



Gael Baile Shíomóin CLG

SIMONSTOWN GAELS GAA

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Main Club Sponsor: DCSLBUILDING

Planning Department
Meath County Council
Buvinda House,
Dublin Road,
Navan,
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C15 Y291

03 March 2020

Re: Draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2026

Dear Sirs,

On behalf of Simonstown Gaels G.F.C, I would like to submit a copy of our Strategic Review in support of the proposed rezoning of lands adjacent to our current facilities.

We have carried out a comprehensive review of our needs over the next 5 years and beyond which highlight the need for additional playing areas.

We envisage that the proposed zoning currently on public display will serve the needs of the club in the medium to long term. I enclose a map indicating the outline plan to develop two new pitches over the next 5 years.

Simonstown Gaels GFC welcomes the explicit statements and objectives set out in the CDP 7.7.6 Existing Sport and Leisure Infrastructure under the headings SOC POL 32 to SOC POLICY 36 and SOC OBJ 9.

The commitment that "the provision of sporting and leisure infrastructure will be directly linked to the development of certain areas to address existing deficiencies and ensure balanced sustainable development" is welcome.

Simonstown Gaels GFC requests Meath County Councillors to consider these submissions and where appropriate, incorporate them in the final CDP.

Regards,


Mel O'Rourke
Chairman

Encls.





SIMONSTOWN GAELS GFC

2025 STRATEGY





CONTENTS

1. Chairperson's Address	3
2. History of Club	5
3. Review Process	7
4. Mission, Vision, Values	8
5. Where The Club Is At Now & What we Need	10
6. Implementation Plan	14
7. Heart of the Community	14
8. Implementation Process	15
9. Acknowledgements	15



1. CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

Following the recent success of Simonstown Gaels GFC in the historic winning the Keegan Cup in 2016 and again in 2017 and then the success of the ladies in the Championship in 2018 it was decided to review our current status and draft a strategy to continue the development of the club.

For this purpose, a Strategic Review Committee was established by the Executive as follows:

- Mel O'Rourke (Chairperson)
- Colm Keys
- Colm O'Rourke
- Chris Condon
- Paul Meade
- Jackie Sheridan
- Karen Clynch
- Johnny Mills
- Séamus Kenny

The Terms of Reference were set out from the beginning as;

Review all aspects of club affairs and recommend the strategic direction which the club should take over the next 5 years and beyond. The review should have the following principal elements,

- Governance and Administration
- Fundraising
- Games development and coaching
- Facilities Assessment
- Future Development
- Communication and PR
- Social and Cultural

As Chairman of Simonstown Gaels I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the draft strategy document in advance. It has taken many hours to develop the plan and I look forward to your views and suggestions so we can incorporate these into a final document to be proposed and adopted at our AGM.

Jim Lane
Chairman Simonstown Gaels GFC



On behalf of the Strategic Review Group, it gives me great pleasure to present Simonstown GFC's 2025 Plan. We have a very successful club with great people involved, be they players, mentors, administrators or supporters. With our recent success, it was felt appropriate to review all aspects of the club's affairs and propose a Strategic Plan for the club to support the continued growth and success of Simonstown.

- The Strategic Plan is the result of hours of effort by countless people who have dedicated their time and experience to producing this draft document. This entailed a wide consultation process with players, officials and supporters as well as officers in other leading clubs and the Meath County Board.
- The objective of the Strategic Review is to determine how best to plan for the next decade so that the club can grow and be successful to enrich the lives of our members, our community and all who come in contact with the club.
- Our club is primarily about our players, administrators and supporters, the games being what connect us and around which everything revolves.
- Within the county, Simonstown is viewed as a very successful club. There is, however, a sense that more can be achieved both on and off the playing fields by harnessing the collective abilities of club members and the wider community.
- Traditionally, the GAA have been parish based, however; the lines are less clear in an urban setting. Our base is Simonstown within the urban area of North Navan which had a population of 30,000 in the 2016 census
- Our catchment area is expanding and under the New Navan Development Plan it is envisaged that there will be increased pressure to provide as many young people as possible with the opportunity to participate actively in Gaelic Games.

Resulting from this, we have distilled the Strategy into a six-point plan which we present here.

I would like to acknowledge the work of everyone who has contributed to the preparation of the plan and would encourage all members to participate in the implementation of the plan.

Mel O'Rourke
Chairman of Simonstown Gaels Strategic Review Committee



2. HISTORY OF CLUB

From small beginnings, Simonstown Gaels GFC has grown since its formation in 1965 to serve the community as the foremost GAA club in the north Navan and Athlumney areas of the town. The club's historical roots date back to when it was formed under the direction of the late Joe Clarke and Jimmy Lane as players came together from existing clubs in Kilberry, Gibbstown and Navan to field a junior B team. Over time it has expanded to draw its playing population and membership from a wider area with the development of so much housing and infrastructure in its catchment area.

Initially, Simonstown's 'home' ground was a field donated by the [REDACTED] but by 1968 the move was made to the existing location where a generous rental agreement with landowner [REDACTED] was made. Eventually, in the late 1970s, the land was purchased for £20,000. The club established a juvenile section in the 1970s and with the establishment of St Oliver's National School in Blackcastle, a natural link was created and fostered in the years that followed. The 1980s were very successful for the club's juvenile teams with a first U-12 success in 1983, a first U-16 success in 1986 and a first minor title in 1988. The first adult title, Junior B, was won in 1987 and that was quickly followed with a Junior A title in 1990. A senior club for the last 24 years since 1995 when the intermediate title was won, the highlight has been the Keegan Cup wins in 2016 and 2017, beating Donaghmore-Ashbourne and Summerhill in the finals, after so many near misses in the past.

A Division One league title in 2005 and a first U-21 success in 2012, featuring many of the players who would go on to win senior medals four and five years later were other highlights. The club has produced many players for various Meath teams down through the years with Colm Brady winning an All-Ireland title in 1996 and Hank Traynor following that up in 1999 while the county's only All-Ireland winning U-21 squad featured Ronan McGrath, Kenneth Cantwell and Graham Cooke. Ronan and Kenneth were All-Ireland minor winners in 1990 and '92 while Paul O'Brien and Ciaran Moore were part of the 1990 squad.

Simonstown Ladies GFC has grown from strength-to-strength since its formation in 1994/95 under the direction of Brendan Egleston, culminating in last year's senior success. Within three years of playing its first competitive match, the ladies had won a junior B championship and a Division Three league while firm foundations for the future were laid when the U-16s won a championship title. Over the last five years, Simonstown have become a dominant underage force, winning four consecutive minor titles with many of those girls contributing to last year's first-ever senior title with a final win over Seneschalstown. In 2018 the senior ladies also claimed the 2018 Division One League and Masita Cup titles while the junior ladies took the Division Five league title. This year the second team won the Junior B Championship title.



On the development front, Simonstown initially built the existing clubhouse in 1984 but have added extensions in 1995 and again in 2004 when the current gym and childcare facility was added and the astro-turf pitch was opened. The main pitch was added in 2001 and opened when the then All-Ireland champions Kerry came to play Meath in a challenge match. Since the success of the senior team in winning back-to-back senior titles, a significant upsurge in interest at academy and juvenile level can be seen.

The current infrastructure is stretched beyond capacity and Simonstown are dependent on the good auspices of Meath County Council at Blackwater Park and St. Patricks Classical school for training and playing facilities.



3. REVIEW PROCESS

As part of this 2025 review process the committee initially scoped out the parameters of the task at hand, identifying key objectives, tools and resources available to the committee, tasks and priorities. The committee was selected with a view to providing different perspectives, expertise and relevant skill sets to enable a progressive plan be developed, monitored and delivered.

A detailed needs analysis was conducted, identifying our current resources and comparing those with our future resource needs. As part of that, other GAA clubs, community projects and sports were considered and assessed to ensure that our analysis was armed with the most relevant and up to date information. This process identified that given the current and projected playing population our current resources are inadequate.

A comprehensive and inclusive online questionnaire was provided to club members, parents, guardians and coaches and indeed other interested persons with a view to gauging the member's needs and opinions about the future of the club. This survey was well received, and the answers were insightful and provided a relevant framework to guide the committee's deliberations.

The committee consulted widely and held various meetings with Meath County Council, various members with unique perspectives/insights, local landowners, local businesses and indeed regional construction companies.



4. SIMONSTOWN GAELS – OUR MISSION, VISION, GOALS & VALUES

OUR MISSION

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

We are dedicated to ensuring that our games and values enrich the lives of our members, families and the communities we serve.

We are committed to active lifelong participation for all by providing appropriate facilities.

We actively seek to engage with and include all members of our community.

We promote individual development and well-being and strive to enable our members to achieve their full potential in their chosen roles.

OUR VISION

To provide our community with an inclusive sporting, social and cultural GAA club where men and women participate in a **One Club Model** and are inspired to develop their full potential and enjoy a lifelong engagement with our association.

OUR GOALS

The challenge for the next decade is to be a leading urban club. Our Goals are:

1. Provide facilities for all to join and play/participate at their level of ability.
2. Excel at the highest level across all codes of Gaelic Games.
3. Promote a sense of sportsmanship, volunteerism and club loyalty among our members.
4. Successfully integrate the Ladies and Men's Club into to the 'One Club' model.
5. Encourage and support lifelong participation of all potential members in our community.
6. Develop and provide a social and cultural aspect to our club.



OUR VALUES

Values	What this means
Community Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community is at the heart of our Association• Everything we do should help enrich the communities we serve• We foster a clear sense of identity and place
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The cornerstone of our Association is effective teamwork on and off the field
Amateur Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are a volunteer-led organisation• All our players and members participate in our games as amateurs• We strive to provide a games programme at all levels to meet the needs of all our players
Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We welcome everyone to be part of our Association• We support the needs of all our members
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We respect each other both on and off the playing fields• We operate with integrity at all levels• We listen and respect the views of all
Player Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We provide the best playing experience for all our players• We structure our games to allow players of all abilities to reach their potential

Ní neart go cur le chéile (there is no strength without working together)



5. WHERE THE CLUB IS AT NOW & WHAT WE NEED

In 2019, there are 565 registered members of the club. It is noteworthy that this does not include the registered members of the Ladies Club as they are a separate entity at present. As can be seen in Table 1 (below) the trend of membership is positive. The likely key factor in this improvement is success of our Senior Football team with the Championship wins in 2016 and 2017 and 2018 and 2019 LGFA which generated great goodwill, interest and enthusiasm towards the club.

	Registered	Full Members	Youth Members	Honorary	Social
2019	565	211	332	6	16
2018	553	208	318	4	23
2017	493	201	285	4	5
Difference +/-	72	10	47	2	11
% +/-	15%	5%	16%	50%	220%

Table 1: Membership of Simonstown Gaels GFC 2017 - 2019

In terms of playing members, there are 333 players active. However, it is clear that there are issues of retention of players across challenging age groups. These include early teens and late teens as they transition into adult football. As a club it is incumbent on us to develop strategies to retain our players and indeed increase player involvement. Aspects of this strategy would include meaningful games, good fixture planning, high quality training and management of teams, increased club spirit and togetherness.

Development System	Grade	Competitions			2019	2018	% +/-
		Knock Out	League	Championship			
Excellence	Senior	Feis Cup	Div 1	Keegan Cup			
Retention	Junior C		Div 4 League	Junior c	15	25	-66.67%
Performance	U21			Knockout Championship			
Performance	U19		League	Championship			
	U17		Leagues		12		
Development	U15						
	U13						
	U14						
	U11						
	U12						
Participation	Go Games						
	U11				28	24	14.29%
	U10				21	23	-9.52%
	U9				23	24	-4.35%
	U8				36	24	33.33%
Recruitment	U7				35		
	Nursery				48	131	
Total Playing Number					333	275	
Overall +/- from previous year						58	



Table 2: Playing Members 2019

Our club has a number of feeder schools. These schools are likely to grow in size over the next few years as Navan town and its hinterland increase in size. As a club we have developed strong links with these schools. Our GDA is active in all the schools, providing coaching and football sessions to the pupils. It is our aim to maintain this footprint in these schools, providing health impacts to the kids, delivering a very positive message to the kids, parents and teachers about our club.

Academic Year	Official Name	Mainstream Class Pupils	Mainstream Classes
2018	ST OLIVER PLUNKETT NS	429	17
2018	ST PAULS N S	728	28
2018	NAVAN EDUCATE TOGETHER NS	201	7
2018	SCOIL NAOMH EOIN	326	13
2018	ARD RÍ COMMUNITY NATIONAL SCHOOL	228	8

Table 3: Club Feeder Schools 2018

In terms of our town's population, the latest (2016) CSO figures indicate that the population was in excess of 30,000 (30,173). The population is expected to grow at a rapid rate, with a projected 17.5% increase by 2026 to 35,473. This is rapid growth and as such all feeder schools and indeed sporting clubs will have to build in capacity over the next few years. Additionally, as can be seen in Table 4 (below), the numbers of young children (ages 1 to 10) is high and is reflective of recent higher birth rates. This is further supported by information as illustrated in Table 5, indicating that the male and female bands (0-14 years) are the largest population bands until middle age (35+). This increased birth rate combined with the projected population increase will likely lead to high player interest and numbers for our club.

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0	244	242	486
1	265	241	506
2	272	264	536
3	277	260	537
4	306	276	582
5	305	285	590
6	285	311	596
7	287	298	585
8	300	298	598
9	270	275	545
10	291	295	586
11	252	237	489
12	263	260	523
13	252	248	500
14	260	227	487
15	204	213	417
16	203	203	406
17	198	199	397
18	190	184	374
19	161	154	315
20-24	772	736	1,508
25-29	849	941	1,790
30-34	1,158	1,369	2,527
35-39	1,377	1,478	2,855
40-44	1,384	1,447	2,831
45-49	1,105	1,106	2,211
50-54	816	821	1,637
55-59	621	614	1,235
60-64	477	541	1,018
65-69	425	443	868
70-74	300	338	638
75-79	198	239	437
80-84	110	176	286
85+	77	200	277
Total	14,754	15,419	30,173



Table 4: 2016 Population Breakdown



Table 5: Population Bands

Current Facilities

Our current facilities are excellent and reflect very positively on the various club officers and volunteers who invested time, energy and expertise in developing and delivering infrastructure for the club over the years. Our facilities were sufficient but given the increased playing numbers, training and game demands it is incumbent on us to deliver capacity for our current members but also plan for future trends and demands.

Our current facilities are as follows;

Facility	Description	Remarks
Pitches	Full Size x 2	1 is floodlit to accepted standard 1 is lit for training
Dressing Rooms	5	Too small for current squad numbers
Gym	Gym & Weights Room	Requires more space
Hall	Indoor Hall with sprung floor	Requires football proofing
Astro Turf	70m x 30m	Surface in need of repair & upgrade
Offices	1 small office	Inadequate for current and future needs
Bar & Social Facilities	Large bar & social room	Adequate

Table 6: Current Club Facilities



Proposed Facilities

Having conducted a detailed needs analysis, taking into consideration best practice, player numbers, competition layouts, training loads of teams and the projected demands on the club, the following resources are considered necessary by the club to deliver on its promise to provide the best infrastructure possible for our members.

Facility	Number Needed	Deficit	Remarks	Priority
Full Size Pitches	2	Yes	Require 1 new pitch immediately	1
Full Size Pitches	2	Yes	Extra new pitch by 2025	3
Pitch Lights	2	Yes	Improve training pitch lights	2
Juvenile Pitch	2	Yes	Require 2 new juvenile pitches	1
Hall	1	No	Improve with lights and safety padding	3
Astro	1	No	Needs maintenance & upgrade	2
Skills Wall	1	Yes	Build skills wall for underage training	1
Gym	1	No	Requires expansion & some new equipment	1
Trim Trail	1	Yes	Circular walking/running track inside grounds perimeter for members, players & parents	2
Conditioning Area	1	Yes	Set aside area for heavy conditioning work. Primarily by adult teams.	1

Table 7: Proposed 2025 Club Infrastructure

Priority 1: Issue to be addressed in 20/21

Priority 2: Issue to be addressed in 21/22

Priority 3: Issue to be addressed in 23/25



6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

GAA Simonstown Gaels GFC 2022-2023	2022				2023				2024				2025			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Club Structure & Organisation Sub-Committee																
Coaching Sub-Committee																
Finance Management & Logistics Sub-Committee																
Facilities Sub-Committee																
Communications & PR Sub-Committee																
U18 & U21 Sub-Committee																
Player Development Sub-Committee																
Club Development Sub-Committee																

7. HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Simonstown Gaels are at the heart of the local Community and offering their facilities to many local organisations. The list is indicative of the current organisations that benefit.

- Creche
- Bingo (weekly)
- Bowls
- Bridge
- Mature Movers (dancing)
- Ballroom Dancing
- Travellers Workshop
- Filipino Social Group
- Basketball
- Badminton
- Football facilities (St. Pauls/St. Olivers schools)
- St. Ultans Special School
- Irish Wheelchair Association (Boccia tournament)
- Boxing training
- Various training and development courses
- Gymnasium (Complete Body Fitness)
- Summer Football Camps
- Navan Road Club (cycling)
- Birthday parties and other social events
- Meath Local Sports Partnership



8. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

In order to ensure that the plan, once accepted and ratified by the club membership is monitored, measured and reviewed it is proposed that the 2025 Activity Areas are assessed by the Committee on a quarterly basis. It is proposed that this committee (through their chairman) report to the executive on the compliance with and attainment of the stated goals. On the basis of those findings, the Executive may need to re-prioritize their efforts, provide additional resources or otherwise use their position to ensure that they club remain on track towards its stated 2025 objectives and targets.

Regular update through the e-newsletter should be provided to members of the 2025 goals. This will ensure that members are aware of progress, can contribute to the common goal and can individually assist where they feel their input is best served.

Similarly, at AGMs, progress towards the clubs 2025 vision, must be included as a key area of debate, scrutiny and discussion. The members must be made aware of progress, but similarly have a right to be informed of obstacles, impediments and issues of delay.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have contributed to the development of this plan over the past number of months.

I would like to thank the members and all the respondents to the club questionnaire that has helped shape this plan.

The key objective of the Strategic Review Group was to review all aspects of the club affairs and make recommendations to further develop the club.

The recommendations are only the first step, to bring them to fruition will require the support and effort of all club members. Over the coming months and years, we look forward to achieving this ambitious plan.

The Strategic Review Committee

Ní neart go cur le chéile



SIMONSTOWN GFC DEVELOPMENT PLAN



