

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Naomh Séamus
St. James' GAA Club



Promoting Gaelic Football in the Renmore, Mervue and Ballybane, Good Shepherd Parishes.

TOWARDS A BRIGHTER AND BETTER FUTURE

FOUR PARISHES - ONE CLUB

ST. JAMES' GAA CLUB

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018 - 2023

Mission Statement

“To provide a social, recreational and sporting outlet for all members of our community while simultaneously promoting the games, values and ideals of “Cumann Lúthchleas Gael”.

Introduction

St. James' GAA Football Club Development Plan as set out reflects our club's vision over the coming years by identifying areas of critical importance that need to be advanced in order to continue to have sustainable football teams at all levels into the future.

St. James' are fortunate to have a committed body of "Evergreen" Volunteers, whose primary interest is to ensure that the club follows a path of continuous improvement to realise our goals and aspirations in the coming years.

We are a relatively new club, established in 1994, catering initially for adult football and drawing from the existing clubs of Mervue and Renmore.

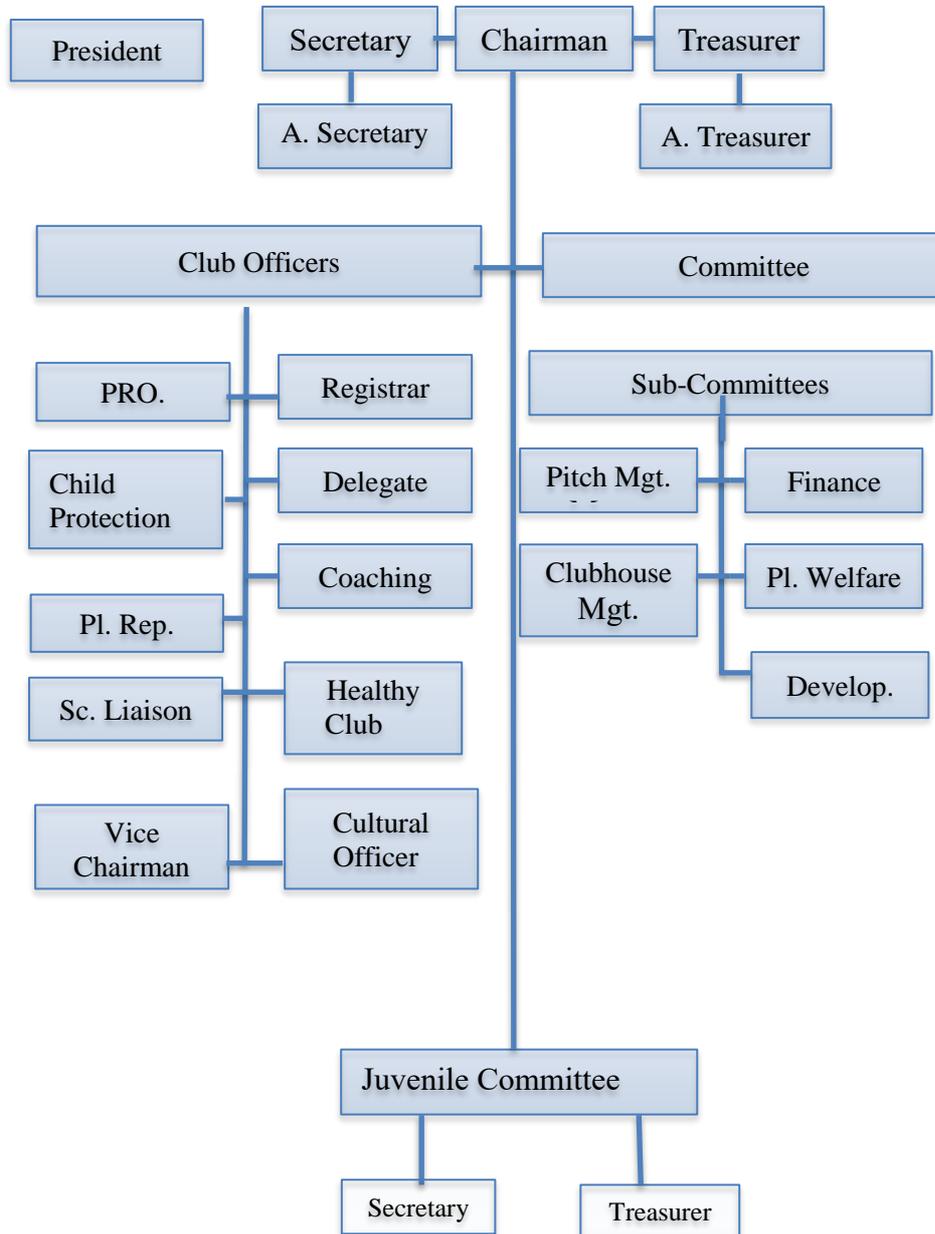
It later expanded to cater for minor and U21 football and in 2007, both Mervue and Renmore Juvenile Clubs ceased to exist as playing entities and both came under the remit of St. James' GAA Club. Many of those involved back then are still active members of St. James'.

The vision then was to improve and promote the development of football in our catchment area and to build a club capable of competing at the highest level at all grades of Gaelic Football in Galway County and beyond.

It is now the duty of this current generation of Club Officers and Members to set out aims, goals and targets for the next five years, building on today's foundations to achieve greater prosperity for our club and the community we serve.

Jimmy Newell, Chairman
December 2017

St. James' GAA Club Organisational Structure



Current Infrastructure:

Mervue Clubhouse (GAA vested)

Trustees: Martin Crowley, Tony Hanley, Jimmy Newell, Michael Monaghan (Galway County GAA), John Prenty (Connacht Council GAA).

Clubhouse ownership: St. James' GAA Club

This facility was upgraded as part of phase one capital investment in 2016 providing club, county and community usage as follows:

- Dressing rooms x 3 with showers and a referee's room with shower.
- Large meeting room / boardroom with communicating kitchen.
- Male & Female toilets.
- Small meeting room upstairs.
- Small recovery gym upstairs.
- Office facilities.
- Internal storage.
- Boiler house.
- External storage container.
- Perimeter boundary & car parking.

Renmore Clubhouse (GAA vested)

Trustees: Pat Houlihan, Colm McGowan and Padraig Nolan.

Clubhouse ownership: Renmore GAA club. However, St. James' manage and control the facility and have unrestricted access.

This Renmore clubhouse facility includes: -

- Large meeting / boardroom with kitchen and toilets.
- Dressing room x 1 with showers and toilets.
- Dressing room x 2 (integrated configuration) with shared showers and toilets.
- Referees' room with shower
- Large fully equipped gym upstairs.
- Equipment room.
- Storage internal.
- Storage external
- Boiler house.
- Perimeter boundary & car parking.

St. James' GAA Pitch Facilities:

The club have two pitches in Mervue and two at Renmore with an annual rolling licence agreement from Galway City Council.

Mervue Pitches: The adult pitch has a 1.2 metre boundary fence and exit gates complying with safety regulations. Goalmouth areas are surfaced with astroturf and both goal post ends have a ball recovery netting facility which are adjustable depending on pitch requirements.

This pitch is full size compliant and is our primary facility pitch for home match fixtures. This pitch is also a favourite with many external clubs and schools who we try to accommodate where possible.

The juvenile pitch is sized appropriately for all underage football activity with goal posts and nets.

Additional ground in this area is used for warm-ups pre-match and pre-training. Both pitches are used extensively to promote Gaelic games through underage camps as well as facilitating St. James' Ladies Gaelic Football team as their home venue.

St. James' Pitch Management Committee manages the grass cutting and maintenance of the fenced pitch and the playing section of the underage pitch.

Renmore Pitches: Both pitches are on raised ground with one larger than the other. The larger pitch, while extensively used, is not full size compliant. Neither pitch has a boundary fence or ball recovery nets, while both pitches are rarely idle due to club activities, use by neighbouring clubs, schools and community use.

The pitches are also our main pre-season training facility, gym (strength & conditioning) training and player development facility.

Capital Spending on Mervue Clubhouse Facility over Years

1997: Clubhouse construction €70,000

Breakdown of costs as follows:

- Sports grant €23,000
- Galway Co. Board €1,000
- Club contribution €46,000

2004: Clubhouse renovation/extension costs €90,000

Breakdown of costs as follows:

- Sports grant €52,000
- Club contribution €38,000

2016: Clubhouse upgrading & pitch development €142,000

Strategic Development Plan 2018.

St. James' GAA club have just completed phase one of the 2016 Capital Development programme whereby the main pitch was redeveloped and fenced at a cost €104,000. It took six months for the pitch sod to recover to playing standard with careful maintenance by the pitch management sub-committee.

The clubhouse in Mervue was upgraded with a meeting room and mini-gym added upstairs. The upgrade cost €27,000.

The Club wish to acknowledge a Capital Sports Grant contribution of €85,000 and a Galway City Council contribution of €7,500.

It is our intention to make progress on phase two of our Capital Development programme (further pitch development) in 2018.

The clubhouse in Renmore was upgraded with a full modern gym upstairs in 2014 at a cost of €135,000 including a Sports Capital Grant of €75,000.

We are working hard as a club and using all our financial creativity to build a club development fund in the hope that we will be able to seek funding for the construction of an all-weather artificial astroturf surface pitch. The development will encompass an area of 1800 sq. m. (60m x 30m), fenced with flood lighting and with full planning secured. The cost is expected to be in the region of €160,000.

In terms of a comprehensive club development, we view this phase two plan outlined later to complete the overall focus and vision of the club now. We expect that its implementation will provide medium term stability in terms of infrastructure, resources and organisational foresight for our club over the next decade.

The five areas listed below are the significant framework parameters for development in this phase two plan:-

Player Development System
Communication and Culture
Facility Management and Development
Financial Sustainability Plan
Succession Planning

The scope of progress will hinge on our capability to acquire major capital investment through Government sports grants and GAA sports grants.

The Galway City Council will play its role as well as our own ability to create a development fund from our current expenditure budget and fundraising.

St. James' catchment base is in a community designated as a Rapid (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) area and will therefore qualify for maximum funding under the sports grant schemes.

The overarching criteria governing this development is, that the club does not commit to any form of debt to achieve its outcome.

Player Development System

Player development starts with the first underage panel right through to the senior panel in an environment of continuous improvement delivered by capable coaches and managers who themselves have been processed and critiqued by a quality improvement benchmark system.

The overriding aim of player development is to create a standardised system of coaching and management that is unique to St. James' and this methodology would be used in all coaching right through the grades regardless of whether the coaches are from St. James' or from an external provider.

It is a policy requirement of St. James' GAA Club that all personnel directly involved with teams are Garda vetted.

Consistency Management:

The long-term ideal for our club would involve, having a group of in-house (neutral minded) coaches and managers who can take a panel of players from underage right through to senior.

This would provide the *first level of consistency* throughout the years and should espouse belief and trust between participants in equal measure.

The *second level of consistency* would involve Linear Coaching, whereby all proactive club coaches are upskilled and follow pre-agreed methods and techniques. This would ensure similarity in skills and drills and should lead to a high level of understanding among players right through the years.

The overall guidance of the programme would be specified and agreed by the club appointed Coaching and Games Development Group.

The *third level of consistency* would involve all team managers working in synchronisation, whereby the efforts of one manager is recognised and

complemented by other managers working across common player panel platforms.

This Dovetail Management Technique is essential at all levels to ensure that the benefits and strengths of each panel is fully utilised in order get the best outcomes for each team.

Coaching Standardisation:

The club will need to appoint a Club Coaching Officer with responsibility for managing and overseeing all coaching related activities.

This will include not only policy oversight, but also ensuring that all coaches attend official courses, as well as implementing a system to monitor player progress.

The Coaching Officer must have completed the GAA Coach programme and Certification or have an equivalent coaching qualification, together with a proven track record in coaching and managing.

Train the trainer's programmes need to be initiated, either in-house by the Coaching Officer or by external qualified coaches or a combination of both. The Coaching Officer will be expected (and supported) to gradually introduce a formal GAA Coaching Programme to a level that ensures all our coaches achieve certification.

Each coach and manager need to be skilled on a broad spectrum of activities like strength and conditioning, training routines and managing.

All coaches and managers, whether from our club pool or from an external source, need to understand the linear coaching and dovetail management operational requirement as described above.

The important point here is that whoever coaches or manages teams in the future will be required to understand and implement the agreed ethos and

principles of St. James' Linear Coaching and Management System while at the same time bringing their own unique skills to complement the system.

This will ensure that outcomes will reflect the efforts of all coaches and managers through the years as opposed to the that of an individual coach or manager.

Code of Conduct:

Outside of the club's rules on safety and behaviour, there needs to be a clear understanding on the levels of acceptable conduct from all personnel (players, officials, coaches, trainers, mentors, supporters, parents and guardians) involved in the club.

In general, respect, courtesy and honesty are required from all members.

This applies to team mates, coaches, officials, referees, parents, opponents and visitors.

The inappropriate use of photographic equipment and social media, particularly from a dressing room setting, is simply not permitted. The club code of behaviour is governed by the official GAA "Code of Behaviour" at www.gaa.ie.

1. Players

In the first instance, the club expects players to be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

Players must understand the rules of Gaelic Football and comply with these rules Physical and verbal abuse of opponents, referees and coaching personnel is simply not permitted.

Players with particular issues must channel these via the Team Coach, Team Captain or the Player Representative. Instructions from coaching personnel must be respected.

Bullying is an attempt to gain advantage or isolate a player, is simply not permitted.

Players must always behave in a manner that avoids bringing the club into disrepute.

2. Coaches and Managers

Coaching personnel must understand the rules of Gaelic Football and comply with these rules.

Physical and verbal abuse of opponents, referees and players is simply not permitted.

Coaching personnel must abide by the club's philosophy of neutrality and fairness in team selection.

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. However, coaches should have a clear understanding of where and when sanctions are appropriate.

The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into consideration when using sanctions.

3. Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians should encourage and support all players and respect the fact that one's own child may not be selected for whatever reason.

They should encourage and support the coaching personnel and respect the fact that the team selection choices were made was in good faith and fair basis. They should encourage their child to understand and respect the decisions made.

Subjecting coaching personnel or players to flippant, sarcastic or disparaging remarks is simply not acceptable.

4. Supporters

Supporters who are members of the club must abide by the club's rules in relation to respect and dignity.

Subjecting coaching personnel or players to flippant, sarcastic or disparaging remarks is simply not acceptable.

Supporters who are not members of the club are obviously beyond the capability of any club sanction and simply have nothing to do with our club's code of behaviour.

However, subjecting coaching personnel or players to flippant, sarcastic or disparaging remarks is simply not acceptable and this type of behaviour, if consistent, can be dealt with at Club Officer level.

5. Fundraising

This section is not intended to suggest any historical poor practices however, the club has a duty of care to ensure that clear lines surrounding governance and accountability is understood and adhered to by all members. The selling of lotto tickets, major fundraising tickets and bucket collections comes under the remit of the Club Treasurer. All fundraising must have clearance from the Club Treasurer. The Club Assistant Treasurer will be expected to be part of any sub-committee which deals with club finance.

All club fundraising must be coordinated in a way that ensures the same loyal Club Sponsors are not door-stepped twice by St. James' Club Members.

The Lotto Licence must be renewed on an annual basis and official ticket fundraising must have a permit. All other local fundraising must be cleared by the club and have good practice safeguards in place including clear identification and supervision. The Lotto functions well and the controls are robust.

Bolstering Facilities:

Pitches and the training grounds must be maintained to playing standard throughout the playing season.

Building the planned astroturf pitch is most important to provide for winter schedules and pre-season activity. The astroturf pitch will also provide training and leisure activity for club members. The astroturf pitch will provide excellent activity-based schedules for the underage. The gym facility in Renmore will need

to be maintained to an up to-date standard and made available to all members. The clubhouse in Mervue will need to be maintained to modern standards, it's technology enhanced, and open as an all-day centre. The clubhouse will need to have targeted shop facilities selling light refreshments.

Reconfiguration of Operations and Delivery:

School Coaching needs to begin with the 8-10's as opposed to the 12's. This will help capture potential young players before they become aligned to other sports. The St. James' GAA Club Academy training on Saturdays will be significantly enhanced under the proposed coaching programme initiative.

St. James' GAA Club Juvenile Cúl Camps will be significantly enhanced under the proposed coaching programme initiative.

Underage players with special skills and talent need to be engaged into a skills excellence and high-performance programme.

Players in the 17 -19 age group need to be introduced into a development programme to nurture them to the next level.

Players not yet eligible to play senior grade must partake in the junior panel. Players who are regraded or training with the senior panel as potential starters and are eligible to play junior, must partake in the junior panel.

Cooperation and understanding are paramount between all club managers, so that players are played across panel platforms if they deserve to be played. In other words, there should be no demarcation line in the adult programme of coaching and management that would limit a player's playing potential.

There will be an onus on all club managers to abide by the club's policy in this regard as part of their responsibilities and duties.

Training schedules pre-season must include all potential players.

This will ensure that the full complement of players is exposed to the challenges of the year ahead as equals prior to being graded into senior and junior.

Commitment from players is key. No initiative can succeed without all players committing to the cause and buying into the programme for the year in full.

Player Welfare Enhancement:

Participation in Gaelic Games is hugely important and deriving enjoyment is a key element. However, there are times when the will to win can overshadow the enjoyment. This can be mainly due to rigorous training schedules, unpredictable fixture schedules and consequent adjustment of home life, sport and work life balance.

This point can acutely challenge any club but it is a fundamental priority issue from a welfare perspective.

The new challenge from the club's perspective is how we adjust schedules to reduce the stress on players' particularly young players who have unrealistic expectations of playing multiple codes and at the same time trying to remain injury free.

There are also cohorts of elite players in all clubs who play across grades with their club, college and county teams.

Support and Mentoring:

Establish a framework for player welfare for both the adult (senior) and underage (juvenile) cycle. It is the club's intention to set up a Welfare Unit under the guidance of the Healthy Club Officer.

Support for the adult members will be largely based around:

- Community activity
- Employment
- Further education
- Providing support and dealing with problems as they arise.
- Talks on addiction & addiction counselling.

Support for the underage members will be largely based around:

- Environmental awareness together with the fulfilment and opportunities to be achieved by groups working together
- The benefits of volunteering
- Community project involvement
- Advice on further education possibilities
- Addiction awareness and talks
- Staying healthy and healthy eating and diets.

Within the club we have a broad spectrum of capable personnel in various walks of life who are capable and willing to lend support to this framework.

GAA Player Injury Scheme:

The GAA provides an Injury Fund which is funded by Members for Members. It is not Insurance as such and is not regulated by the Central Bank. In essence, it covers benefits which cannot be claimed elsewhere.

The following are covered by the Fund:

- Players who incur **accidental** bodily injury while playing Gaelic Football only either in the course of an official fixture or in the course of an official supervised training session.
- Match officials (i.e. Referees, linesmen/lineswomen or umpires injured whilst officiating at an official game of Gaelic Football).
- Voluntary coaches, team managers, selectors and members of official team parties injured during games or training as specified above.

The following are the key features of the fund:-

- Willis Towers Watson are the appointed Administrators of the fund and they administer the fund on behalf of the GAA.
- There is no legal obligation on the GAA to provide an Injury Fund. Risk is an inherent factor in sport, as in life. When members voluntarily take part in Club activities they accept the risks that such participation may bring.
- The Injury Fund does not seek to fully compensate but to supplement other covers such as Private Health Insurance, National Health Insurance,

Personal Accident Cover, Employment benefit covers, Income Payment protection covers.

- The Fund only provides cover for otherwise unrecoverable losses up to the benefit limits. The Fund should not be used as a guarantee of for the payment of expenses. Ultimately, the responsibility to ensure that adequate cover is in place rests with the individual member commensurate with their specific individual needs.
- A Club must be registered and players/members must be a paid up member of the Club.

What are the Benefits:

- Medical: Otherwise unrecoverable medical expenses are covered to a maximum of €4,500. The first €100 of each claim is not covered.
- Dental: Otherwise unrecoverable dental expenses are covered to a maximum of €4,500. The first €100 of each claim is not covered.
- Supplementary Hospital benefit: €400 per days stay in hospital payable only if stay is a minimum of 10 consecutive days up to a maximum of 15days.
- Loss of Wages: Applicable only to a) Adults and b) Youths who are in full time employment at the date of Injury. Employment means permanent gainful employment of not less than 16 hours per week. Otherwise unrecoverable loss of basic nett wages (i.e. excluding bonuses, overtime, unsociable working hours allowances, etc.) Social Welfare/Income Protections/ Income protection cover and/or other entitlements will be considered recoverable and will be deducted from the basic nett wage figure.
- Capital Benefit: Permanent Total Disablement from gainful employment €100,000, Loss of sight in both eyes €100,000; Permanent partial loss of sight Up to €100,000; Loss of Limb(s) Up to €100,000; Complete and incurable paralysis €100,000.
- Death Benefit: Adult - €50,000.00 Youth - €25,000

Important Features:

- Match injury – notify referee, team manager and Club Secretary.

- Training session injury – notify team manager and Club Secretary and make note of time and date and how injury occurred.
- N.B. Claim must be registered within **60 days**.
- Club will process paperwork.
- Consult Club regarding costs of procedure/operation if no health insurance in place.

Player Integration and Retention:

Players who live and work in our area and are not original St. James’ Players are welcome to join our club as full members. However, our club policy is, that we do not actively scout to recruit players who have not voluntarily wished to become members. This is our policy and remains our policy.

All new player members will be introduced to the club; it’s coaches, and fellow players by the Club Secretary.

Once inducted, membership paid, registered and formally transferred, the player is free to use the club facilities and compete for consideration to play football as a St. James’ Club Player.

The club’s perspective over the coming years is set out this document. This is the first rung of the ladder in relation to player retention, whereby all players understand the club’s efforts in providing a road map to future progress.

St. James’ GAA Club offers all adult players modern facilities, excellent coaching, strong social and communication strategy, a safe and non-threatening environment, a culture of belonging, inclusion and diversity.

The club endeavors to use its connections to Employer Enterprises in seeking local employment both short-term and long-term for its players who wish to work locally, as well as players in transition through college.

However, players who work away are connected to training schedules through social media apps, by which their workouts are vetted and performance measured. Special training arrangements are put in place at weekends on their return to minimize any adverse effects.

In future, it is hoped that collective training sessions can be arranged, particularly for Dublin and it's hinterland-based players to maintain a level of performance and consistency similar to base training.

Concussion Injury Management:

Concussion is a brain injury that needs to be taken seriously to protect the long-term player welfare. Any player suspected of having sustained a concussion, should be immediately removed from the field of play and should not return to play on the same day.

Where a Team Doctor is present, he/she should advise the person in charge of the team, i.e. the Team Manager, in this regard and the player must not be allowed to continue his participation in the game.

Concussion is an evolving injury; therefore, it is important to monitor the player after the injury for progressive deterioration.

Players suspected of having a concussion, must have adequate rest of at least 24 hours and then must then follow a gradual return to play protocol.

Players must receive medical clearance before returning to play.

Defibrillator Management

The management of this important instrument is crucial

- It must be stored fully charged with unrestricted access. Time is critical.
- The charge must be checked on a weekly basis, recorded, and validated.
- The battery and pads expiry dates must be verified.
- Trained personnel must be validated, and their training updated and verified.
- A trained operator should be present for all home games
- The instrument should form part of the mobile medical equipment on the pitch

Embracing Inclusiveness and Diversity:

St. James' GAA Club has a proud record as a non-political, anti-racist, anti-sectarian organisation. We are fully committed to the principles of inclusion and diversity at all levels. We expect all coaches and managers to understand the club's policy in this regard, as opting out of these responsibilities is not an option.

Communication and Culture:

St James' GAA clubhouse is the fulcrum of the community, providing all our members a base for sporting, cultural and social activities in our community. All members, supporters and community organizations that wish to connect directly to the club's communication system may do so as follows:

Website: <http://www.saintjamesgaa.com>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/stjamesgaagalway>

Email: secretary.stjames.galway@gaa.ie

The club Registration Officer and the Communications Officer has the capability to communicate with all online members through the online system myclubfinances.com where online members can be updated of events, games, by SMS, Email and Apps.

All members that wish to be linked to communications for games, meetings and activities can register their mobile with their communications officer for regular alerts.

St. James' GAA Club continues to support and enjoy Friday evening's cultural session throughout the year. This is mainly a session of traditional Irish music and songs under the leadership of the Club's Cultural Officer.

This group draws on the talents of up to forty freelance musicians from within the Club's catchment, many of those performing range from beginners to experienced and all are encouraged to take part and showcase their artistry.

Members and Community Activity:

The users in this section are either members or social members. The clubhouse is virtually in use full time outside of official club activity. The following are examples:

- Monday morning: Senior citizens - Mediation yoga
- Monday afternoon: Active retired ARA: Creative writing
- Monday evening: Ballybane Bheag Ladies: Fitness and exercise.
- Tuesday morning: St. James' GAA men's club: Men's shed activities
- Tuesday evening: Mervue ladies club: Fitness and exercise
- Wednesday morning: Active retired ARA - Meet and greet club
- Wednesday evening: Senior citizens: Arts and crafts club
- Thursday morning: Sonas club - Voluntary dinners and music by Cope.
- Friday evening: Culture club with Irish music and songs

St. James' GAA club is strong on communication and culture, providing unrivalled support to members and community in our catchment area.

Facility Management and Development.

Phase two of our club development is primarily about constructing the planned astroturf Pitch.

Most clubs in the country have astroturf facilities with lights. This is essential for early season training for our teams. Otherwise, other clubs will have an advantage.

Uses

1. Early season training for all our teams.
2. Five aside and seven aside matches
3. Curtails usage of the main pitches, leaving them in good condition when the football season begins
4. Bowling and other activities for the elderly during the day

St. James' Astroturf Project:

This is an exciting project of development in the club, spearheaded by the Club's Pitch Development Committee.

There is existing planning permission for a 70m. x 35m. fenced pitch with lights. The Pitch Development Committee viewed and compared astroturf pitch projects in Caherlistrane, Liam Mellows GAA Club and others in terms of size and optimum use.

It is the committee's opinion that a 60m. x 30m. fenced pitch with lights would be most suitable for our needs.

Funding the Project

It is hoped that a Sports Council Capital Sport's Grant and GAA Grant will fund the bulk of the costs. The remainder of the cost would be funded by a grant from Galway City Council and from the club's own development fund. There are other possibilities of small funding available through advertising hoardings, etc.

General Costs

The cost of astroturf surfacing is in the region of €80m². In this project of 60m. x 30m., with an overall size of 1800m², the projected cost would be in the region of €145,000.

However, other costs would arise in relation to finishing the project. A concrete path for security and weeds control will need to be constructed around the perimeter of the pitch, Professional Fees will be incurred in procuring and supervising the contractors and the electricity required to run the facility will need to be accessed.

We view the estimated overall cost to be in the region of €160,000.

Financial Sustainability Plan:

The club annual running cost is circa of €50,000, mainly sourced in the following order:

- Club Lotto
- Fundraising
- Membership
- Sponsorship
- Bag packing in local stores

However, our club funding just meets club costs currently. This is not a sustainable position as it allows no flexibility for unforeseen events or sudden changes in club running costs.

There is also a need to build up a reserve fund to future proof the club during periods of economic difficulties and for capital development planning going forward.

How to Increase Funding:

Realistically, there are two ways of achieving this:

1. Club Lotto: There is a lot of potential to increase the sale of lotto books. It is probably the most painless way of raising more funds. If the club could

sell an extra 30 books per week, it would accrue an extra €7,000 annually.

2. Membership: It may be difficult to understand that St. James' GAA Club have a low membership base currently. This is obviously an area of untapped potential and needs to be addressed in our 5-year plan.

The club must set-out a mechanism for scoping potential members in our catchment area, there must be many adults who would not alone be willing to pay €25 membership but would also play an active role in day-to-day club operations?

Succession Planning

St. James' GAA club is fortunate in having many volunteers who assist in the running of our many teams. However, in the overall context, general membership participation is low by comparison to other clubs.

This is obviously a critical area of untapped potential and there is a need to proactively identify key people with the right skill sets to get involved to deliver maximum benefit in important roles for our club going forward.

Many of these roles will evolve around the day-to-day administration and management of the club. The current committee structure works well in relation to team and club management, due mainly to the rich crop of right skilled individuals in key positions currently available to the club.

However, resources of this magnitude will not always remain optimum, and as the years roll on, the club must plan forward to identify key structural changes to be in a position to absorb the shock of individual retirements.

Executive Leadership:

Executive leadership is a key fundamental that requires skillful personnel to manage all the dynamics of a modern-day club. Modern GAA Clubs must be managed like a business, having an eclectic mix of operations like games, coaching, human resource management, and financial management, to name a few.

The next generation of Club Officers will need to be selected from the club resource pool based on their ability and skill to discharge the specific requirements of future demand. They will need to be identified and enticed to become involved as leaders and with respect to the historical selection of Club Officers, it is important that every effort be made to ensure that competent personnel are processed for selection through the democratic system.

Financial Management:

Financing the system is a key fundamental that requires good corporate governance and prudent management.

The Club Treasurer will require a broad range of financial skills; he/she will need to surround themselves with an army of like-minded volunteers who can tap into every available resource.

Identifying potential sustainable sources of income is essential, managing it is a feasible task, but risk management and cost containment will be the challenge.

Brand Marketing:

In general, this area of club business needs to be led by knowledgeable in-house personnel who ideally have in depth experience in business and marketing or else we need to consider engaging with external service providers to advise and train in this area.

St. James' Juvenile Teams are currently strong on "brand". Every young player owns a St. James' jersey with crest, which is worn at training and socially. This is a simple example of St. James' brand working, and hopefully we will be able to retain the same interest as these young players grow older and are challenged by competitive sports.

However, we must also be able to capture this cohort group and their parent's into becoming club members year on year, e.g. player members, ordinary members, or social members on a long-term basis as they progress through the grades.

To challenge competitive sports in later years we must plan to ensure that all age groups are catered for, in relation to optimised coaching & games.

The need for good coaching, consistent coaching and linear coaching is paramount so that consistency prevails through the grades.

Effective team management is important so that each player is given an

opportunity to achieve their full potential.

All club personnel and participant's welfare are paramount. The club must ensure that it is fully indemnified against all potential risks associated with all users of our facilities.

Facilities for Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation and Counselling will need to be identified and provided.

A good "Brand" will help attract sponsorship and membership as well as coach, player and manager retention.

Facility provision is a key component long-term.

The clubhouse in Mervue will need to be open and managed as an all-day centre, with facilities for soft drinks and technology available.

The gym at Renmore will need to be opened to members and managed accordingly. In the longer term, changing rooms 1 & 2 will require upgrading to include the fit-out of two builder's finish shower rooms and the installation of false ceilings. The original roof dates from 1984 and may require to be renewed at some point in the future depending on how it weathers with time.

The need to identify and handpick high quality individuals with experience in the relevant fields is paramount to future progress.

Good competent new blood will ensure that the benefits of quality succession planning will far outweigh any perceived difficulties and take St. James' into the future as a strong vibrant GAA Club.