Club Development Programme (CDP)

Background:

- GAA Clubs play a key role in supporting physical activity, supporting participation, community connections and provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to take part in sport. Clubs provide pathways for coaches, players, officials and volunteers to support the development and success of the GAA community.

- However, clubs are facing increasing challenges such as recruiting and retaining members and volunteers, developing coaches, managing facilities, securing financial support, and ensuring effective governance. All of this helps to establish structures to create an effect and sustainable club.

Overview:

- The Club Development Programme (CDP) is designed to support clubs at different stages of their development. The CDP is available to new, emerging and established clubs (GAA Handball and/or GAA Clubs), also to GAA clubs interested in affiliating with GAA Handball under the OneClub Model. This support aims to build strong foundations for long-term success, from improving capacity, increase participation, developing the club workforce (coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers), to create sustainable pathways for future growth.

- This programme has been created to help guide clubs to achieve the minimum operating standards in core areas (Coaching & Games Development, Club Management/Administration, Communications, Facilities and Governance).

- GAA Handball will have a recognition process in place to reward clubs for their sustained effort in promoting the game (particularly at grassroots level) and achieve the operating standards required.

Purpose:

To strengthen and support GAA Handball/GAA Clubs to become well-managed, sustainable, inclusive and capable of providing high-quality opportunities for their communities.

The programme will provide clubs with the guidance, resources and support needed to:

- Strengthen leadership, governance and club management.
- Increase, retain participation and membership.
- Recruit, develop and retain coaches, volunteers and officials.
- Improve financial sustainability and access to funding.
- Enhance and/or develop facilities (improve participants/members experience)
- Promote inclusion, equality and safeguarding.
- Build stronger links between clubs, communities and other local organisations.



Overall, the programme aims to create stronger clubs that can deliver more opportunities for people to participate, progress and enjoy GAA Handball in a safe, welcoming and sustainable environment.

Aims & Objectives

The Club Development Programme aims to strengthen the capacity, quality and sustainability of GAA Handball clubs through targeted support, development and continuous improvement.

1. **Strengthen club management & administration** – Improve structures and process to ensure compliance with safeguarding, and related governance/ policies (GAA & Sport Ireland requirements).
2. **Improve club planning & performance –** Encourage clubs to establish clear development plans, SMART targets and systems for monitoring and evaluating progress.
3. **Build financial/fundraising capacity & sustainability** – Help clubs strengthen financial planning, diversify income, and access funding opportunities.
4. **Develop the club volunteer base** – Recruit, retain and develop coaches, volunteers, officials and club administrators via appropriate training and development opportunities. Create awareness around the pathways for coaches and players, to grow and maintain memberships, which support the skill development of each target group (juvenile, adult etc.).
5. **Strengthen partnerships and collaborations** – Develop stronger relationships between clubs, schools, community groups, local councils/LSP (Local Sports Partnerships) and other partners. Improve overall community engagement (e.g. marketing & visibility), and participation with various groups to build local support and visibility of club/success.
6. **Improve facilities & resources** – Support clubs to identify facility and equipment needs and develop plans for improvement and/or investment.
7. **Promote safe, inclusive & welcoming clubs** – Strengthen safeguarding, equality, inclusion and accessibility so that all club members/community members have the opportunity to participate in a positive environment.
8. **Support long-term club sustainability** – Build the skills, structures and capacity required for clubs to adapt to changing needs.
9. **Provide Support** – access to resources and networking opportunities.

Overall: To create stronger, more sustainable and inclusive clubs that provide high-quality opportunities for people to participate, develop and enjoy sport within their communities.

Target Groups:

The Club Development Programme will support clubs at different stages of their development, recognising that clubs have different levels of capacity, experience and need.

Phase 1

- ✓ **Newly formed GAA | Handball Clubs (0-5 years)**
- ✓ **Clubs seeking re-affiliation (previously established clubs)**

Phase 2

- Start-up clubs (in progress of affiliating/getting involved)
- Current/Active clubs who require additional support
- Current GAA clubs (oneclub model – no handball)

Other:
The programme will also support the people who contribute to the effective operation and development of clubs, including:

- Committee members
- Administrators
- Coaches
- Volunteers
- Officials
- Young Leaders
- Previous players/participants

Programme Structure

The club development programme will provide different levels of support, combining training, practical support and mentoring.

Focus Areas

- Coaching & Games Development
- Volunteer Recruitment & Retention
- Facility Development & Infrastructure
- Communication & Marketing
- Governance & Administration
- Financial Sustainability & Fundraising



- ❖ Phase 1 – Onboarding & Club Planning
- ❖ Phase 2 – Programme Delivery
- ❖ Phase 3 – Club Implementation & Support
- ❖ Phase 4 – Evaluation & Reflection

No.	Month	Date	Area	Topic	Key Areas Covered
1 **Webinar**	December	Wednesday 2nd	Intro + Q&A	Introduction	• Structure of the programme • Aims and objectives • Participant requirements • Club planning brief

2	January	Monday 18th	Club Planning & Assessment	Building a Stronger Club	• GAA club requirements
					  ○ Roles
					  ○ Affiliation
					  ○ Membership
					
					• Club assessment / review
					  ○ What is success to your club
					  ○ SWOT
					  ○ Setting goals & priorities

3	February	Monday 22nd	Governance, Administration & Requirements	Running an Effective Club	• Committee Structures • Effective meetings and delegating • Policies and procedures • Planning and reporting

4	March	Wednesday 24th	Volunteer Recruitment & Retention	Building A Support Team	• Volunteer recruitment
					  ○ Who, How & Where
					  ○ Recognition & retention
					• Coach development & CPD Opportunities
					• Induction support system

5	April	Wednesday 21st	Coaching & Games
			
			-
			
			Volunteer Recruitment & Retention
				Growing Your Club: Participation & Members	• Member recruitment
					  ○ Programmes for all ages
					  ○ Taster sessions
					  ○ Player pathways
					• Creating a positive club experience
					• Retention and re-engaging former members

6	May	Wednesday 19th	Communications, Marketing & Community Engagement	Getting Your Club Noticed	• Communication plan & links • Social media • Utilising resources (Canva) • Local promotion • Recruitment campaigns

7	June	Monday 21st	Facility Dev. & Infrastructure	Developing Your Club Facility	• Facility developments & improvements
					  ○ Creating a development plan
					  ○ Planning permission
					  ○ Accessibility
					• Partnerships
					• Funding opportunities

8	July	Wednesday 7th	Financial Sustainability & Fundraising	Making Your Club Financially Sustainable:	• Budgeting and planning • Grants and funding applications • Fundraising • Sponsorship • Other income
9	Break for Summer	July & August	Club implementation	Club implementation	• Plan to Action • Building community partnerships ** Access to staff
10 **In-Person**	August	Hardball Finals (Singles) – Sun 22nd	Next Steps & Graduation	Club Planning – Next Steps	• Club Planning: From ideas to action
11	September & October	Fri 24th Sept Fri 1st Oct	Senior Wallball Championship	SFs – Friday 24th Sept Finals – Friday 1st Oct	• Access to Senior Wallball (singles) Finals in NHC
12	Optional Extra	In-Person	Intro / Taster Workshop	Intro / Taster Workshop	• Intro / taster workshop for all club/community members

** All online workshops will be delivered within a 1-2 hour timeframe.

** Multiple club reps are welcome to attend each workshop.

Resources Provided

- **Workshops:** Mixed delivery method, with online delivery, with an additional 1-2 in-person.
- **Online Portal/Resource Hub:** Access to guides, templates, checklists etc.
- **Funding Access**: Access to additional support via equipment grants, facilities development grants, coach education, and links to external stakeholders.
- **Mentorship:** Support from staff.
- **Peer support:** Link with other like-minded people on the journey to creating a stronger club. Learn from current clubs and their past experiences to improving their structures and club success.

Timeline

A 12-month programme cycle that provides sufficient time to deliver support for clubs in various areas across club development. On completion of the pilot phase, the programme may then operate on an annual cycle, with clubs entering at different levels to support one another (e.g. new club and established club in year 2).

- Programme delivery 6-8 months
- Followed by 6 months support post programme completion
- Estimated 12-month programme

Programme Benefits

- Improved club standards
- Club Recognition
- Training, advice & guidance
- Funding & grant support
- Engage with like-minded clubs
- Understand how to become a sustainable / successful clubs
- Attract new members






Recognition & Sustainability

On completion, clubs can receive;

- **Recognition:** Clubs that complete the programme receive certification, and credit towards CPD such as coach education/training workshops (approx. €250).
- **Development Grant:** Clubs can receive financial support to go towards equipment and/or facility development, e.g. wallball court (approx. €1000-1500).
- **Celebration Event:** Showcase new clubs, and share success stories at the final event of the programme in Croke Park.
- **Ongoing Support:** Graduates of the programme can continue access to resources and mentoring for 6 months post completion. Check ins will also be available monthly for further support.

Apply Now

1. Complete the application form [Application - Club Development Programme].
2. Deadline: 18th November at 5pm.
3. Successful applicants notified by 22nd November.
4. Applications will accept place on programme by 25th November.
5. First workshop provisionally set to take place on Wednesday 2nd of December, including programme overview and introduction.

Information & Resources

For further information, programme resources and GAA Handball updates,

Visit www.gaahandball.ie

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