % Ranking (Combined)



**92%**

**Are confident about the Club's ability to ensure provision of adequate facilities in the longer term**

## What Matters Most in Terms of Facility Development - % Ranking (Combined)



**\*April 2024  
Survey of Members**

**Strategic Goal  
Facilities – our baseline position**



1

Develop and deliver a site Masterplan to meet current and future needs

Head of Development

2

Manage Member registration to provide regular updates and report on membership patterns over time & projections

Registrar

3

Maintain records of usage trends for all facilities and report quarterly to Executive Committee

Assistant Secretary

4

Maintain records of composition of all teams – numbers/age/code to inform future planning

Registrar

5

Establish an Income Generation Framework to support club development

Chairperson

### Operationalising these Objectives

- Club Masterplan
- Foireann – Membership Administration
- Team Records
- Funding and Grant Applications

Success on and off the field of play through provision of high-quality coaching at well-maintained facilities and a strong sense of community cohesion, belonging and pride.

What our members will see

Vision

What we'll do

Behind the Scenes

What activity will underpin success

Build our reputation to be a 'best in class' club in all its aspects

Deliver excellence in coaching and player development

Offer quality cultural, social and health related community activities

Provide facilities that reflect membership numbers and needs

Financial Management

- Financial probity and reporting
- Fundraising / Sponsorship / Events / Hub management
- Grants and other opportunities

Communication and Engagement

- Public Relations
- Member Relations
- Media Management
- Social Media
- Sponsor Engagement

Resource Management

- Facility Maintenance
- Facility Development – in line with Masterplan
- Volunteer Recruitment & Management
- Membership Management

Governance and Compliance

- Adopting & implementing policies and procedures
- Compliance with GAA Codes / Rules / Policies / Insurance / PIF
- Officer Training

Coaching Quality

- Carryduff Way compliance
- Recruitment & Retention of coaches
- Coach training
- Safeguarding compliance
- Player retention

Safeguarding

- Awareness Raising
- Officer/Coach Training & Development
- Compliance and Risk Management

# Carryduff GAC 2024-28 – Plan on a Page





# Values



**Our values are drawn from our Carryduff Way coaching strategy, together with the values we espouse and share as members of the GAA**

*The GAA instils in its members the values of integrity, loyalty and pride, creating a strong foundation for personal growth and community development.*

Mary McAleese  
Former President of Ireland

**Effort** We believe continuous effort is the key to unlocking our potential; sustained effort and struggle lead to strength and growth

**Honesty** We will act with integrity and transparency and take responsibility for our actions

**Community** We will continue to instil a sense of community and embed and promote the GAA's 'grassroots' ethos

**Voluntary** We will provide opportunities and support to all our volunteers, enriching and improving their own lives and the lives of our members

**Amateur** We will respect and support the GAA's amateur ethos, while growing and developing players to the best of their potential

**Respect** We treat all members and visitors with dignity and will respect and uphold the roles and decisions of officials and managers

**Inclusion** We will strive to transcend barriers associated with ability, age, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation and promote our activities to people from all backgrounds

# Carryduff GAC

## Executive Committee

### Governance Structure 2024



**Mandatory Roles  
(2023 Constitution)**

Roles determined annually by incoming EC



Gaelic Life Ulster Club

**ALL-STARS**

2023

Club of the Year  
Carryduff GAC



**WE ALL BELONG HERE  
IN THIS PLACE. AT THIS TIME**

**WE BELONG NOT BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE OR WHERE WE COME FROM**

**BEING HERE MEANS BELONGING**

**BELONGING MEANS KNOWING YOU'RE PART OF A COMMUNITY**

**A COMMUNITY THAT HAS A PLACE FOR ALL**

**WHERE POTENTIAL IS NURTURED**

**WHERE INDIVIDUALS BECOME TEAMS**

**WHO HONOUR THE LEGACY OF THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE**

**AND STRIVE TO BUILD A LEGACY OF THEIR OWN**

**SOME OF US PLAY**

**SOME OF US USED TO PLAY. SOME OF US NEVER PLAYED**

**WE ALL BELONG**

**BELONGING MEANS HAVING A VOICE**

**MEANS BEING ABLE TO SAY WHAT YOU THINK IS RIGHT**

**BEING LISTENED TO**

**BELONGING MEANS RESPECTING EACH OTHER**

**MEANS BEING THERE FOR EACH OTHER**

**ON THE PITCH. OFF THE PITCH**

**BELONGING MEANS ROLLING OUR SLEEVES UP AND DOING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

**WE ALL BELONG WHETHER IT'S OUR FIRST DAY OR OUR HUNDREDTH YEAR**

**WE ALL BELONG HERE BECAUSE THIS PLACE BELONGS TO US ALL**

**OUR GAA**

**WHERE WE ALL BELONG**