



PEOPLE • CLUBS • COMMUNITIES

STRATEGY 2027-2030

A GAME FOR EVERYONE, FOR LIFE.

INCLUSIVE
ACTIVE
CONNECTED
THRIVING





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GAA HANDBALL
STRATEGY 2027 – 2030

Plan on a Page

Respect
Excellence
Inclusion
Integrity



OUR VISION

Visible in every community,
a game for everyone, for life!



OUR PURPOSE

Progress, develop and grow
GAA Handball as a lifelong
sport, rooted in clubs and
accessible to all.

OUR VALUES



RESPECT

People, our heritage
and our game



INCLUSION

A game for
everyone



EXCELLENCE

Striving for the
highest standards



INTEGRITY

Doing the right thing,
on and off the court

STRATEGIC PILLARS & OBJECTIVES

01



VISIBILITY & PROMOTION

RAISE OUR PROFILE. GROW OUR REACH.

- 1.1 Increase national awareness of GAA Handball
- 1.2 Strengthen communications capability throughout the organisation
- 1.3 Grow digital reach and engagement
- 1.4 Strengthen the profile and recognition of Handball across the GAA

02



PARTICIPATION & PATHWAYS

MORE PEOPLE. MORE OPPORTUNITIES.

- 2.1 Revise Competition Structures
- 2.2 Develop clear pathways for all our members
- 2.3 Increase participation at all levels
- 2.4 Strengthen school and community programmes

03



CLUBS & STRUCTURES

STRONGER CLUBS. BRIGHTER FUTURES.

- 3.1 Integrate handball into a greater number of GAA clubs nationwide
- 3.2 Support Club development
- 3.3 Improve organisational effectiveness
- 3.4 Build, support, and retain a strong volunteer network
- 3.5 Improve facilities and access to playing opportunities

Teachtaireacht an Uachtaráin

Tá áthas orm an Plean Stráitéiseach seo a chur ós bhur gcomhair, plean a leagann amach na príomh spriocanna atá beartaithe againn do na blianta 2027-2030. Creidim go láidir gurb iad na cumainn bunchloch na heagraíochta, gurb iad na hoibrithe deonacha cuisle na heagraíochta agus gurb iad na daoine seo is cúis leis an rath atá faoi láthair ar chúrsaí liathróid láimhe fud fad na tíre. Tá fás mór tagtha ar líon na n-imreoirí le blianta beaga anuas agus tá feabhas tagtha ar na háiseanna imeartha ó cheann ceann na tíre. Is í mór aidhm an phlean ná tuilleadh forbartha a dhéanamh ar an obair iontach atá déanta go dáta chun ár gcluiche, liathróid láimhe, a thabhairt níos faide chun cinn idir seo agus 2030. Iarraim ar gach duine a bhfuil bainte acu le liathróid láimhe tacaíocht a thabhairt do phlean stráitéiseach agus a ndícheall a dhéanamh spriocanna an phlean a thabhairt chun críche. 'Ní neart go cur le chéile' a deirtear agus is fíor go mbraitheann rath an phlean seo ar chomhoibriú toilteannach ó phobal liathróid láimhe na tíre

I am delighted to introduce GAA Handball's Strategic Plan 2027-2030, a roadmap that will guide our association over the next four years and help shape the future of our sport. I have always believed that if our sport is to grow and thrive, that growth must begin in our clubs and work its way up through every level of the organisation. Clubs are the heartbeat of GAA Handball, and at the centre of every successful club are the volunteers who give so generously of their time, energy, and commitment. I have no hesitation in saying that GAA Handball is blessed with some of the finest volunteers in Ireland. Their dedication to promoting, nurturing, and sustaining our sport is the foundation upon which all our success is built.

In recent years, as an organisation, we have taken stock of where we were, where we needed to be, and what changes were required to move our sport forward. That process of reflection and renewal has already begun to deliver positive change. More importantly, it has reignited a spark among our volunteers and members nationwide, people who understand the unique value of

GAA Handball and the important role it plays within communities across Ireland.

Our sport possesses a rich heritage and tradition, but it also offers something equally important in today's world: a sense of belonging, connection, and opportunity for people of all ages and abilities. Across the country, we can see a renewed passion and enthusiasm to achieve greater things for GAA Handball, and this strategic plan seeks to harness that momentum.

This plan sets out an ambitious but achievable vision for the future. It focuses on increasing the visibility of our sport, expanding participation opportunities, strengthening pathways for players and volunteers, and supporting clubs to flourish. Above all, it is a plan that recognises the importance of working together. Success will not come from any one individual or group; it will come through collective effort, shared purpose, and a commitment to supporting one another.

As we embark on this journey, I encourage everyone involved in GAA Handball, players, volunteers, coaches, officials, clubs, schools, and partners, to embrace this strategy and play their part in bringing it to life. Together, we can continue to modernise and grow our sport, ensuring that GAA Handball remains relevant, vibrant, and accessible for future generations.

Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." Those words capture the spirit of this strategy and the opportunity before us. By working together, we can build on our proud traditions, strengthen our communities, and secure a bright and sustainable future for GAA Handball.

Caoimhín Ma Cúaigh
Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Liathróid Láimhe



Teachtaireacht an Ceann Liathróid Láimhe

Is cúis mhór áthais dom é, fáilte a chur roimh an bplean stráitéiseach seo Liathróid Láimhe CLG le haghaidh na mblianta 2027-2030.

It is my great pleasure to welcome the publication of the 2027-2030 Strategic Plan for GAA Handball. This plan provides a clear vision that will strengthen and support the sustainable growth and development of our sport for the years to come. While it is ambitious, it is also grounded in realism.

This Strategic Plan is the result of extensive consultation with our members and external stakeholders. Through this process, three key priority areas emerged as central to the future development of GAA Handball: visibility and promotion, clubs and structures, and participation and pathways. Importantly, these priorities build on the strong foundations laid in the previous strategic plan, reflecting the progress made to date while identifying clear opportunities for further growth and improvement.

A consistent theme throughout the consultation phase was the deep sense of community and belonging that GAA Handball fosters. This is one of our greatest strengths. As we look ahead, it is essential that we continue to nurture this spirit while also adapting to an evolving sporting landscape. Our ambition is to grow the sport in a way that is sustainable, inclusive, and reflective of modern needs.

We are deeply appreciative of the ongoing support of the GAA, and we look forward to further strengthening collaboration with its units and departments. GAA Handball holds a unique place within the Gaelic Games family as its only

individual sport. This distinction presents a significant opportunity, and we must

continue to promote and showcase the sport as the dynamic and accessible game that it is.

While many organisations develop strong strategic plans, it is their implementation that ultimately drives progress. This plan is intended to be a living document, one that is actively embraced by all members and embedded in the work of the Association at every level. Its success will depend on our collective commitment to bring it to life.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this process, including those who completed the consultation survey, attended regional workshops, and the members of the steering group who gave generously of their time and expertise in shaping this plan. I truly hope that this plan will have the desired effect of continuing to grow and strengthen a sustainable Association for the future.

Eilis Ni Loinsigh
Ceann Cumann Lúthchleas
Gael Liathróid Láimhe





Teachtaireacht ón Ard-Stiúrthóir GAA

Thar ceann Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, ba mhaith liom comhghairdeas a dhéanamh libh as an bplean straitéiseach nua seo do Liathróid Láimhe a chur ar fáil.

Tá sé fiorthábhachtach a leithéid seo de phlean a bheith ann. Tá sé fiorthábhachtach, freisin, go mbeadh daoine ag obair as lámha a chéile lena chur i bhfeidhm. Mar a deir an seanfhocal – ní neart go cur le chéile. Tá spriocanna soiléire luaite sa phlean seo agus guím gach rath oraibh agus sibh ag tabhairt faoi na spriocanna sin a bhaint amach.

I wish to commend everyone in GAA Handball for the work that has gone into the preparation of this Strategic Plan, one that sets out a roadmap for an exciting future for the sport.

These are exciting times for all of us with a vested interest in Gaelic Games. There are challenges aplenty of course, but also no shortage of opportunities. This plan is about harnessing potential and setting goals to ensure Handball faces the future with confidence. I saw at first hand the successful staging of the Wallball World finals in Limerick in 2024 which showed that standards are exceptionally high and the National Handball Centre at Croke Park is one of the finest facilities of its kind anywhere in Irish sport.

We always say that the GAA is at its best when it is about people and community. As we continue to work on making our clubs ever more community focused, inclusive and integrated, Handball has so much to offer and play a role in our network of clubs being bigger and better than ever before.



For more than 100 years Handball has been promoted through the GAA. The vision and leadership set out in this document can ensure that Handball's story is one of increased participation with more people in more clubs and more facilities enjoying this important piece of our cultural and sporting heritage.

I look forward to seeing Handball stride ever purposefully forward into its second century as part of the GAA family.

Ar aghaidh linn le chéile.

Tomás Ó Riain
Ard Stiúrthóir

Where we are **Now** (2026)



40,670
SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS



7.5M
SOCIAL MEDIA
VIEWS



156
GAA HANDBALL
CLUBS



37 GAA CLUBS WITH
GAA HANDBALL AS PART
OF THEIR CLUB STRUCTURE



7,053
MEMBERS



134
SILVER LEVEL
REFEREES



2
PARTICIPATION
PROGRAMMES
WITH THE GAA

Where we intend to get **To** (2030)



+10%
SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS

Grow our online
community by
10% annually.



+10%
SOCIAL MEDIA
VIEWS

Increase our reach
and views by
10% annually.



STRONGER
GAA HANDBALL
CLUBS

Supported and
thriving, with vibrant
underage sections.



+10%
GAA CLUBS
WITH HANDBALL

Increase the number of GAA
clubs with Handball as part of
their club structure by 10%.



+20%
MEMBERSHIP

Grow our
membership by 20%.



350
SILVER LEVEL
REFEREES

Develop and
support 350 silver
level referees.



+100%
PARTICIPATION
PROGRAMMES

Double participation
programmes with the
GAA (+100%).



OUR ENABLER

ACCURATE DATA & INSIGHT

To have accurate data and insight on everything we do.

Our Vision

**GAA Handball —
visible in every
community,
a game for
everyone,
for life.**

Our Purpose

**To progress,
develop and
grow GAA
Handball as a
lifelong sport —
rooted in clubs
and accessible
to all.**



Our Values

Respect – We value every person and treat others with fairness, dignity and consideration.

Excellence – We pursue the highest standards in all that we do, on and off the court.

Inclusion – We welcome and support everyone, ensuring our game is open and accessible to all.

Integrity – We do what is right, acting with honesty, accountability and respect for the game.

Our place within the Gaelic Games Family



THE GAA'S PURPOSE, VISION AND VALUES

The GAA's purpose is to promote Gaelic Games, culture and lifelong participation as a community-based, volunteer-led organisation which enriches lives and communities.

Their vision is a sustainable community-based and volunteer-led Association where as many as possible, participate in Gaelic Games and culture, for as long as possible.

GAA's values are:

- Community Identity
- Amateur Status
- Inclusiveness
- Respect
- Player Welfare
- Teamwork and Volunteerism

GAA Handball is proud to be an integral part of the Gaelic Games family, sharing its commitment to strengthening communities, lifelong participation and volunteerism. GAA Handball contributes to the GAA's overall purpose of enriching lives by providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate, compete and connect within their local communities.

This Strategic Plan has been developed in alignment with the GAA's Purpose, Vision and Values. While recognising the unique identity, traditions and opportunities of handball, our direction reflects the wider ambitions of the Association. Our Purpose supports the GAA's commitment to growing participation and promoting Gaelic Games. Our Vision embraces a sustainable, community-based and volunteer-led future where more people play handball for longer.

Our Values of Respect, Excellence, Inclusion and Integrity complement the GAA's core values, reinforcing our commitment to putting people first, fostering welcoming communities, upholding the highest standards of governance and ensuring the long-term success of our game.

By aligning our strategic direction with that of the GAA, GAA Handball strengthens its contribution to the Association's collective ambition while remaining focused on the specific needs and opportunities of our sport. Together, we will continue to grow handball, support our clubs and volunteers, and ensure the game thrives in communities across Ireland for generations to come.



Our Strategic Pillars

- 1. Visibility & Promotion**
- 2. Participation & Pathways**
- 3. Clubs Structures**

Key Priorities

These are the key things we intend to deliver through this plan:

- 1. Greatly increased awareness nationally of our sport.**
- 2. A revised competition structure that makes handball prosper.**
- 3. An effective organisation, with vibrant clubs at its core.**
- 4. A central position at the heart of the Gaelic Games family.**
- 5. Children and youth thriving in our sport.**

1. Visibility & Promotion

Intended outcome:

GAA Handball is visible across Ireland and within the wider GAA family, both in person and online, and is underpinned by a strong, consistent brand and a growing digital presence.



Objective 1.1:

Increase national awareness of GAA Handball

Key Actions:

- Deliver two national awareness campaigns annually
- Produce high-quality promotional content (player profiles, highlights, storytelling videos)
- Proactively pitch stories to national, regional and local media
- Strengthen the brand's identity and ensure it is consistently presented across all Units
- Develop and enforce consistent branding guidelines across all materials

Objective 1.2:

Strengthen GAA Handball communications capability throughout the organisation

Key Actions:

- Secure dedicated and appropriate communications expertise and resource within the broader GAA communications structure
- Create and implement a structured annual communications plan
- Build and maintain a media contact database
- Establish a regular content schedule across all channels
- Manage media relations and coordinate press releases & media partnerships
- Support and training of all Unit's PROs

Objective 1.3:

Grow digital reach and engagement

Key Actions:

- Implement a platform-specific social media strategy
- Produce consistent regular content (video, short-form, behind-the-scenes)
- Broaden content to showcase role models, success stories, development and coaching
- Optimise and regularly update the official website
- Build and manage an email marketing strategy

Objective 1.4:

Strengthen the profile and recognition of Handball across the GAA

Key Actions:

- Collaborate with GAA Departments for cross-promotion
- Secure regular inclusion in GAA media channels (GAA.ie, matchday programmes, social platforms)
- Promote Handball at GAA national events, festivals and programmes
- Showcase GAA Handball at a major event in Croke Park

2. Participation & Pathways

Intended outcome:

More people of all ages and abilities are playing GAA Handball, supported by modern, flexible competition structures and clear pathways that guide players, coaches and officials from first involvement through to elite level.

Objective 2.1:

Revise Competition Structures

Key Actions:

- Conduct a full independent review of all elements of existing competitions (Clár, formats, structures, grades, etc.)
- Implement the competition review recommendations
- Align all competitions with player development stages and pathway levels
- Pilot tiered and flexible competition formats at local and regional level (short-form games, team events, festival formats)
- Provide opportunities for regular, accessible competition within clubs and counties through provision of toolkits, resources and supports

Objective 2.2:

Develop clear pathways for all our members

Key Actions:

- Develop and implement a player participation pathway
- Create long-term elite player development framework
- Develop and implement a coaching pathway
- Develop and implement an official's pathway

Objective 2.3:

Increase participation at all levels

Key Actions:

- Develop targeted participation campaigns (e.g. youth, adult, female, social, inclusion programmes)
- Explore introducing Street Handball in urban areas and public parks
- Promote and grow Social Handball (recreational and non-competitive handball)

Objective 2.4:

Strengthen school and community programmes

Key Actions:

- Further enhance relevance of Handball within GAA Coaching + Games Development programmes and initiatives
- Integrate Handball into GAA school initiatives
- Develop programmes and resources to support participation in schools (e.g., Handball programmes in schools with club links)
- Align with GAA national participation campaigns, including summer camps
- Engage with Local Sports Partnerships and other local governing bodies for collaborative opportunities

3. Clubs & Structures

Intended outcome:

GAA Handball is sustained by thriving, well-governed clubs, a strong volunteer network and effective structures, with the game embedded in more GAA clubs and improved access to facilities nationwide.



Objective 3.1:

Introduce handball into a greater number of GAA clubs nationwide

Key Actions:

- Identify and provide guidance to GAA clubs to develop Handball
- Partner with GAA County boards to promote Handball within existing GAA clubs (including World GAA County boards)
- Promote shared use of existing GAA facilities

Objective 3.2:

Support Club Development

Key Actions:

- Deliver club development programmes, resources and toolkits (planning, governance, operations, facilities, member engagement) to existing clubs.
- Identify and engage with both lower membership and lapsed clubs with necessary resources, programmes and recruitment initiatives
- Assist clubs with compliance on relevant legislation, codes of practice etc.
- Collaborate with relevant GAA Departments on the Club Compas and Foireann programmes
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice networks between clubs
- Facilitate the recruitment of Club PRO's, with training/guidance provided
- Create greater linkages with, and support to, the Irish Collegiate Handball Association

Objective 3.3:

Enhance organisational effectiveness

Key Actions:

- Conduct a full review of organisational structures at provincial, county and club levels
- Implement recommendations of the review, including clarifying administrative roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes

- Align governance with best practice standards (e.g. Code of Governance for Sport)
- Introduce improved reporting, accountability, data collection and communication systems

Objective 3.4:

Build, support, and retain a strong volunteer network

Key Actions:

- Create clear volunteer, coach and officials' roles and role descriptions
- Provide on-line and in-person training and development (coaching, officiating, administration, events)
- Introduce recognition and reward programmes
- Support clubs in volunteer management and retention strategies

Objective 3.5:

Through advocacy, improve access to playing opportunities

Key Actions:

- Continue to build relationships with key stakeholders at national level (e.g., GAA, Sport Ireland, Government, education sector) and international federations (e.g. World GAA, World Handball Council)
- Collate a database of handball facilities nationally
- Explore shared use agreements for Handball facilities between GAA Handball and schools and community partnerships
- Develop a long-term national and regional facilities vision



GAA HANDBALL
STRATEGY 2027 – 2030

Delivery

Roadmap

Turning ambition into action

Priority Year For Each Objective

2027

1.2 - Communications
Build our story. Grow our reach.

3.3 - Organisation
A more effective, future-ready organisation.

2.1 - Competition Structures
Stronger, more accessible competitions.

3.4 - Volunteers
Support and grow our volunteer base.

Greater
Visibility
Stronger
Foundations

2028

1.1 Awareness
More people. A bigger audience.

1.3 Digital Reach
Grow engagement online.

2.4 Schools & Community
Bring Handball to more people.

3.2 Club Development
Stronger, more sustainable clubs.

More
People
More
Opportunities

2029

1.4 GAA Profile
A higher profile across the GAA and beyond.

2.2 Member Pathways
Clear routes for everyone.

3.1 More Clubs
Expand our reach nationwide.

A Stronger
Presence
Nationwide

2030

2.3 Participation
More players, for longer.

3.5 Facilities Access
Better access, more places to play.

Lasting Impact
Brighter Futures

ONGOING
Annual operational plans, measurement, reporting and review.

Measure.

Review.

Improve.

Repeat.

Respect
Excellence
Inclusion
Integrity



Implementation Framework

How we will make this happen



The success of this strategy will be measured by the actions we take and the outcomes we achieve. Annual Operational Plans will translate the strategic priorities into clear actions, responsibilities and measurable targets. Progress will be monitored regularly, with quarterly reporting to Ard Chomhairle.

Our implementation will be guided by five key principles:

- 1. Leadership & Resources** – Ensuring the people and resources are in place to deliver the strategy.
- 2. Clear Accountability** – Assigning ownership for actions and monitoring progress across all levels of the Association.
- 3. Communication & Engagement** – Keeping members, volunteers and stakeholders informed and involved throughout implementation.
- 4. Collaboration** – Working in partnership with clubs, counties, provinces and key stakeholders to achieve shared objectives.
- 5. Performance & Review** – Monitoring progress through annual operational plans, KPIs and regular review to ensure continuous improvement.

This strategy contains thirteen core objectives. While these provide a clear roadmap, the implementation process will remain flexible, allowing GAA Handball to respond to changing needs and emerging opportunities.

The strategy will be reviewed annually to assess progress, measure impact and refine priorities where required.

13
CORE OBJECTIVES
Delivering A Stronger
GAA Handball

ANNUAL REVIEW
Measure. Learn. Adapt.
Keep Moving Forward.

A LIVING STRATEGY
Responsive. Inclusive.
Always Evolving.

GAA
HANDBALL



PEOPLE • CLUBS • COMMUNITIES

We thank you for your ongoing support of GAA Handball

Buíochas

The Strategic Plan Steering Group:

Kevin Cooke
Fiona Shannon
Brian Mulkerrins
Liam Masterson
Gill Waters
Kevin Brennan
Lizzy Lynch

The staff and Ard Chomhairle of GAA Handball. Individuals and groups who responded to the survey or gave their time in the consultation for this strategy.

The clubs, volunteers and players who make up GAA Handball.



GAA Handball

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